

San Quentin News



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Photo by FirstWatch

Ken Burns, Julie Dunfey and Dayton Duncan hosting a Q&A for their PBS documentary *Country Music*

Ken Burns brings *Country Music* at SQ

By Joe Garcia
Journalism Guild Chairperson

Ken Burns came to the San Quentin chapel and delivered an exclusive prison screening of his latest American gospel, *Country Music*.

The July 24 visit brought prisoners up close and personal with the legendary filmmaker and two of his Florentine Films teammates, writer and co-producers Julie Dunfey and Dayton Duncan.

"I feel like I've met almost everyone here in this room," said Burns to the roughly 150 inmates and staff. "This has been one of the greatest hours of my life."

Burns uses the scope of *Country Music* to explore themes of America's cultural identity, as he has done in his other documentaries.

"You don't ever get an answer. You just deepen the question," Burns told *SQNews*. "We're a very complicated people."

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Robert E. Burton receives first ever Distinguished School award



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Robert E. Burton Principal Michael Wheelless, receiving the Distinguished School award from OCE Superintendent Shannon Swain with Warden Ron Davis (Center)

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Associate Editor

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR) Office of Correctional Education (OCE) presented its first ever Distinguished School award to the Robert E. Burton Adult School at San Quentin State Prison in July.

An award ceremony was held at the prison to acknowledge "exemplary achievements" the school has made above all 34 other accredited schools within CDCR's prisons.

"It wasn't surprising it was San Quentin that won this award," said Ralph Diaz, CDCR Secretary.

"There's nothing easy about running an agency, school, or prison." Then he congratulated Michael Wheelless, the school's principal.

"Schools, by nature, are a blend of many different partnerships," said Wheelless. He said the partnership today is the CDCR administration, made up of the Office of Correctional Education, San Quentin staff, volunteers and inmate tutors, teaching assistants, gardeners and, of course, the teachers.

Wheelless said when he started teaching at the elementary school level, he had an old concept of teaching: teacher, student, parent.

That changed with experience. "It's not a one person show," he said. "It takes everyone working together to make things happen."

Several students were given the opportunity to speak about their past struggles, staff support, accomplishments and the benefit of education.

"After the first grade, I hated school," said inmate Tommy Wickerd. He said by age 18, he was in county jail and later went to prison. "Rehabilitation was the last thing on my mind." He said that was his "ignorant self" in the CDCR.

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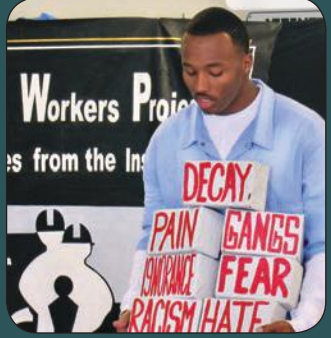
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Photo courtesy of CDCR

San Joaquin County District Attorney Tori Verber Salazar speaking in live press conference with SQ prisoners on TV

Re:Store Justice starts 5-year restorative justice pilot program

By Aron Kumar Roy
Staff Writer

A live internet joint press conference involving San Quentin State Prison and CDCR officials in Sacramento announced a five-year restorative justice pilot program aimed at the needs of victims, offenders and the community.

The first-ever live news conference to include incarcerated individuals was held recently to

announce the program which will be based in San Joaquin County.

The incarcerated men, members of the Re:Store Justice organization, shared how they believe that restorative justice is a more wholesome approach to criminal justice.

Re:Store Justice is a nonprofit organization that deals with restorative justice and criminal justice reform.

See **RE:STORE** on Page 5

Town Hall addresses the arrival of deaf prisoners

By Anthony Faulk
Managing Editor

San Quentin State Prison will begin housing deaf prisoners, state officials report.

"They just want to be a part of the education and self-help programs you enjoy here," said Kelly Mitchell, assistant deputy director for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

The transfers to San Quentin are the result of years of litigation

between the deaf community and CDCR for their equal access to educational and self-help programs, said Prison Legal Office attorney Rita Lomio.

Mitchell announced the change at three August town hall meetings at San Quentin. She said 10-15 deaf people would arrive at SQ in September.

She said there have been court rulings "but we're here now and I believe this is going to be good."

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Photo by FirstWatch

The hearing-impaired soon to arrive at San Quentin

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Chicago group engages storytelling to understand violence

By Clarissa Donnelly-DeRoven
Contributing Writer

When Sam Castro was three years old, he was shot in the arm outside his home on Chicago's Northwest side. He remembers the chaos in the aftermath, how his mother and grandmother screamed when he walked over and told them what had happened. He also remembers that after the initial shock of the whole thing, nobody ever spoke to him about it again.

Castro, 45, said that the incident loomed large in his childhood. Seeing violence so early in his life led him on the path to crime and eventually to prison.

He shared the story as part of a facilitated conversation in April called "From Incarceration to Peacemaking," which aimed to describe the root causes of violence. The event was hosted by Envisioning Justice, an organization devoted to encouraging Chicagoans to think about the impacts of the criminal justice system on communities around the city



All those in attendance assemble for a group photo after the talk

Photo courtesy of Clarissa Donnelly-DeRoven

and imagine what reforms to the system might look like.

"The whole point of Envisioning Justice is to try and see what the arts and humani-

ties can do to make criminal justice reform a city-wide issue, but also to really involve people who aren't usually involved and get them to envision what a different system would look like," said Elliot Heilman, an organizer of the event.

Castro and two other men spoke to an audience of about 15 teenagers who were members of The Peace Exchange, a Chicago organization that educates teenagers about topics ranging from restorative justice to teen dating violence with the hope that they become peace leaders in their own communities.

Henry Cervantes, a program manager for Peace Exchange, who facilitated the talk, said that these conversations were important because they "can transform our own perceptions of the world and can change our views on reality."

Cervantes grew up in spaces greatly impacted by violence and incarceration. "My earliest childhood memories were that of my mother and sisters and I being beaten on a daily basis, and hearing, seeing and avoiding gunshots in this community," he said. At age 12, his younger sister took her own life as a response to the domestic violence. Cervantes was only 17 years old. "The work I'm doing now has everything to do with how I was raised," he said.

Cervantes said conversations like this one are important because they help heal formerly incarcerated

people's wounds while also allowing others to learn from their mistakes. "You gotta share that knowledge with the people," he said.

The feeling that the criminal justice system traps Black and Latino communities in an endless cycle of incarceration loomed large throughout the conversation. Micah Baker, 16, a student from The Peace Exchange, reflected on this after the discussion.

"The Black community and the Latino community, they end up in these correctional facilities because they don't have the resources that White people have," Baker remarked after the event. "They don't have these equal opportunities, and that's what lands them in these jails."

During the conversation, Baker and the other teenagers also grappled with the question of prison reform versus prison abolition. Orlando Mayorga, one of the formerly

incarcerated panelists, came down on the abolitionist side. "It does not take prison for a person to learn from the mistakes that they make," he said. "I am who I am in spite of prison, not because of it."

Mayorga, who recently graduated from college and works with people re-entering the community after incarceration, noted how difficult it is to transform neighborhoods when so much of the community is locked up.

"[Prisons] rob our neighborhood of valuable resources," he said, adding that people who could improve neighborhoods "don't have that opportunity because they're spending so much time in prisons."

Castro agreed. Once he got out of prison he said he remembered thinking, "I destroyed my community. Now, I need to rebuild it. I need to help my people because if we don't do it, nobody will."



Photo courtesy of Clarissa Donnelly-DeRoven

Sam Castro, Frederick Seaton and Orlando Mayorga, the three formerly incarcerated panelists during the conversation. Castro and Seaton sport the neon yellow jackets that they wear when they work as violence interrupters.

In Remembrance

Brothers George Grifall and Chris Koppe

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

More than 60 men of all nationalities, races and origins gathered in San Quentin's Catholic Chapel to celebrate the lives of George Grifall and Chris Koppe. The two well-known incarcerated men passed away in San Quentin in the month of June.

"I love you, brother," was the catchphrase for Grifall. Koppe was lovingly known as Colonel Sanders or Colonel Crispy.

After the evening meal on July 18, prisoners mingled and listened to the blues, led by the smooth drumming of Darryl Moody Schilling. As the chapel began filling up, Schilling picked up the pace with a livelier beat.

"He told me he loved me, and then I climbed in my rack," recalled Michael "Doc" Dickman, his cellie, about the night Grifall passed away. "George told me not to wake him for the Saturday breakfast — he hates CDCR pancakes, plus we had plenty of food."

Grifall had a "bad habit" of hanging his hand over the ledge of the bed, Dickman explained. He said that the following morning he kept bumping into Grifall's hand and after a couple times, Dickman was yelled for Grifall to move his hand, but he didn't respond. Dickman became concerned.

"When I felt his hand, it was ice cold," Dickman said. "He died in his sleep. Don't believe the rumors out there."

Walter Sprakea talked about meeting Grifall while incarcerated at Corcoran in 1999.

"Chris told me that he'd teach me how to play rhythm guitar"

"I thought then, he was too friendly," Walter said. "Back then, prison was harder to do time in, and you'd see him and say, 'what's wrong with that guy?' He was always respectful and of course, would say, 'I love you, brother.'"

Larry Ryzak added, "George was my friend. He was one the most loyal people I ever knew. I could still hear him, 'I love you, brother.' He never changed. He had good morals. He wasn't perfect, but nobody is or we wouldn't be standing here."

Anthony Thomas read a poem that he wrote in honor of Grifall.

Richie Morris said that he didn't know George well, but "his absence leaves a hole in my life. I always saw him being kind."

"Now, Colonel Crispy looked like Colonel Sanders," Morris continued. "We spend our time with people passing by us and never notice who they are. We got an opportunity here to record we stand among giants. I want you to recognize that."

SQNews Staffer, Aaron Taylor talked about guitar lessons he got from Koppe.

"One day I see this dude in the rotunda playing the blues, who looked like Colonel Sanders bending the strings," Taylor said. "Chris told me that he'd teach me how to play rhythm guitar," However, Taylor said that he was slow picking up the lessons. "Chris told me he wouldn't play with me because he said he never met a Black man who didn't have rhythm."

The incident, Taylor said, invigorated his willingness to learn guitar, and he practiced until Koppe later agreed to play lead guitar with him at an open mic.



Photo courtesy of CDCR
Chris Koppe playing his guitar

In between men taking the stage to talk about their friends, Quentin Blues entertained the audience: (Dwight Krizman (Bass), Richie Morris (Guitar and Vocals), Chris Thomas (Mandolin & Vocals), Mark Kinney (Piano), Joe Thurson Percussion); Andrew "Boots" Hardy (Guitar and Vocal).

A recording of "Now I Can Rise", with Koppe on lead guitar was also played.

Brian Holliday talked about his relationship with Grifall.

"Every time he saw me, he'd stop and say, 'What's up?' You don't see that in people too much," Holliday said. "I really miss him."

Quentin Blues closed the memorial with two songs for Koppe: "Full Tilt Boogie" and "Upward as I Fall".

For Grifall, Quentin Blues played "Feet Don't Fail Me Now". Then "Boots" performed a song he had written the previous morning and dedicated to George.

"I dropped my pick inside my guitar and this song fell out," Boots said. "This song is about the stories I heard about the man after he passed, the love and the handshakes."

Correctional Officer L. Griffin

"Griffin wasn't just a correctional officer; Griffin was a mentor, a teacher and a pure hearted genuine soul, who always offered you the truth"

By Richard Richardson
Executive Editor

San Quentin State Prison lost a great treasure on Aug. 23. After a lengthy battle with cancer, Correctional Officer L. Griffin passed away.

Griffin's passing hit the men-in-blue like a boulder. Griffin had worked at San Quentin since Feb. 14, 1998.

"Once I heard about C/O Griffin's passing, I was instantly saddened, being that we worked together for four years," said Anthony Ammons. "One of the most important things that Griffin taught me was to always say 'thank you' and 'you're welcome.'"

Harold Meeks added, "The wisdom and words of encouragement Griffin gave to me empowered me to keep mentoring the youth inside these prison walls. Griffin always reminded us that we can change, and it is possible."

Griffin was well-known to younger inmates, who wore their pants too low—they'd catch hell for it. "Stop sagging your pants," Griffin would tell the youngsters, and rightfully so. Griffin never missed an opportunity to speak candidly and directly and never worried about who listened or their opinions.

The prison staff, as well as the men-in-blue, knew



Photo courtesy of CDCR
Correctional Officer L. Griffin

Griffin for being cheerful in nature. Many say that laughter would fill the room whenever Griffin appeared—filling every corner in every inch of San Quentin.

Here are just a few of the things said about Griffin:

"Griffin wasn't just a correctional officer; Griffin was a mentor, a teacher and a pure hearted genuine soul, who always offered you the truth."

"If you never knew what a real angel looked like then you never saw Griffin."

"Griffin told stories filled with a wealth of knowledge but also with an abundance of joy, laughter and smiles."

"It didn't rain on Aug. 23, 2019; the sun shined, just like Griffin's smile."

Without a doubt, the atmosphere here at San Quentin will never be the same.



Photo courtesy of CDCR
George Grifall

"George was my friend. He was one the most loyal people I ever knew. I could still hear him, 'I love you, brother'"

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.
- Please do not use offensive language in your submissions.
- Poems and artwork (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
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Behind the Scenes



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Removal of books from prison library seen as attempt to censor black history

By Alfred King
Journalism Guild Writer

The Danville Correctional Center in Illinois has removed more than 200 books from its library, volunteers from the Education Justice Project and Illinois Public Media confirmed.

The books were removed from a library in the facility's education wing. Rebecca Ginsburg, director of the Education Justice Project at the prison, said she felt a pit in her stomach when she realized the books had been removed.

"I felt sick," she said. The Education Justice Project offers University of Illinois classes to inmates housed at DCC.

Illinois Department of Corrections Director John Baldwin said the books shouldn't have been in the facility in the first place.

"Somehow, a lot of books got into the institution without going through our review

process," he said. "That was our fault."

Asked to explain how his staff identified the 200 books that needed to be removed and reviewed, Baldwin said, "I don't know how the facility found that out. I have no idea."

The library was created to provide the general population books required for the students in the facility to complete their coursework and just marked its 10th anniversary this year.

The majority of the removed books centered on race. Ginsburg believed race is the issue for the books' removal.

"Are they removing all Black books?" she asked. "Reading about the history of slavery, post emancipation, and the black experience in the United States is an important part of developing a Black person that is whole in society."

Ginsburg contacted State Rep. Carol Ammons and

showed her the list of the removed books. "I was totally taken aback by the list..." She wanted to know what if the objections were based on race. She plans to make other state lawmakers aware of the book removal and remains committed to making sure this does not happen again.

The following is a sample of books removed: *Up From Slavery* by Booker T. Washington; *Visiting Day*, a children's book about a parent who is in prison, and various titles about Black history by professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. A majority of the books removed from the program's library were about race.

These types of censorship restrictions exist nationwide. Washington State has banned book donations. Arizona Department of Corrections banned a book written by a former federal prosecutor that dealt with racism in the criminal justice system, arguing that the book posed a threat to security in prison.

The Illinois Department of Corrections Director John Baldwin was asked what constitutes inappropriate content. He pointed to his department's publication review policy, which states the following guidelines: material that is sexually explicit or otherwise obscene; facilitates communications between offenders; encourages hatred, violence or other criminal activities; is detrimental to security.

Michael Tafolla, who was recently released after serving 20 years in Illinois for murder, challenged the premise that books cause riots or fights at the prison. "If people like me that come from poverty-stricken neighborhoods learn how to be much more and value ourselves, we're going to be less likely to be breaking the law or doing other at risk things." Tafolla is now employed as a case manager for the Chicago based Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, working with at-risk adults.

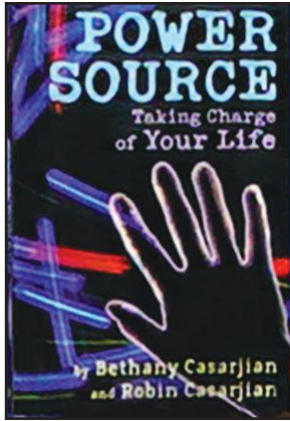
Power Source group commemorates first-ever YOP graduation

By Joe Garcia
Journalism Guild Chairperson

San Quentin youth offenders came together on their own—in a grassroots ceremony on June 23, to commemorate the first-ever graduating cycle of the Power Source curriculum.

Institutional glitches delayed the officially scheduled graduation in May. But, the incarcerated members of BE-IT (Benefitting Each Individual Together) wanted to make sure this group of dedicated young men got the chance to fully celebrate their accomplishments.

“Here’s to rehabilitation!” Brian Holliday toasted his fellow graduates with an ice cold soda. Surrounded by friends, mentors and outside facilitator Ayoola Mitchell, Holliday seemed in great spirits—despite having been physically attacked by two reception center inmates just the day before.



“That’s the cost of staying at this prison and committing myself to ‘programming,’” Holliday told *SQNews*. “The bottom line is to keep doing the positive things that will get me home to my family.”

“Power Source is a group created for young men to help them understand themselves better,” Mitchell told *SQNews*. “It’s about examining their belief systems and challenging their thinking—

without being confrontational in how we challenge it.

“It’s really about looking introspectively—building a safe container, building a community—so that the guys feel comfortable talking about personal things, sometimes things they’ve never disclosed before.”

“It opened my views of other inmates of different races,” said Holliday. “Hearing their stories of a different childhood—that expanded my thinking, for sure.”

Graduate Bryan Alejandro, a 20-year-old gay man, described the Power Source group as “a place where I can just be myself without anyone judging me for my sexuality.”

“I feel like I’m the first gay guy who’s accomplished something in prison,” he said. “I know that’s not true, but I feel that way through all my struggles.”

Mitchell credits the inmate facilitators with perpetuating such an inclusive and transformative vibe—Eric Aber-

crombie, Ryan Dietz, Sumit Lal, Isaiah Love, David Rodriguez, Nou Phang Thao, Thanh Tran, and Kenny Vernon.

“I taught for eight years in various institutions,” she said. “You only really know something if you can teach it.

“Facilitating goes beyond that—to listen and be able to reach. This facilitating team really surpassed any expectations I thought I had.”

Graduate Jessie Rose said, “This is definitely a group where I could come and be comfortable. The connections were real. It was easy to form bonds with people—especially with the guys my own age.”

“This is the funnest group I ever been in,” said facilitator Love. “I didn’t know what to expect, but we’ve built a nice container that’s gonna stand up.”

BE-IT and Power Source fall under the umbrella of KidCAT—SQ’s premier youth offender support pro-

gram. KidCAT members filled the room alongside the graduates.

“To all the KidCAT members, I want you to take a good look and recognize these faces,” said facilitator Thao—the last founding member still incarcerated. “Wherever you run into these guys—out on the yard, in the buildings—encourage them, help them.

“They may not realize how powerful that help is, but they need that help. You are now their resources.”

Thao related this message to Lal, the facilitator who’d just paroled the week before. He said Lal embodied this ideology—blossoming from an often troublesome YOP (youth offender program) into a guiding mentor for newly arrived YOPs.

KidCAT’s Phillippe Kelly concurred. “Sumit had a lot to do with putting this curriculum together,” he said. “All of you guys are gonna get out of here. Remember, how you spend your time in here now will determine your future out there.

“Find your peers. Bring people in to get the help they need. Y’all got help—it’s only fair that you give help back.”

Facilitator Tran expressed his appreciation for this inaugural graduating class: “For the longest time, I’ve said, ‘If you give young guys the opportunity, they’ll not only meet but exceed your expectations.’ And for the longest time, they continue to prove me right.”

“Any curriculum is only as good as the guys who bring life into it,” said Mitchell. “You all did amazing work in here, really brought this curriculum to life.

“That was especially important for this very first cycle. Because of your commitment to this program—being the first—we are being allowed to expand.”

Graduate Jonathan Rivas said Power Source taught him valuable lessons about becoming a man and dealing with childhood trauma.

“When you’re a kid, you tend to react to things differently, see things differently. But now I see that one day we might react to things more normally.”

According to all the guys, Mitchell has been a tireless advocate for rehabilitation and new beginnings. They joked that it seems like she’s at SQ every single day, facilitating in one capacity or another.

In line with the friendly, familial atmosphere, Vernon handed out personalized comedic awards to each participant. Mitchell, of course, was given the “I Have Fifty Jobs” award.

She spoke about her background—how she quit her occupation as a juvenile hall counselor to become a teacher, taking a substantial pay cut in the process.

“What kind of society pays you more to lock them up than to educate them?” she said.

“Working here, it ain’t even work,” Mitchell continued. “It’s what you guys give me. You give me hope that I’ve not been doing this work in vain.”

“Ayoola’s like my mother in prison,” said Alejandro.

“Our group started out with 21 guys. Some guys got transferred out, but nobody just stopped coming,” Mitchell said. “That right there speaks volumes about the 18–25-year-olds.

“One guy—I won’t say his name—did try to stop coming. I may or may not have sent threatening messages. He ended up seeing it through.

“So thank you all for putting up with my shenanigans.”

Other graduates in attendance on June 22 included Miguel Arevalo, Chase Benoit, Jonathan Lunsford, Kevin Rojano, Anthony Russom and Vincent Turner.

Nazhee Flowers, Marshal Kaplan, Jermaine Lindsay, and Rodney Rederford completed the curriculum but were transferred to other facilities before they could receive their certificates in person.



Photo by FirstWatch

San Quentin’s first-ever YOP graduate class of Power Source

PUP hopes to become nation’s first stand-alone prison campus

By Joe Garcia
Journalism Guild Chairperson

The Prison University Project’s (PUP) quest for independent college accreditation—and what that may mean, exactly, for the San Quentin community—inspired an active conversation at the July 29 town hall meeting hosted by PUP.

With submission of its accreditation application complete in August, PUP’s transition from its partnership with Patten University to the nation’s first stand-alone prison campus moved a step closer to actualization.

“To become independent, we’ll become a better school,” said PUP Executive Director Jody Lewen. “We’ll have the freedom to innovate—and actually improve our program through our own design.”

Patten, a longstanding Bay Area private university, was purchased in 2012 by UniversityNow, a for-profit online college. Since then, Patten has all but closed its brick-and-mortar campus. PUP intends to move forward and make a clean break.

Without independent accreditation, however, PUP may need to partner with an established, accredited, program. The short-term back-

up plan includes an interim agreement with San Diego-based National University.

“If we partner with a new school, in many ways we’d be handing our program over and saying, ‘Please do this well,’” explained Lewen. “There’s just no way to maintain the quality. That’s the tricky thing about partnerships.”

“Turning a profit is a strong motive for schools to come in and run things inside without concerns for quality. There’s a very big push right now for for-profit schools to get into prisons.”

Lewen scheduled the town hall meeting to offer SQ an open glimpse into the accreditation process and give the community a chance to ask questions and voice concerns. PUP board members, faculty and advocates joined Lewen to offer their own insight and support.

“This is an opportunity to build an even better model, to send a message to the world that people inside prison are worthy of this type of education,” said Lewen.

“Of course there’s the fear that if we create a school whose main campus is inside a prison, then the credibility of that diploma will be diminished.

“But from what I’ve seen, the reputation of a school is fostered by the reputation of its alumni and faculty—and that greatly outweighs these other factors.”

Incarcerated PUP tutor Clark Gehartsreiter expressed strong doubts that a college diploma unique to San Quentin could ever be well received by potential employers and outside academic institutions.

“I’m opposed to independent accreditation—it’s a bad idea,” said Gehartsreiter. “It will create a prison school whose name and location will follow you around on your resume well beyond your sentence.

“That dynamic alone will instantly change the narrative about you, and make the primary point of the conversation that you’ve been to prison.”

To punctuate PUP’s impact and success since its inception in 1996, six formerly incarcerated alumni returned to the prison as town hall participants—Jason Bell, David Cowan, Pat Mims, Dmitriy Orlov, Curtis Penn and Leonard Rubio.

Mims, a director of the Re-entry Service Center of Richmond, California, quickly rose to address Gehartsreiter’s viewpoint. “We’re getting away from what’s so truly

exciting about independence here,” he said. “We want to give incarcerated persons the type of quality education that employers will have no problem with.

“Once you begin to walk in your own skin with that education—people start recognizing that as a strength. You’re not hiding.”

Rubio, a former PUP valedictorian, also spoke. He currently serves as Insight Prison Project’s Executive Director. “Junior colleges are starting to help returning citizens continue their education,” he said. “There’s a lot of help out there—so if you’re trying to hide your background, you’re actually limiting your resources.

“I’ve always been upfront about my past with prospective employers. Because if they don’t want me there, I don’t want to be there anyway. “Plus, if you lie, it always comes back. The idea that you’re going to hide your background—that’s not happening anymore.”

Besides starting to review PUP’s application, the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has a site visit scheduled for SQ on Oct. 21-24. On their first day here, ACCJC representatives plan

to hold a student forum in the chapel before sitting in classes and observing PUP’s everyday operations firsthand.

At the close of the October visit, ACCJC will offer an open presentation to report the substance of its findings.

“ACCJC is the gold standard for higher education in the United States,” explained Melanie Booth, an accreditation consultant helping PUP draft its application. “Accreditation ensures that college credits are fully transferable and get acknowledged by graduate programs.

“It’s grounded in a complete peer review process that determines if everything is lined up and working like a college program should be.

“Because of these rigorously high standards, every student attending an accredited program is assured that their credits will transfer—and that they’re getting a consistent education.”

PUP Program Director Amy Jangochian expressed her own observations at the prospect of independent accreditation.

“The accreditation world—they want hard data, so it puts us constantly in a state of self-checking, making sure we’re providing the excellent standards we’ve promised,” said

Jangochian. “Are we doing okay in the various ways we want our students to be doing okay?”

“Accreditation’s going to keep us on our game.”

Near the end of the town hall, after raised concerns were addressed, many students offered PUP gratitude for what’s been achieved so far.

“PUP’s more than just a college. We have a personal relationship,” said Gregory Coates. “The powers that be might not agree with that, but it certainly means a lot to us.”

“The education I received in the two years I attended PUP—it enabled me to critically think and write well enough to be competitive for positions where other people have a Master’s or Ph.D.,” said Mims. “Talk to your peers about why it’s so important.

“You’ll have skills, transferable skills for a career—not a job, but a career.”

“I’ve never been anywhere that made me feel so much like a human being,” said Darwin Billingsley. “It doesn’t feel like I’m in prison anymore. I’ve been able to open up.

“And to see so many returning citizens come back in—I plan on being one of those returning citizens.”

Examining the spectrum of education and incarceration

By Juan Haines and Joe Garcia Staff Writers

Norberto Andino, 53, sat in a circle of about 25 people that included his classmates and teachers. The Columbian-born man came to prison without the ability, he said, to write even two sentences in English. It was the first time that the life-term prisoner reconsidered his educational journey.

"When I went to school in Columbia, I was so ashamed," Andino said on July 15 at the third *San Quentin News* Teacher's Forum. "My mother didn't have money for me to eat. I had to walk for an hour to get to school in 102-degree heat almost every day. I felt embarrassed."

Ms. H. Lucas is one of Andino's teacher.

Many of her students at San Quentin have lived in economically disadvantaged communities that are plagued with violence and other hardships.

"I have to understand the impact and added stress that these factors might bring to a student," Lucas said in a previous interview. "I don't know what they've endured or what they are going through, so it is important to be patient and understanding of each person."

The forum's aim was to give educators from the San Francisco Bay Area the opportunity to meet students who didn't complete high school and wound up in prison – students who are in the process of obtaining their high school diploma or its equivalency.

For decades, The Rand Corporation has studied educational opportunities for the incarcerated and found, participation in any kind of education program, independent of the prisoner's offense, or topic and level of the intervention, increases employment post-release and reduces recidivism by up to 43%.

Another study in 2019, *Prison-based Education: Programs, Participation and Proficiency in Literacy/Numeracy* found retaining employment post-release is "critical" to reduce recidivism.

"Every dollar invested in correctional education saves nearly five dollars in re-incarceration costs over three years," Rand concluded.

Kita Grinberg teaches in Mendocino county jail.

Grinberg says she sees how academics and healing support each other.

"Opening the doors to education is what's needed to stop recidivism," Grinberg said.

"We use the time in the jail positively."

San Francisco State University Professor Richard Ayers talked about former students of his, who've been killed or are in prison.

"I feel very strongly when I hear about the failures," Ayers said, "not just as individuals, but as institutions. But, what are we going to do about it?"

Elaine Bryce's high school students emailed questions about incarceration.

The responses from SQN staff about the realities of prison negated their preconceptions. Bryce said that their honesty changed the trajectory of her students' lives. "For that I will be forever grateful. I'm here to learn from you guys."

Bryce and her students are scheduled to tour the prison on a later date.

The incarcerated men presented the teachers with brief

stories about their educational experiences inside and outside of prison. Many of the stories indicated that childhood trauma, family separations, substance abuse and violence played a large part in disrupting their education. A common theme about their educational opportunities at San Quentin was the caring classroom environment that the teachers provided.

Lorenzo Romero said that when he came to prison he didn't know how to read or write because his learning disability prevented him from pronouncing words or understanding definitions of words.

"I never found a teacher who believed in me in the other eight prisons," Romero said. When he enrolled in the education classes at San Quentin, he said, the teachers gave him

the confidence that education could work for him.

Anthony Coleman, a self-described first-generation gang member who is now an ex-gang member, once worked as a teacher's aide. He now mentors young individuals in math, English and life skills.

"I like to help the ones who won't come to the education classes here," Coleman said, referring to San Quentin teachers. "I've never seen the loyalty that the teachers apply here."

Charles Brandon, an 11th-grade dropout, said participating in the forum was encouraging.

"Being a part of that made me look at my life and want to do better," he said.

Norberto Andino, who can now speak and write English fluently, added, "I want to put all my effort into getting a GED. It's gonna take some time, but I know I'm gonna get it."



Photo by FirstWatch

Students, teachers and SQNews staffers exchange ideas during the Teachers' Forum



Photo by FirstWatch

Dana Morgan and Marisa Villega hear as Norberto Andino opens up about his educational experiences



Photo by FirstWatch

Teacher Alex Naeve



Photo by FirstWatch

Anthony Coleman listens as Lorenzo Romero shares his struggles with reading

TOWN HALL

Continued from Page 1

"Deaf people may serve longer prison terms than their hearing counterparts because they are not able to equally access educational and rehabilitative programming," wrote attorneys at the Prison Law Office in recent statements attached to the long-running *Armstrong v. Brown* disability rights case.

There are currently 78 deaf inmates within CDCR, the Prison Law Office reported. Thirty-seven have been housed in Substance Abuse Treatment Facility and State Prison at Corcoran that, prisoner rights advocates say, makes it difficult to provide them needed interpretation services.

Moving them to San Quentin allows them to "have improved access to interpretation services, to more and varied programs, services and activities, and to community groups familiar with their needs," said Don Specter, director of Prison Law Office.

"I told everyone we could do it here - it would be easy here because of the groups, education, and programming you have here," said Mitchell. She described San Quentin as a place with an "open and accepting" environment.

Mitchell led a discussion, video clip viewings, and demonstrations about deaf culture and challenges and solutions related to their integration. Her implementation team included Lt. Tim Fleshman, Correctional Counselor II C. Levan, and

Deanna Sardo, sign language interpreter.

Levan led questions and answers on myths such as all deaf people read lips, use sign language, and cannot talk. "All deaf people are not the same," Levan said, "Effective communication depends on the individual."

Levan demonstrated some best practices for communicating with deaf individuals with help from Sardo and San Quentin inmate Tommy Wickerd, a sign language practitioner. During the town hall meetings, Lt. Tim Fleshman showed video clips of non-incarcerated people from the deaf community signing and verbalizing messages about the deaf culture.

"Don't act like you know what we are saying, when you don't. We see you; we

can tell when you are clueless," signed one unnamed woman evoking chuckles throughout the room.

Mitchell said, "They don't expect you to be perfect. They just want you to welcome them and accept them."

She talked about her own experiences visiting with deaf prisoners. She shared how after getting over her own nervousness, and loosening up, she began to be able to communicate with the people.

"I wasn't able to sign, but I began to understand through context. They appreciate the effort," Mitchell said. "They just want you to welcome them and accept them. They just want to be part of the community."

Mitchell informed the attendees that there will be

a sign language interpreter available at all official and "due process" events involving a deaf person and classes and groups to which a deaf is assigned.

She reported San Quentin will hire three staff interpreters, establish relationships with contract interpreters to be used as needed, and use computer/video interpretation systems for when in-person interpretation is not needed or feasible. San Quentin will also install video remote phones for deaf inmates to communicate with family and friends.

"There is a \$1.5 million budget for this," said Mitchell, "San Quentin will get the resources it needs."

One issue mentioned was deaf individuals not hearing public address announce-

ments. Various solutions were discussed including officers checking the Strategic Offender Management System (SOMS) to see if the person being called is deaf. Fellow inmates could help, she said. "You guys are going to know who they are. You're going to help them like you already help each other."

Audience members agreed. Inmate Kenjo Jackson said, "I think it's wonderful. I love diversity. It solidifies real change taking place in prison. We experienced bad. Why not something and someone new?"

Kelly described the town hall meetings as a "kickoff" to talk about the change. She said there would be more training as the transfers get closer.

RE:STORE

Continued from Page 1

The two locations were tied together via Skype.

"This was us announcing to the public the new resources and opportunities at hand to reshape what the criminal justice system looks like," said Eric "Maserati-E" Abercrombie, the main spokesman for the incarcerated men.

"This is an opportunity to take a progressive approach to the criminal punishment system, which we know does not work. We aim to save taxpayer dollars, reduce the crime rate,

reduce the incarceration rate, and increase healing."

The \$5 million pilot program aims to provide an alternative to the punitive approach of prison.

The plan is to have offenders undergo an intense screening process to make sure that they are ready to change their lives by participating in the restorative justice program. Excluded are sex crimes and offenses that took a life.

"Currently there are limited opportunities for victims to engage in the criminal justice system other than at the end, when they make a victim impact statement," said

San Joaquin County District Attorney Tori Verber Salazar.

"This is going to put power and tools and an opportunity to heal back in the hands of our victims."

Each offender's plan will be crafted and agreed upon by the crime survivor, the offender, community groups, law enforcement and defense attorneys.

"I want to promote healing," said crime survivor Trino Jimenez, who was standing alongside the men in blue.

Rather than incarceration, offenders would be sent to substance abuse treatment, counseling, education and job training. Offenders may

be required to pay restitution or write a statement of apology.

"The way the current system is designed, the survivors are neglected. The conviction is the most important thing to achieve justice. It does nothing to help the victims heal," said Abercrombie, "With this program, victims are not neglected; they get resources and support to heal."

Offenders in the program receive a suspended sentence. If they violate the plan, they could be sent to prison. If they complete the program, they could avoid having a criminal record.

Re:Store Justice cofounder and former San Quentin State

Prison resident Adnan Khan attended the press conference in Sacramento.

"This will provide an opportunity for people to truly understand why they did what they did, so then they can be accountable and so then they can continue making amends," Khan said.

Khan and State Senator Steve Glazer (D-Orinda) advocated for the funds to introduce the pilot program after a meeting at San Quentin State Prison.

"The goal of restorative justice is to give victims a chance to receive true justice in a much more personal way than our current system allows,"

said Senator Glazer. "At the same time, the program gives offenders a chance to make amends directly to the victim."

Abercrombie said he wants to create a criminal justice system that heals rather than further divides communities. He said he hopes the San Joaquin County pilot program will pave the way for a statewide restorative justice reform that will replace the current punitive system.

"Coming from the places we come from, we place limits on ourselves," said Abercrombie, "I want to encourage everyone to break out of the boxes that we put ourselves in. As corny as that may sound, it's real."

Let The People Speak

To San Quentin News,

I am an SB 260 life prisoner that has been denied my freedom for 27 years for a "non-murder offense" by the parole board.

I have noticed it is almost impossible to find any updated news about old lifers. Each quarter I look forward to the *San Quentin News* that is published by well-educated and rehabilitated men. And I am beginning to be disappointed that the articles seem to be promoting sports, music, etc.

I am pretty sure San Quentin prison is lovely, but the reality is for a lot of lifers, specifically serving a sentence for 3 strikes, it's time to go home. We are the oldest abused and used prisoners.

What happened to all the lifer litigation against the board? I am afraid if I don't speak up now, it will never be said. The political lifer voices are drowned out by rhetoric. If we don't have nothing else, we got a voice.

Sincerely
Tracy Cullie



Mental Health program

I would like to bring light to Mule Creek Prison, B-Yard to give everyone an idea of the majestic atmosphere surrounding it. Like most prison yards it has five buildings, a beautiful yard, and a great education program. Building six is where the (Enhance Outpatient Program) E.O.P. inmates and staff members who make the difference to this yard are placed.

Everyone has issues of some sort; few choose not to do anything about them. There are those who take steps to change their lives in the face of such opposing circumstances, and at times it may look hopeless, but they persevere anyways.

Those who step up every day, and face their issues inside their self and the stigma over them from the world because of mental health issues are very special. The staff who watch over them, and the psychologist who take the time to help them overcome their issues should be acknowledged for what they do, even though they don't do it for the purpose of being acknowledged.

Psychologists have their hands full, but do a great job to counsel, and lend a helping hand to assist people with mental health disorders. I don't know if you have ever dealt with mental health disorders, but let me tell you at times people can be unpredictable and unreasonable due to their issues, and whatever else is going on in their lives.

It takes really special people with big hearts to properly deal with this. I'm not even talking about the unending training and schooling. I believe people are put in positions because they are able to handle the situation properly.

I have personally been in the groups and there is a lot of support and information for people plus the program is getting better and focusing on major mental health issues likes: anxiety, stress, mood, and substance related disorders. The hope is to reach as many people with mental health issues as possible to make the world a safer place.

Ryan Goodson
Mule Creek State Prison

Now in my 17th year of a life sentence, like many of us I have spent a lot of my time working towards a more positive existence than a life in prison might otherwise offer. A big part of that is insuring that I have access to the best resources for education options available for prisoners.

Recently, having been frustrated by virtually every prisoner resource and education guides out there, some of which I've had to fork over not insubstantial amount of money for, I decided to spend a little more to get a new education guide that arrived on the scene. It turned out to be the best book purchase I've ever made.

The Curious Convicts Guide to Prisoner Education 2019 is by far the best prisoner education guide I've ever seen (and I actually seen them all). I bought it because it was advertised as "The only annually updated prisoner education guide." While awaiting its arrival, I'll admit I was reluctant to get overly excited.

It arrived with a thud on my cuff port. A giant 550 pages, crammed edge-to edge with information, it's formatted very nicely and immediately I was able to navigate through a detailed table of contents and comprehensive index. I found exactly what I was looking for immediately.

It doesn't just offer the where and how much though. It gives all degree/certificate options and every course offered by each school. It comes complete with detailed course descriptions, pricing, payment plans, cancellation policies, accreditation, prerequisites, and a bunch of tips for prisoner students.

If I had to give it any negative marks, I would knock off a point on ease of purchase for prisoners. Curious Convict does not offer a physical address, they only sell on Amazon. It added to my reluctance when deciding to buy, it, but once it arrived I knew immediately that the slight inconvenience was well worth it. I forgive them.

Curious convicts email address is;
Curiousconvict@gmail.com
Respectfully,
Christian Longo, Oregon State Prisoner

No More Masks by Frank M. Ornelas

I had three masks, the first one was used for those who didn't know me. It was to keep people away and to keep them cautious. It was a way to keep them at bay. The second was for my circle of friends, friends I didn't trust. I used it to intimidate. With it, I used it until I didn't need them anymore. The third mask I used on my family. I didn't want them to know I was a criminal. I hid the shame and guilt I carried. Alone, I removed the masks; the hurts, the scars, the resentments, the regrets I hid. I had to change. It wasn't easy, but I was ready to heal. When I was ready to face the world, I revealed myself to my family. They saw the authentic me. They accepted, loved, and helped me move on. And I stopped looking for fake friends, and started looking for confidants. And they were true so I didn't need a mask. They got to know me. In the end, I stopped wearing all the masks; In public, people no longer feared me; some even greeted me. I was finally able to receive society, because society was ready to receive me.

Michael Ornelas
Valley State Prison



RE: Presidential Bid

Dear San Quentin News,

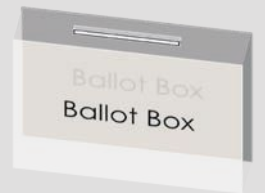
I will be running in the 2024 Presidential election, I promise. I'll need all the support I can muster-up. Our country is at risk 24/7. With God all things are possible. Hopefully I will have my G.E.D. by then; real sure of it.

First ever former prison inmate to become commander-in-chief. Lower the unemployment rate, that, in turn will lower the crime rate, then in turn lower the murder rate.

I would also address climate change where we respect the earth, respect and take care of one's self. It might be already too late to save our earth, (but) I'm advocating for the earth. Let's work together and stop the madness/destroying Mother Earth. If people think the weather's dangerous now keep burning fossil fuel.

In other places on earth people are dying of hunger, and the people that don't; BAD things are happening to them. People should learn from the mistake they've made in the past. If people don't they most likely will not have much of a future on the livable earth once it is gone.

John C. Imus Jr.
Valley State Prison



Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for Incarcerated Addicts

William Brigham, M.S.W. (Master of Social Work)

Fewer than 1 percent of the more than 5,000 U.S. prisons and jails, housing more than 2 million inmates, allow access to FDA-approved medications such as methadone, buprenorphine, Suboxone or Vivitrol, even though addiction experts have considerable evidence to prove their effectiveness in treating addiction to opioids (heroin, oxycodone, hydrocodone). Even the National Sheriffs Association has published a guide as to how best to incorporate their use in jails.

The opposition to the use of these medications in jails and prisons is mostly because of legitimate safety and security concerns. A possible answer to this problem might be found in the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which bans discrimination against people with disabilities, to include protection for those recovering from drug addictions. At least four prisoners nationwide are arguing that the ADA covers them and that they are being denied proven medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

The importance of making this treatment available during incarceration is found in the following: In the two weeks after release, prisoners are 12 times more likely to die – and 129 times more likely to die of an overdose – than the general population. Forced abstinence behind bars means addicts are released with a lower tolerance and an increased urge to use.

Recent research reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse found that prisoners who received methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) during incarceration were more likely than prisoners who did not receive MMT to engage in the treatment after being released, and that those who received methadone during incarceration also reported less heroin use and had a lower risk of nonfatal overdose after being released.

Only five states – Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, Vermont and Washington – offer both methadone and buprenorphine to some inmates at one or more prisons or jails. Hopefully all parties involved (corrections official, researchers, civil rights organizations and prisoner spokespersons) can come together to continue to discuss this important issue.

All praises be given to our Supreme Creator, "THE LORD of HOSTS." I compose this letter in response to an article about Mr. Glenn Bailey. An Article from San Quentin News dated April 2019. I couldn't resist an opportunity as this to extend my utmost respect, plus appreciation regarding your integrity. Also (your) commitment to the roles you all have assumed. Its complex trying to describe the emotional impact – us coming together for a true cause like the ole days!!

A time in which we understood how imperative it was to unite, unlike today, many of us are lost and now conform to elements reflecting self-destruction, or should I emphasize genocide? Wondering why we've failed to empower ourselves as a Black race.

A consequence of miseducation regarding the dynamics of empowerment. Therefore, has hindered us the adequate cause plus ability to work together!! Primarily due to everyone 'hatin' rather than congratulating!! Every time one of us emerge, whom is great, somebody's gonna hate!! That's ridiculous!! Yet, a reality many of us cannot understand a failure to incorporate ideas, business, also finances puts us Black people in vulnerable positions! "I'm keepin it 100."

Now I get out next year and a brotha 49, yet still got it! However, do realize the complexities I must endure. Although it's a shame you can't get any help in our Black communities, a lot of us are still suffering the effects of slavery!!

That's why I must be surrounded by those who regard the struggle, those whom are not suffering mental enslavement; but a lot of us have succumbed to bitterness, hate, fear as well in a lot of our sistaz as well.

Where our sistaz don't even smile anymore! But (sister) your smile is so infectious and exudes joy. Nor have I allowed trials or set-backs to steal my inner peace. My GOD given ability to exist warrants enough reason to be happy! So, I can smile too. I refuse to let things I endured in prison, or the streets of L.A., where I'm from steal my joy! Anyway, GOD BLESS. I send my love to all of you. Big ups to 'OG' Mr. Glenn Bailey.

Don R. Scott
North Kern State Prison

Governor Gavin Newsom Appointments for the Board of Parole Hearings on Aug.12

- Arthur Anderson, 71, has been reappointed to the Board of Parole Hearings, where he has served since 2008.
- Patricia Cassady, 67, has been reappointed to the Board of Parole Hearings, where she has served as a commissioner since 2016.
- Randolph Grounds, 64, has been reappointed to the Board of Parole Hearings, where he has served since 2016
- Maria Gutierrez, 56, has been appointed to the Board of Parole Hearings. She has been an assistant sheriff at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department since 2018.
- Michael Ru, 55, has been reappointed to the Board of Parole Hearings, where he has served since 2017.
- Mary Thornton, 55, has been appointed to the Board of Parole Hearings. She has served as deputy commissioner and administrative law judge with the Board of Parole Hearings since 2018.
- Michael Romano, 47, has been appointed chair of the Committee on Revision of the Penal Code. Romano has been director of the Justice Advocacy Project at Stanford Law School since 2007.

Correction for the last issue:

Page 2: Photo caption should read Heather Hart not Heather Heart.

Page 8: Photo caption read Paul O'Neal – its Anthony O'Neal – also in the Story O'Neal and not O'Neil. Photo caption read Barry Farris on bass – its Darryl Farris. Photo caption read Lee Jaspar not Jasper in both captions. Photo caption Leonard walker – Walker needs to be capitalized

Page 9: Photo caption should read Steve McNamara not Steve MacNamara

Page 10: Photo caption read PUP tutors and Graduate Nythel Collins – its Collins' uncle Richard McCline (in black), PUP tutor and Nythel Collins

Page 11: Photo caption read GRIP graduate Tribe 733 – its Tribe 933. Inside story – reads Veronica Jackson wife of graduate is Arthur Jackson, not Arthur Williams.

Page 16: Photo credit for August's Woodstock story is courtesy of Tom Lipnsky

Page 18: The correct spelling is David 'Clout' Wilson not Williams

Page 18: In April of 1972, Ralph Ligons beat 'Fast' Eddie Hart in a meet at Sacramento State University one month before the Munich Olympic Games; Ligons is 1-2 in official races against Hart...

Page 18: The correct spelling is Robert Polzin not Polizen.

Page 18: Anthony Denard was drafted in two consecutive seasons to the Twins and Diamondsbacks, not the Blue Jays.

Finding your true self in a non-designated universe

KidCAT Speaks!

By Joe Garcia
Journalism Guild Chairperson

Jonathan Rivas came to San Quentin, vowing to turn his life around and try to become a positive father figure for his 3-year-old daughter.

"It hits me hard, when I see things like Disneyland commercials, families with Mickey Mouse," said Rivas. "I envision myself there someday being able to buy her souvenirs."

Although he describes himself as somewhat insecure, his voluntary transfer to SQ, a recently-made "non-designated" prison, demonstrates the young man's underlying strength and courage in starting to make his own life choices.

"I spent six months in the hole for a stabbing—you know, a 'removal'—but it turned out it was a bad call," the 22-year-old Rivas explained. "I came here because I didn't want to do that stuff anymore."

Throughout the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR),

mainline or so-called "general population" (GP) prisoners largely must base their identity on whatever reputation they earn in prison.

To further such a reputation, prisoners like Rivas often participate in a coordinated "removal"—where a targeted prisoner is attacked by multiple assailants. That dynamic forces the target to be classified as a "victim", and hence removed from the facility or, at least, that yard.

"When something needs to be done—you have no choice," said Rivas about that lifestyle. "It's stupid, 'cause they're trying to brainwash us and make us think like it's the thing to do."

"Gangbanging on the streets changes when you come to prison."

CDCR formally reclassified SQ as its first non-designated prison at the start of 2018. That means that SNY (Sensitive Needs Yard) prisoners can be housed here—right alongside men who still consider themselves GP. SNY status has always been regarded as an equivalent to being in protective custody.

Certain Mexican and White prisoners adhere to their own

racial brand of prison politics. That means that those who willfully choose to remain housed among SNY inmates at a non-designated facility are putting their reputation in permanent jeopardy.

"I know there's gonna be consequences. I'm not scared," said Rivas. "What I'm scared about is not making it home—scared of losing my family, my daughter."

Even at SQ, general population prisoners housed temporarily in the reception center here will sometimes ignore their custody escorts to "take off" or attack the inmates they perceive to be "no good."

"I still remember being on the bus on the way here. All of us were worried," said Rivas. "When we first got to R & R (the prison's Receiving and Release department), we all wanted to know, 'Are they 'removing' guys on the yard here?'"

"But the Black guy that worked R & R told us, 'Nah, that's not what it is. It's not like that here—it's about being yourself now.'"

Once Rivas heard that, and heard about all the self-help programs, rehabilitative



Jonathan Rivas in white on the fútbol field



Rivas giving a speech at the Avary Walk

groups and college courses SQ offers, he said he knew it was time to check it out for himself.

"I want this place right here to be a ground where I can change and grow," he said. "Being able to find myself now—what I really love to do and having the free will to do it—I realize that's what being a real man is."

"San Quentin has taught me that success is not about winning. It's all about learning and improving."

Rivas deals with the negative consequences whenever he calls home. "My three older brothers, they're in prison on the mainline right now," he said. "My family tells me that they basically hate me—that they're disappointed, that they never expected this from me."

"Even the sister of my daughter's mother tells me, 'You're totally devalued. They all just degrade you like you're nobody anymore.'"

"At first, that really made me feel like they were right. It made me feel less than."

Rivas recently became the newest member of KidCAT, unanimously voted in. He continues to impress the youth offender support community with his commitment to self-improvement and being of service to others.

Nou Phang Thou, KidCAT's last founding member to remain incarcerated, has mentored many youth offenders during his years at SQ. He noticed Rivas' openness to change right away.

"One beautiful thing about Jonathan, he has great intuition to recognize his own weaknesses," said Thou. "And then he has the commitment to seek out the help he needs and address those weaknesses—so he can become a better man."

"I don't have to be a follower, but today I can try and be a leader to the youth that are still lost," said Rivas. "I just wonder how many of them out there on the mainline will listen to me?"

Even with SQ's non-designated status and overall progressive culture, many prisoners here still hold on to some degree of their old GP mentality. That dynamic continues to shift slowly.

"Some of them changed their perspective of us," said Rivas. "They think all SNYs are here for snitching, for being child molesters—stuff like that. But it's not until they listen to our stories, to my story, that they realize these dudes here have been through some stuff, seen stuff."

Rivas said he grew up in foster care after his mother abandoned him when he was six and his little brother was four. "I used that as an excuse for me to act out in life. I grew up in juvenile hall."

"That's what I did—fighting, running away from group homes," he continued. "Finally, I joined a gang at 14."

Soon after that, Rivas fought with another youth at his foster facility, got convicted for the assault and battery, and would then spend almost four years in juvenile custody.

"I was released 16 days before my 18th birthday," he recalled. "And I went right back to the streets."

It wasn't long before Rivas was arrested again—this time for carjacking, along with gun charges and other crimes.

"I ended up taking a deal for ten years at 85%," he said. "Right now, I'm set to go home at the end of 2023."

At SQ, Rivas now facilitates the Power Source curriculum, after being part of

its first graduating class. He credits the nationally recognized self-empowerment program with helping him understand himself and his past mistakes.

"I used to be selfish and never cared about what my family thinks," he explained. "I never cared if they were happy."

"My dad tried to still be around for me and my little brother. He tried to get us back, but his drinking problem stopped him a lot."

He spends his weekdays apprenticing as a carpenter in vocational training—a prison job that will give him viable employment opportunities upon reentry. On the weekends, Rivas looks forward to competing in soccer for his newfound community—often against outside guest teams through SQ's organized sports league.

In June, Rivas gave an impassioned speech at the Project Avary Walk, an event geared toward raising funds that pay summer camp fees for kids of incarcerated parents. Rivas spoke about his daughter, the painful separation his incarceration caused—and his mission to make it back to her.

In addition to vocational classes, Rivas struggles his way through the Prison University Project's college prep courses—non-credited classes he must pass before pursuing an Associated Arts degree.

"Whenever I feel like quitting class and giving up, I think about my daughter and someday being able to help her with her studies," he said. "That always motivates me to keep going."

"You know, at San Quentin, if you're not taking college courses or participating in groups—you're just not cool."

Dear KidCAT

My name is Jose Hernandez. I'm serving a 68-to-life sentence and have been incarcerated since the age of 16. I am now 25 years old and I want to reach out to all of you. I've currently been going back and forth to San Joaquin Juvenile Court, and I've had a chance to read the *SQNews*.

Most importantly, and what has inspired me to write this letter, are the articles, projects and KidCAT Speaks that has given me more hope—as well as drawn my full interest for the last seven months.

At this point in my life I may be given an opportunity to have my case overturned. I plan to petition the courts and ask to be resentenced under the Youth Offenders Program (YOP). I'm even going to seek a court order to be sent to San Quentin so I can partake in learning the KidCAT (First Step) curriculum and hopefully become a mentor for the YOP community.

Now I need and want to pursue my path in obtaining the KidCAT curriculum, so I can mentor the program while I finish the remainder of my sentence. If I can obtain this experience while still behind the walls, it will help me live my dreams. I've prayed, believed and always kept my faith that I'd give back to my community when I am released. The dream now is to obtain the curriculum so I can facilitate workshops. I don't have any sponsors, volunteers or financial resources to purchase your curriculum.

Thank you for your time in hearing a young man that has vowed to become a part of KidCAT.

Jose,

KidCAT genuinely appreciates your time in writing to us. A big part of our work revolves around sharing each other's experiences. We all learn from one another and support each other. That's essentially how the KidCAT community first came into existence and continues to grow.

Hearing about your personal journey and your commitment to mentorship—that inspires us.

In terms of our First Step curriculum, we are in the midst of an active reboot right now. Over the next couple of months, KidCAT plans to unveil an improved version and incorporate some new lessons that we've learned throughout our previous cycles. Also, there is an administrative procedure we must adhere to in order to uphold the overall integrity of our program.

Once we get all these hurdles ironed out, we will make sure to update everyone through KidCAT Speaks. We're very excited about the future of the First Step curriculum, and we hope that can include you, Jose—and anyone who wishes to become involved with KidCAT's mission.

The faith and commitment exhibited in your letter are the most important things to stay focused on, as well as always making sure your voice remains heard. KidCAT wants to emphasize to all our readers that your voices matter. KidCAT Speaks encourages you to write us here at SQ. Your letters inform and resonate within our community and never lets us forget our collective goals of self-improvement, rehabilitation and service. Thank you so much.



Any inmates interested in receiving the KidCAT curriculum must ask the Community Partnership Manager (CPM) at their facility to contact the CPM at San Quentin. As of February, 2019, KidCAT's curriculum can only be distributed to inmates through their CPM.

The Beat Within

A Publication of Writing and Art from the Inside



KidCAT and *The Beat Within* hold monthly writing workshops. *The Beat Within* conducts writing workshops in juvenile detention centers throughout the country. KidCAT 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 KidCAT Speaks!

Comfort Zone - The definition of "comfort zone" is a place or situation where one feels safe or at ease and without stress. This week we want you to tell us of a time you had to leave your comfort zone? What did or will you have to do? How stressful and uneasy was it or will it be for you? Can you tell us about your comfort zone? Was/Is it a healthy place for you? Or, is it important for your health and well-being to move beyond your comfort zone? Tell us more.

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

KidCAT (Creating Awareness Together) is a group of men who committed their crimes in their teens and were sentenced as adults to life terms. The group's mission is to inspire humanity through education, mentorship and restorative practices. KidCAT Speaks wants to hear from all offenders, educators, and policymakers concerning juvenile justice issues and rehabilitation. Contact us at San Quentin News, Attn: KidCAT Speaks, 1 Main St., San Quentin, CA 94964.

HBO film *O.G.* reviewed at Sing Sing prison

Incarcerated audience was invited to engage in Q&A dialogue with film's director Madeleine Sackler

By **Marcus Henderson**
Editor in Chief

The groundbreaking film *O.G.* was shown to a packed house of prisoners at the notorious Sing Sing prison in New York. The fictional film features an incarcerated man facing release after more than two decades in prison.

The incarcerated men were given a chance to critique the film and have a Q&A with the film's director, Madeleine Sackler. The event was brought to the prison courtesy of the prison college program

Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison.

"The film was recognized by our organization because of its groundbreaking inclusivity," said Sean Pica, executive director of the sponsoring organization.

The film was released last year on HBO and is considered unique because it was shot in the Pendleton Correctional Facility in Indiana; almost every role in the film is played by someone who works or lives in Pendleton, according to the organization's press release.

The college program, along with the film's director Sackler, was granted permission to screen the film inside Sing Sing for the Hudson Link students. Hudson Link has a college program in eight New York state prisons—Sing Sing is one of them.

Pica made the surprise announcement at the organization's Spring Benefit Dinner, following the presentation of its Bill Webber Award for Community Service. Sackler was this year's award recipient.

Sean Pica said that Sackler created the film to challenge

the image of prisons that is currently portrayed in popular culture: "These images can be incredibly misleading," he said, "and ultimately fail to represent the realities of those caught within the system."

Sackler is an Emmy-winning director of films that shine a spotlight on social injustice. Her award-winning documentary, *The Lottery*, brought attention to the US public education crisis. According to the press release, this led her to investigate criminal justice issues and problems in prison systems.

"Our currently incarcerated students love hearing about those whose work we recognize and celebrate," said Pica, "so this film screening not only gave them the opportunity to meet someone who has done incredible work in her community, it also gave them the chance to assess that work for themselves and offer their responses."

After the film, students discussed their critiques, focusing, for example on the portrayal of violence. The group praised the film for capturing the disorienting experience of facing release from prison.

"We would like to thank the administration at Sing Sing for continuously encouraging unique educational opportunities for our students," said Pica. "We wouldn't be able to host any of our incredible events or programs without their support."

"We would also like to thank Madeleine and her team for visiting our program and taking the time to encourage our students. This was an incredibly unique experience which we know the Sing Sing students will be talking about for a long time."



Photo courtesy of Hudson Link

Sing Sing prisoners, Hudson Link volunteers and *O.G.* director Madeleine Sackler pose for a photo after the screening

Coalition For Justice graduates exemplify commitment to community

By **Joe Garcia**
Journalism Guild Chairperson

San Quentin's Coalition For Justice (CFJ) celebrated the completion of its latest graduating class—Cycle 15.

CFJ's primary focus involves providing its students with skills that encourage community building and social responsibility. The July 25th ceremony also gave a distinct nod toward Cycle 15's exceptional level of commitment.

"We started off with a much bigger group, but it was you guys that stuck it out and came to the end—came every day," said inside facilitator Allan Bennett. "Your determination wasn't just within this room during class. You'd stop me at all different times to ask questions."

"That made me really think about this stuff, and I thank you all for continuing to push me further."

Outside volunteer Nathaniel Moore also commented on the group's perseverance and resolve. "Committing to something and doing it, that's a true testament to your character—to your own values," said Moore. "It's a testament

to the way you're going to approach things when you're not in here.

"Many people on the outside don't demonstrate that accountability the way you guys do. I want to honor your level of commitment."

"Common ground is what we're seeking—instead of focusing on our differences"

Moore also made sure to mention Dr. Karen Lovaas' longstanding efforts to continually make CFJ available to the SQ community. Unable to attend the graduation, Lovaas nevertheless was not forgotten.

"On behalf of Karen, I want to acknowledge the incredible amount of work that goes on in here," said Moore. "I want to thank her into this space and honor her."

Current lead facilitator Royce Rose graduated CFJ during Cycle 8 and has facilitated every cycle since then.

"During the last 16 weeks, we've tried to help and assist you in becoming leaders in the community—not just on the streets, but in here also," said Rose. "A lot of guys came out of their shells while working together in this class—guys that didn't even think they could speak at first."

"It's great for us to find common ground and be able to listen to another guy's perspective without condemning them."

Each inside facilitator addressed the new CFJ graduating class. "The best day is always the last day—because of all the feedback," said Philippe Kelly. "Not only did we all learn a lot together, but y'all gave us ideas about how we can improve our program."

CFJ runs three days a week, from 3 PM to 5 PM. Arthur Jackson thanked everyone for showing up, day in and day out. "Most groups deal with self. This is about community," he said. "What are you gonna take back to your community?"

Longtime inside facilitator Martin Walters said, "One of the most powerful experi-

ences I've ever had has been in this class. It encourages people to realize their own potential."

"I know it can be really difficult to be on a prison yard and talk about justice, but this class changed the way I saw all kinds of different people—and the way they saw me."

Maryann O'Sullivan celebrated her second cycle as a volunteer facilitator. "Besides acknowledging your deep commitment, I want to acknowledge your creativity. It's been really impressive," she said. "When we talked about advocacy work, the ideas you guys came up with were really creative—beyond the box. I'm serious."

"I continue to see a new respect out there for people who've been on the inside. You've experienced transformations that people on the outside haven't experienced."

Volunteer facilitator Paloma Matherth thanked CFJ for "inspiring me and making me a better person. I've witnessed an incredible amount of growth right here in this space that I know you'll all take back to your communities."

In addition to facilitators, CFJ relies on a core of mentors—men who make themselves available outside of the class to provide an extra layer of support for at least two students each.

"We always speak about coming full circle, about the point when we reach that togetherness—that harmony," said mentor Eric Crutcher. "I didn't see it. I'm gonna keep it real. But it's happening for me right now."

Volunteer Judith Tata first came into SQ five years ago to help with a reentry program, but became involved with CFJ right away. "You guys know me by now. I like to keep it pretty formal—not very emotional," she said. "One thing we continued to touch on over the weeks, and especially at the end here, is common ground."

"Common ground is what we're seeking—instead of focusing on our differences. Everyone's thoughts and ideas are needed."

Tata facilitates CFJ every Thursday, but she also keeps the doors open on Fridays to provide graduates one-on-one reentry counseling.

"The biggest problem for nonlifers getting paroled right now is finding transitional housing," she said. "But it doesn't matter how long you have or how long you've been in—we just want to help you succeed."

**CFJ's
Cycle 15
graduating class:**

**John Ables
Derry Brown
Adamu Chan
Ernie Cuadras
Pedro Garcia
Danny Geyer
David Hill
Michael Johnson
Elton Kelley
Darren Settlemeier
Satinder Singh
Earl Snody
Anthony Taylor
Andrew Watkins
Troy Whitely.**

Ken Burns attends film premiere at San Quentin's Chapel

KEN BURNS

Continued from Page 1

"Americans tend to be very tribal—in spite of that whole 'melting pot' ideology we like to talk about.

"Country Music shows legends like Hank Williams getting tutored early on by guys like Jimmy Rogers, so we see the impact of these African American mentors—and how so many country musicians got their chops from somewhere else."

"I'm not surprised by your emotion. I'm honored by it"

The SQ event marked the first time Burns has been back inside a penal facility since he was 19, when he worked as a tutor within the Massachusetts Correctional Institute in Concord.

"I taught a guy my age English and writing," said Burns about that 1972 summer experience. His upcoming production, *College Behind Bars*, took another Florentine collaborator, Lynn Novick, inside New York's Bard Prison Initiative, where she filmed prisoners working to achieve college degrees.

"If you spend time with incarcerated men and women—and see them learning, you realize that if they were on the outside, they'd easily be getting their Masters and Ph.Ds," said Burns. "I hope this film can help unite all those prison university projects around the country.

"When we look at the growing shift toward prison reform right now, it seems like a perfectly propitious time to get all those reforms on the same page."

For the SQ audience, Burns chose to show excerpts that largely featured Merle Haggard and Johnny Cash—two men whose legacies are deeply tied to the prison's own history and culture.

Haggard served time at SQ in the fifties and was in the prison audience during Cash's first concert here on New Year's Day 1959.

"Johnny Cash came to the prison to tell them 'You are a human being,'" said Burns. "It was extremely important for him to come inside and be able to deliver that message.

"You know, when we live in our gated communities out there, we don't recognize the 'other.' You hear the words 'inmate' or 'incarcerated,' and right away that closes the door. "To truly begin to understand ourselves and forgive ourselves—as well as the 'other'—that's much harder for humanity to bear."

Cash's performances at SQ left an indelible impression on him, which later fueled the desire to record his landmark concert album at Folsom State Prison.

"You can't contain him in any one story," Burns said of Cash. "He was one of those artists that could grapple with two opposing ideas at the same time—those binary contradictions.

"Haggard had all this anxiety about people finding out about his prison past. It was Cash that convinced him to get up on stage and be open about it.

"Lifting that immense burden off of him was a wonderful moment—an

incredible gift Cash gave to Merle."

Country Music's entire 16 hour run is slated to begin airing on PBS in September. Before previewing about 30 minutes of selected clips, Burns spoke to the audience.

"Country music, its fairness and authenticity enables it to address human beings—wherever they might be, and whatever they may look like," he said.

Burns later discussed the profound way country artists stay deeply rooted to their fan base. "Because so many came from abject poverty, they never lose their connection," he said. "There is no 'being above' the fans for the artists in *Country Music*. They look each other in the eye."

The first screened segment focused on Haggard and his upbringing within a family of Oklahomans migrating to Bakersfield, California. Because "Okies" faced extreme prejudice—being "talked down to" and "looked down upon"—by mainstream society—the film reveals Haggard's empathy toward the Black experience in America.

During his outlaw career, Haggard escaped 17 times from various California correctional facilities, his first



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

SQNews Staffer Kevin Sawyer, Ken Burns and Julie Dunfey watching *Country Music*



escape being from a juvenile detention center at the age of 16.

"Somebody was always after me," said Haggard in *Country Music*. "I was only doing time when they'd catch me."

Haggard credited Cash and that New Year's Day concert at SQ for inspiring him "to someday be a star." He also wondered what path his life might have taken "if music hadn't saved me."

Incarcerated old-timer Curly Ray Martin—a veteran country musician himself who walked the SQ yard with Haggard in the '50s—sat right beside Duncan during the chapel screening.

Afterwards, eyes watering with emotion, Duncan pointed out Martin to the audience as "one of the great stories in country music."

"Curly Ray was at Folsom when Cash made his concert there," said the choked-up Duncan. "What an honor to be able to show you that in person."

Martin turned 80 in June and has spent the last 52 years serving a seven-to-life sentence for murder. At his most recent hearing in April, the Board of Paroles denied him again—for the 24th time.

"They said they felt I was still dangerous," Martin told *SQNews*.

Although he knew about the screening that day, "I was just gonna wait for it to come on PBS," he said. "I had to be at work, but then my boss called me up to the desk and said, 'Here's a pass to go up to the chapel.'"

"I got Lt. Sam Robinson to thank for that. 'Else I would have missed out.'"

"I was shocked," Martin said about all the attention paid to him by Burns and team. "I felt kinda honored and proud.

"I think Merle would've liked it. For both of us, I'm sure, watching it took us to places where we didn't necessarily want to go—some bad, some good—labor camps, prison yards. It was all a part of us."

Martin dispelled the recent myth that Haggard and he were once cellmates.

"I don't know where they came up with that. When I was here, Merle lived in North Block. I was housed in South," Martin said. "The only thing we shared was the yard and Glen Sherley. They started me writing.

"Merle and Glen ran together constantly, and then I came along. Merle taught me to play bass.

"When I was here in '58, I didn't know nothing about music—except I liked it."

Between then and starting this prison term in 1967, Martin achieved his own success in the music industry—playing with the likes of Eddy Arnold, Waylon Jennings, Haggard, Rose Maddux, Tammy Wynette and many others.

"I know I'm here because I was too hard-

headed to appreciate what I had," Martin said. He rarely ever pulls his guitar out anymore after surgery for cancer ended his singing. "That tore my vocal cords all to hell."

Setting up a brief Q & A after the preview, Burns helped the chapel's sound engineer, Steve Pascasio, carry a table up onto the stage area.

"He wanted to help out," Pascasio later said. "When people saw him about to pitch in, they tried to stop him—but he told them, 'No, I want to do this.'"

Richie Morris used the Q & A microphone to tell Burns and the entire audience how he'd cried while watching the scenes of Haggard. "I grew up with the children of Rose Maddux. I've been locked up for the last 34 years, but there's men here who've been locked up far longer," he said. "Your film gets straight to the heart of me."

"I'm not surprised by your emotion," responded Burns. "I'm honored by it."

D. Ernest Sotero also shared his own background and thanked Burns, Dunfey and Duncan for "taking the time out of your day for us lowly prisoners here."

"What a kind story," said Burns. "I'd take away one adjective in there, however—lowly."

Dunfey, responding to a question, explained how perhaps the most challenging aspect of making this film involved capturing the resonant power of the featured songs' lyrics. Burns generally uses instrumentals to set his intended tone.

"Country music is more than 50% about the lyrics, so the viewer needs to hear those words," said Dunfey. "I have to credit our editors for getting that right.

"*Country Music* deals heavily with the question of who we are as Americans—and you can tap your toe and cry to it."



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Burns, Dunfey, Moderator Rahsaan Thomas and Duncan on stage



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Audience watching *Country Music*

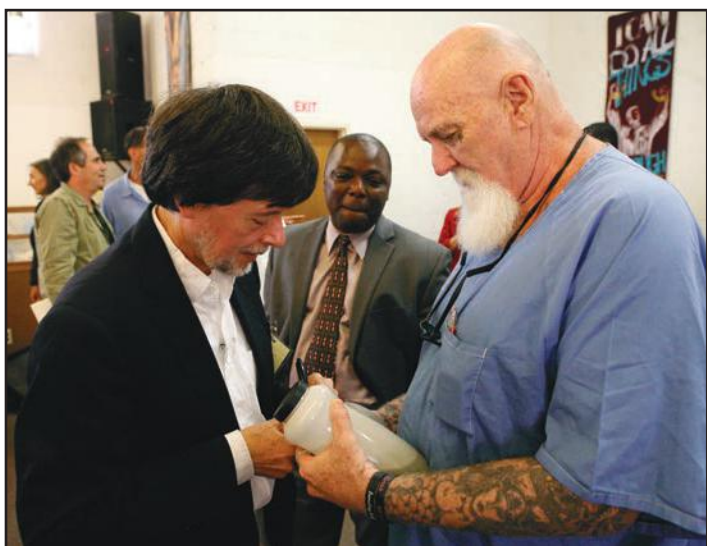


Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Burns signing autographs after the event



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Burns with Duncan speaking with Curly Ray Martin, who walked the yard with Merle Haggard in the '50s



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Ken Burns wearing the SQ Day of Peace wristbands

When educators and students create an exceptional learning atmosphere...

AWARD

Continued from Page 1

For 17 years, Wickerd said, he's been sober and not involved in gang activity. "I changed my life." He thanked all the educators. "The teachers here at San Quentin have a special skill that others don't have."

Inmate David Taylor said he dropped out of school at age 16 and learned the business of selling drugs. "Not having a GED or high school diploma made me feel like nothing." He restarted his education in the county jail but dropped out. He started again at California State Prison, Sacramento but that ended when he was transferred.

The crowd laughed at Taylor's story about a long "addiction" to watching television soap operas in prison, wasting time.

"I think about going to college for the first time," said Taylor. He thanked the Robert E. Burton School teachers. Taylor was found suitable for parole earlier this year.

"All teams have to have a captain, and ours is Mr. Wheelless," said inmate Kevin Schrub. "If CDCR had an all-star team of teachers, San Quentin would make up half the team." He said the teachers work with the men, even those who don't want to come to class or do the work.

Shannon Swain, OCE Superintendent, discussed what makes a good school and how the CDCR education program launched the Distinguished School program. "When you start to look at your own practice, you can reflect and improve to see where you need to grow," she said before presenting Wheelless with the inaugural Distinguished School honor.

"Thirty five prisons, 12 applied, one made it," said Ron Davis, San Quentin's

warden. He noted that the education program at his prison would not be possible without staff working in food service, custody, medical, mental health and many other departments. "Everyone's moving in the same direction," he said. "It's really the perfect storm. It comes from staff who care."

"This is a celebration of professional educators at San Quentin"

"I get invited to a lot of events to speak," said Diaz. Then he told the story of when he was a young correctional officer working in the education department at Corcoran State Prison. It was then he observed inmates playing domino games in education and making soups with oysters. He said his thought on the matter then was if they weren't beating each other up, everything was fine. That's not his outlook today. "We're in a day where people are actually learning and growing," he said.

"It happens because of the people," said Diaz. At San Quentin, he said, there are about 875 men pursuing an education through Burton. Of those, about 160 are studying a technical trade and about 380 are attending college. And he didn't forget to recognize and thank all the volunteers who provide "over 40,000 hours of their time" each year to help the men. He also thanked the students, and the custody staff for "creating a safe environment."

"This is a celebration of professional educators at San Quentin," said Brant Choate, CDCR Director of the Division of Rehabilitative



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Graduate David Taylor speaking about his educational experiences



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
CDCR Secretary Ralph Diaz on stage sharing his experiences as a Correctional Officer



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
CDCR Director of the Division of Rehabilitative Programs Brant Choate speaking

Programs. "This event is so important that Ralph Diaz came to speak to you."

Brant asked the "professional educators" in the room to stand. More than a dozen stood up as the audience applauded them.

"I have taught at private schools, charter schools and public schools—and at the college level," said Ms D. Searle, the *Marin Independent Journal* reported. She's a Burton School teacher in the G.E.D. and high school equivalency program. "I really feel that this has been the most rewarding experience." She said inmates are an "overlooked population."

Music for the ceremony was performed by the San Quentin Music Program's band, Just Us. They were Jeff Atkins, piano and lead vocals; Anthony O'Neal, background vocals; Paul Co-meaux, background vocals; Lee Jaspar, guitar; Charles Ross, drums; and Len Walker, bass.

Acknowledging the musical talent of the men in Just Us, Diaz turned to Davis and asked him, jokingly with a smile, "Is there any way to get this band to play at an

event outside?" The audience laughed.

Toward the end of the event, there was a question-and-answer session.

Q: How will technology affect teaching in the CDCR?

A: Swain – "I think you'll see a lot more." She added that, unless there is "caring staff" technology may not add to the education experience.

Q: When can students earn a living wage (in prison) for attending an education program?

A: Diaz – He questioned if people would participate in education programs for the right reason if pay were the incentive.

Q: How can vocational trade students give back?

A: Swain – "I saw a student teaching another the Pythagorean Theorem." She said the CDCR has an innovative partnership at Salinas where students participate and build small homes. Brant – "There's lots of opportunities to give back." He said inmates can teach others.

Q: What's being done to shorten the waiting list to get in education programs?

A: Wheelless – He said to get men in programs faster, "we'd have to increase the number of programs."

Q: What about paying inmate tutors?

A: Swain – The idea that education jobs can be comparable to PIA jobs has been considered.

Q: What about more programs on Level-4 prisons?

A: Diaz – "The challenge with those programs is space." He said those facilities, when designed in the 1980s, didn't have education in mind. Also, safety has to be considered, which means the violence would have to be reduced.

Q: Any plans to increase GED credits under Proposition 57, from six months to nine months?

A: Choate – "No." (The audience laughed)

"I think it's important that this (award) highlights schools' continuous improvement and work as a professional team," said Martin D. Griffin, OCE Associate Superintendent. "San Quentin really stood out for having support that results in student success."

Griffin said CDCR had been working on the award for the last two years. It was finalized in the fall of 2018. He said in February they evaluated applications and later a team visited San Quentin. They came from CDCR headquarters; there was one warden, a community college representative from the chancellor's office, and an assistant from Career Technical Education (CTE). According to Griffin, among the ten criteria used to consider which school to award were climate, culture, professional learning and student support. He said five team members visited San Quentin in May, and the award was announced in June.

The final highlight from the day's event came when Choate sat in with the band and played drums and Swain took to a microphone and sang a spur-of-the-moment rendition of "Hotel California" by the Eagles as the band backed them up. Some of the guests stopped in the aisles and smiled as they observed Swain's vocals, cheerfulness and the seamless transition from Ross to Choate on the drums.



Photo by SQTV
Warden Ron Davis, Chief Counsel Jennifer Neill and Undersecretary of Operations Kathleen Allison visit the SQ Media Center



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Vocational Student Chase Benoit gives a tour of a building maintenance project



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Machine Shop student Eduardo Zavala shows Oscar Medina Administrator from the Office of Correctional Education his work in the Titan CNC shop



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Office of Correctional Education tour the Computer Electronics Shop in SQ's MVB



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Educators H. Lucas, D. Searle and A. Sufi in attendance

Demonstrating great achievement under difficult circumstances

By David Ditto and Michael Johnson
Staff Writers

Tasseled caps and gowns flowed as diplomas, degrees and certificates were conferred in San Quentin's visiting room during Robert E. Burton Adult School's 2019 Commencement. College, high school, and vocational program graduates celebrated their accomplishments with family, friends, teachers, and administrators at the annual ceremony on July 26.

"We're so proud of all the incredibly hard work you have put in," said teacher and emcee H. Lucas to the graduating class. "Not everyone in your block put in the blood, sweat, and tears you have," she added. "What you have overcome to get to this place is no small thing."

25-year-old Tye Barker was the first graduate speaker at the ceremony. He described growing up while his father was in and out of prison, "I lost out on so much because I didn't graduate."

Later, imprisoned as a young father himself, Barker realized he was headed in the wrong direction. "My kids needed me to change," he said to the audience. Barker was one of eight graduates

from San Quentin's new High School Diploma program.

"Tye really turned his life around," said Ms. Anita Kaur Sufi, the teacher for the program. "Now he's ready for college, a career, and anything he sets his mind on."

Sufi said that the diploma program is an alternative to the equivalency program. She explained that it began after Brant Choate, Director of the Division of Rehabilitative Programs, saw the need for another pathway for students who already have many credits to acquire a certified high school education.

*At San Quentin
I learned how
to set and
achieve goals*

Receiving a six-month education credit, Barker went home two weeks after graduating.

"I came to San Quentin with a third- to fourth-grade education," said Tommy Wickerd, the second graduate speaker. He said he confessed to his teachers that the 12.9 grade-level test scores on his

record were actually from cheating when he first came to prison. "I slid through the cracks for 15 years."

"At San Quentin I learned how to set and achieve goals," Wickerd said. He ran three marathons and earned his GED in his almost four years at the Q. "On the final math test for my GED, I got a 149 – four points more than I needed. Now I know what an over-achiever feels like! Now the 12.9 is mine – and the GED!"

"This is monumental," said GED graduate Earl Orr's sister Patsy Orr. "He's my first brother to get his GED." She said their older brother spent about 10 years in and out of San Quentin in the 1970s after serving in the Vietnam War. "In San Quentin back then, they worked out and smoked. That's it. No classes, no groups," Patsy said. "I wish they had this quality education program back then. Earl has found himself again through education. I'm so amazed at the change."

Earl met his 19-year-old granddaughter Ariel Klimpel for the first time at the graduation. She said: "I walked right up and hugged him. It felt so good!"

Coastline Community College graduate Adamu Chan obtained his A.S. degree in Business. Chan said that the experience taught him responsibility, follow-through and self-motivation.

John Bergeron, a Feather River college graduate, obtained an A.A. degree in Social and Behavioral Science. "I never really finished anything in my life," he said. But now, he said, he is the first person in his family to finish college.

Graduate Watson Allison received his A.A. degree in Social Science from Lassen College. He was the speaker



Photo by Brian Asey

Graduating class of Robert E. Burton and Coastline, Feather River and Lassen Community College

for the college graduates. He started his speech with a quote from Malcolm X, "Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today." I've heard that quote many times as a youth. However, it didn't make sense, but today it does." Allison spent 30 years on Death Row after a murder conviction at the age of 23. In 2013 his death sentence was overturned. "Then I was transferred to Solano Prison, where the CC3 counselor assigned me a mentor to help me adjust from death row living. By May 27, 2014, I passed the test for my GED. It was the first positive accomplishment in my life."

Vocational Plumbing graduate Vadim Zakharchenko said, "I wanted vocational training because I want a career in the construction industry." He plans to work for his brother-in-law doing prefab homes when he gets out.

Plumbing instructor Pryor said that his vocational class has a lot of math and isn't

easy, but has tutors in the class to help. He said that he "has had five guys parole and make a career out of this training."

Machine Shop instructor J. Johnson said, "These guys can take this experience and apply for good paying jobs."

College proctor Mr. Young said, "The guys here today have overcome all their failures of the past...This is the happiest day of the year."

Principal Wheelless said, "It takes a lot of hard work by the students to get to this day of celebration and I commend them."

"I feel so encouraged – full of joy and a sense of accomplishment," said graduate George Moss the day after he passed his final GED test – just a week before the graduation. Moss persevered through the flu, surgery, lockdowns and administrative segregation during the two years he worked on earning his GED.

Incarcerated for 14 years, he wanted to quit school and learn plumbing when he arrived at San Quentin.

Principal Wheelless told him, "No. Just knock this GED out first." "I thought it was punishment," said Moss. He said that now he is grateful to the principal, his teacher D. Searle and tutor Quincy Paige.

Now, after earning their high school equivalencies, both Moss and Paige are enrolling in Vocational Plumbing.

Andrew Smith is a GED graduate from the Voluntary Education Program (VEP). He said he received excellent one-on-one tutoring from the Teachers' Aide and said, "Thanks to my teacher, Dr. Marez, for pushing me in the right direction."

"I never thought I would do it because of my incarceration," said graduate Luis Ojeda. "But look – now I got my GED!" He said that Mr. Kaufman, the teacher in the ABE I class where he began, was always there to help him and motivate him to get to the next level.

"Now I'm confident," Ojeda said. He will go home in about a year. "Inside or outside – I'm going to get my college degree."

Twenty-three-year-old Rai-veon Wooden received his high school diploma at the ceremony. He acknowledged help from his teachers M. Ficarra and Mr. Santos to get him ready for the diploma program. Wooden said that with his high school diploma, now he envisions a better job, a brighter future and college.

The 2019 class included 78 graduates, about half of whom attended the graduation. Many had already paroled.

Total number of Graduates

- High School: 8
- GED: 43
- Coastline: 7
- Lassen: 1
- Feather River: 1
- CTE: 18



Photo by Brian Asey

Adamu Chan, Correctional Counselor III Ian Palmer, and Associate Superintendent for the Northern Region, Jennifer Winistorfer (Office of Correctional Education)



Photo by Brian Asey

Graduate Watson Allison and attorney Michael Clough



Photo by Brian Asey

Top: SQ PIO Lt. S. Robinson, Wickerd's wife Marion, Wickerd's mother Linda, sister Judy Herrera
Bottom: Wickerd's nephew Robby Herrera and GED Graduate Tommy Wickerd



Photo by Brian Asey

Niece Toby Hutchens, sister Patsy Orr, Graduate Earl Orr, granddaughter Ariel Klimpel, and friend Sherry Reynolds



Photo by Brian Asey

Educator D. Searle and H. Lucas with Graduate George Moss and Graduate Quincy Paige

Oakland Police Chief delivers apology at SQ Barbershop Forum

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Oakland Police Chief Jane Kirkpatrick delivered an encouraging message of respect, hope and an apology for law enforcement misdeeds to more than 200 San Quentin prisoners looking forward to freedom.

"We have a future and hope together," Kirkpatrick said. "You will be given an opportunity for restoration and you will be welcomed home."

"When you come home, you will be home and you will have a police department that, as long as I am their chief, will address you with respect by your name."

Lt. Bobby Hookfin, a native of Oakland, talked about the "historic mistrust" between the community and the police — mistrust rooted in "enforcing unjust laws."

"We know that — but we're establishing trust across the nation," Hookfin said. "We want to recognize that there's no finish line to public trust. It doesn't end here, once you're released, it continues to build to make our community better — did you hear, our community better?"

Kirkpatrick and Hookfin spoke July 26 at the second Barbershop Dialogue held at San Quentin. There have been more than a dozen dialogues held in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Barbershop Dialogues came about after a BART police officer killed Oscar Grant on New Year's Eve, 2009.

One of those attending was Jack Bryson, whose two sons were with Grant when he was shot. Bryson said he want-

ed to take action about the strained relationship between the police and the Bay Area community. He teamed up with Oakland police officers Captain Michael Carroll and Hookfin to provide spaces for conversations about how policing affect communities.

A couple of years into the dialogues, television reporter Paul Chambers (KTVU) began airing the meetings. District attorneys, police officers, criminal justice reform advocates, formerly incarcerated, as well as incarcerated individuals, sat together and talked.

"It is my great honor to be here and thank each of you," Kirkpatrick told the audience. She turned to Bryson, adding,

"Jack, on behalf of police, I want to say I'm sorry and I want your forgiveness." There was immediately a hush, followed by a collective, "Wow!"

Chambers asked Kirkpatrick why she apologized to Jack and told the prisoners they would be welcomed home.

"We have caused some hurt and harm," Kirkpatrick said. "Everybody in this room has hurt someone. I don't want to forget that there are victims that we hurt and we need to learn to say we're sorry. Then we need to make amends through actions and not cheap words. Many of you have never heard, 'We're sorry.' It matters. That's why it's important."

Several San Quentin prisoners responded to Kirkpatrick's apology.

"I had no respect for law enforcement until that lady got up there and said what she said," Troy "Talib" Young said. "At 7-years-old, I



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Jack Bryson with formerly incarcerated Donald "DC" Barlow

watched my father being beat up by LAPD. Her apology changed my life."

Timothy Hicks said, "I'm from Oakland. To know that she's the chief of Oakland, my community, and to get a verbal apology — to have been harmed — to hear that from someone of such high ranking is humbling."

Paul Salseda commented, "That was very profound because you can't begin a healing process without an apology. We can't even begin to move forward in our lives until we come to some type of repentance in our hearts and say 'I'm sorry' to our communities, our families. For someone at the top to express that is huge. We have the chief to say that and say when you come home; we have a spot for you in the community."

Kevin Neang gave an apology to the victims of his crime and all the people that he hurt. "It's not the title that made it powerful," Neang said. "She removed the chief label and just reminded us that we're all human. The whole world — the system -- wants us to be accountable and to hold yourself accountable; you have to see yourself as a human."

Kirkpatrick responded, "My heart and soul is to heal all of us together. I do recognize that I'm in a chapel and I want us to have a future and hope. I want to be a part of the change."

She added, "I know a fake. I can smell them from afar. I

have no time or energy for cheap talk. We need to heal. Thank you, Kevin, for saying, 'I'm sorry.'"

"Jack, on behalf of police, I want to say I'm sorry and I want your forgiveness"

After Chambers observed there were "a lot of district attorneys in here," the conversation shifted to preventing the youth from coming to prison.

Isaiah Caldwell, a father of three, asked if someone like him, who is serving a life sentence, could collaborate with programs geared to serving at-risk youth.

"Can we talk to the youth and tell them what they're facing?" Caldwell asked. "They would listen to us because our fathers were missing, too — they'll listen to us."

Troy Young got up again to talk about being a reformed gang member from Los Angeles. He offered his life experience to share the realities of prison.

"We have to stop them out there," Young said. He turned to the district attorneys and asked, "How can we work together?"

Jill Klinge, a top district attorney for Alameda County said, "In our office, we're

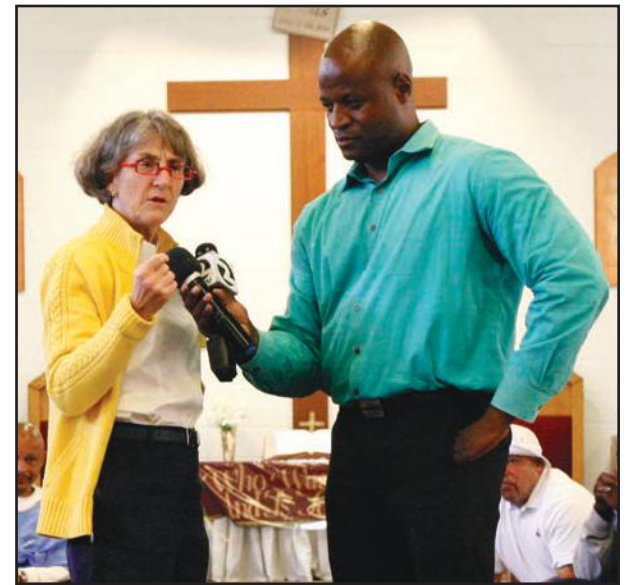


Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Oakland Police Department's Police Chief Jane Kirkpatrick with KTVU Fox 2's Paul Chambers

working with returned residents through Developing Impacted Lives (DIL)." She said she would accept suggestions from "anywhere and anyone" that would help prevent the youth from going to prison.

Klinge spoke about SQUIRES, a program where troubled youth come into San Quentin for candid conversations and intense listening sessions with selected prisoners.

"But, the first thing is getting yourself established, and then come to us to help," Klinge said to the men.

Some prisoners asked the district attorneys about pending legislation that would encourage younger prisoners to take an active role in rehabilitation.

"This bill can change the perspective from despair to hope," said Romeo Baca about California Senate Bill 965, which would give prison time reduction to individuals who committed their crime at a young age.

Baca said he came to prison at age 16.

"It was very frightening, but I acted like it wasn't," Baca said. "KidCAT helped me deal with prison. When you give kids opportunities, they won't let you down."

KidCAT (Creating Awareness Together) is a support community for men who committed their crimes at a young age, often as teenagers, and sentenced as adults to life terms. The group's mission is

to inspire humanity through education, mentorship and restorative practices.

Chase Benoit said he came to prison at age 19.

Benoit said he tells incarcerated youngsters who are struggling, "There's a different path and a different way. You don't have to wait; check out SQUIRES and KidCAT."

Chambers asked, "What about the hard-headed kids. How could you get in their head?"

Benoit responded, "The only people who talked to me then were still doing wrong. So, the real issue is getting them talking to former or incarcerated people."

Kenneth Vernon, 47, proposed teaching young people "emotional intelligence."

He said he came to prison at age 23.

"At that time, nothing would have impacted my choice," Vernon said.

He said emotional intelligence allows individuals to "recognize what you're feeling in your body. If I would have had something like that in school, it would have been a great help."

Also present was former *San Quentin News* staffer Miguel Quezada, who paroled almost two years ago.

"It's going to get great out there," said Quezada to the audience that included several men who did time with him. "It's important for people to hear your voices and understand what you're doing to get out of here."



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Participant Arthur Jackson speaking with a District Attorney



Photo by FirstWatch

Participants of the Barbershop Forum on the Garden Chapel Courtyard after the event

Snippets

Glue dates as far back as 80,000 years when Neanderthals made paste from birth bark.

In 1695, American colonies levied a tax on bachelors to encourage young men to marry.

Beefaroni contains vitamin A and no other vitamins.

Bubbles are made up of molecules which attach to one another. This pulls the bubble in, and air pressure inside pushes the bubble out.

Elvis Aaron Presley, born Jan. 8, 1935 was an identical twin—his brother was stillborn and given the name Jesse Garon.

Rabbits are not rodents. They belong to a family called "lagomorphs."

- Sept. 1: No Rhyme or Reason Day
- Sept. 3: Skyscraper Day
- Sept. 6: Read a Book Day
- Sept. 13: Positive Thinking Day
- Sept. 13: Ronald Dahl Day
- Sept. 17: Intern. Country Music Day
- Sept. 21: National Clean Up Day
- Sept. 24: Punctuation Day
- Sept. 28: Good Neighbor Day

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

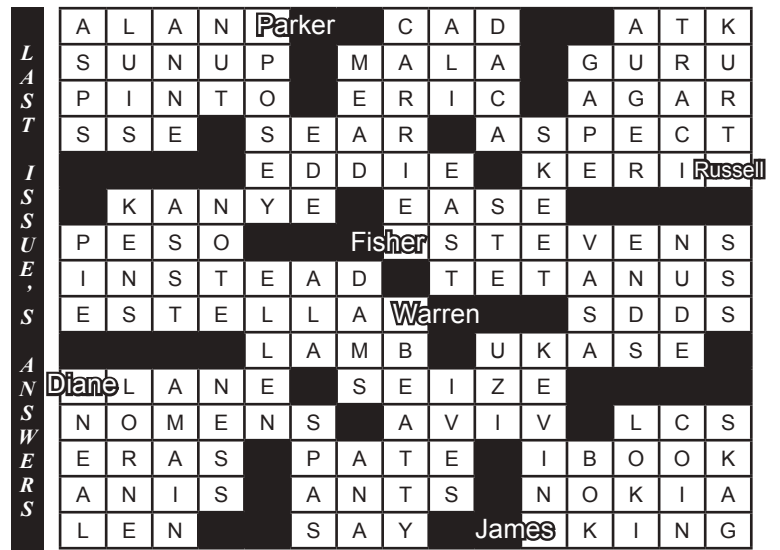
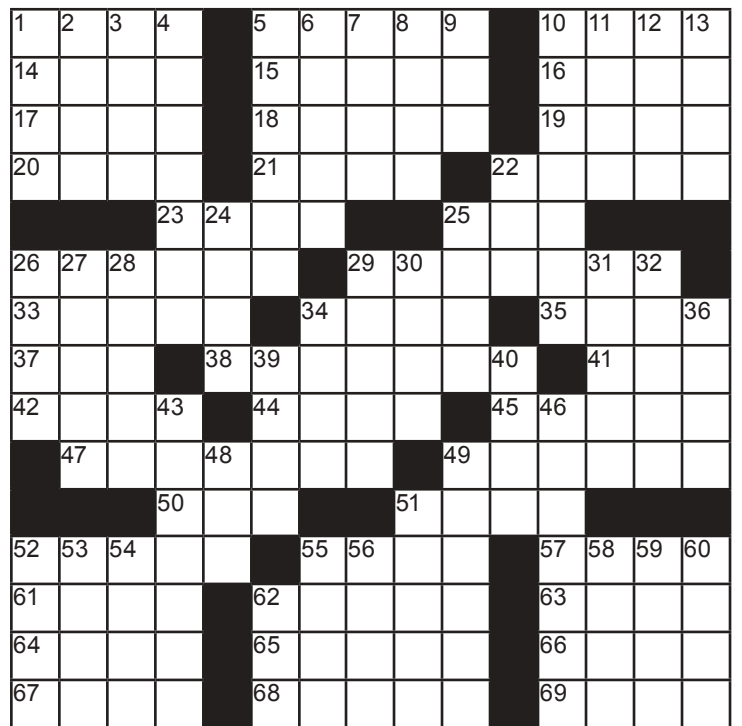
By Jonathan Chiu / Edited by Jan Perry

Across

1. Fight
5. Former CNN host
10. Deer
14. Author Morrison
15. A small crane suspending lifeboats
16. Midwest state
17. ABC host Andrews
18. Area of expertise
19. A vein of metal ore in the earth.
20. City in south central Arizona
21. PBS murder mystery show
22. More than once collection of knowledge
23. Michael J. Fox show _____ City
25. Director Burton
26. Knocked out
29. Host of *The Daily Show*
33. Place in a grave
34. Muslim leader _____ Allah
35. A small, slender-bodied amphibian
37. Tennis pro Ivanovic
38. 1985 Sci-fi movie starring Helen Hunt
41. All in favor?
42. Ornamental band or scarf
44. _____-Seltzer
45. Kitchen accessory
47. *Remember the Titans* Actor
49. Stretch fight
50. Big digit
51. Prisoner custody (Abbr.)
52. Dallas Howard of *The Help*
55. Stony waste material
57. Measure
61. Michelle of *Crazy Rich Asians*
62. Kelly of *The Cutting Edge*
63. Pincer
64. Russo of *Lethal Weapon 3*
65. Run off
66. Employ
67. Change
68. See 49 Down
69. Time measurement

Down

1. School offering
2. Minute opening on a surface
3. South American bird
4. "All Hands on Deck" artist
5. Creator of *Curb Your Enthusiasm*
6. Allen of *Indiana Jones*
7. Pop group Bon _____
8. Ed Sheeran song
9. Dangerous game (Abbr.)
10. One of the islands in the SW Pacific
11. Marvel superhero character
12. Helper
13. So it _____
22. Tyler of *Armageddon*
24. Shampoo brand
25. Precedes gas, down or away
26. Prejudice
27. Actress who plays Addison Dobbins on *The Code*
28. Tea brand
29. Sharp nails
30. Mother of Zeus
31. Looks
32. Actor who was on *ER* and *The Red Line*
34. A mountainous island in Indonesia
36. Golf supporters
39. Precedes bird, gas or breed
40. Winter vehicle
43. Small ax
46. FX show *Sons of _____*
48. Japanese cuisine offering
49. "The Con" Canadian sister pop duo
51. Precedes Callas, Edgeworth, or Agnesi
52. Cowshed
53. Nikki of *Twilight*
54. A symbol of divine procreative energy
55. Brown and gray American rail
56. Fibber
58. Host Ward of *Did I Mention Innovation*
59. *Gone with the Wind* plantation
60. A large jug
62. Hospital workers (Abbr.)



Sudoku Corner

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

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

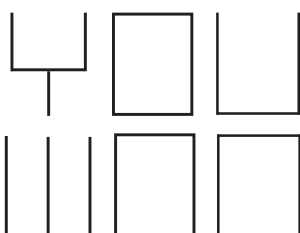
Last Issue's Sudoku Solutions

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

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

Last month's Brain Teasers:

Secret message



Carrier Pigeons

NO. The pigeons remain at 200lbs even whilst flying. Those flying up would reduce the weight, but those flying down would increase the weight, so balancing the total weight.

Math Problem

\$42 (85%)

Brain Teasers

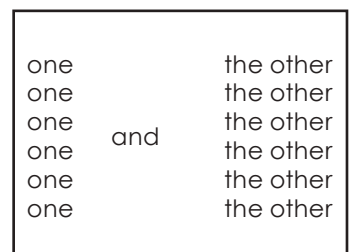
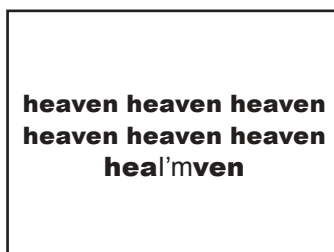
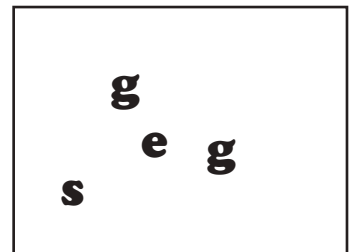
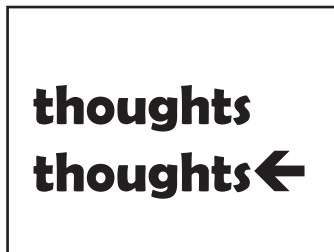
Who the What?

In this game, we supply the who and you supply the what. For example, *Felix the _____* Answer: *Cat*

- Dora the _____
- Jimmy the _____
- Catherine the _____
- Conan the _____
- Oscar the _____
- Ivan the _____
- Joe the _____
- Jack the _____
- John the _____
- André the _____

Wacky Wordies

To solve these fun puzzles, look carefully at each frame, because the arrangement of the letters is a key clue to the familiar phrase contained within. For example, if the word *school* were placed high up in the frame, the answer would be *High school*. Or if the phrase "easy pieces" occurred five times in the frame, the answer would be *five easy pieces*.



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 would 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

Reñido partido entre SQ Earthquakes y el equipo de administración de SJ Earthquakes

Español

Por Pedro Espinal
Escritor contribuyente

Los representantes del equipo de fútbol profesional San Jose Earthquakes visitaron por cuarta vez en dos años la Prisión Estatal de San Quentin para enfrentar a los San Quentin Earthquakes, el martes 23 de julio.

Entre los visitantes se encontraban dos jugadores estelares profesionales, Tommy Thompson #22 carrilero derecho y Shey Salinas #6 mediocampista.

La competencia futbolística arrancó con una gran energía. Los visitantes ya habían jugado en este campo de uso deportivo múltiple y contaban con el apoyo de un gran número de fanáticos.

La estrategia de Refugio "EL Tuca", entrenador del equipo local, fue presionar la salida desde la portería al equipo de los visitantes formado por la administración de los SJ Earthquakes para impedir que el equipo saliera jugando y organizara su ataque.

A tan solo 5 minutos del encuentro, el jugador Chris Maccougal sufrió severas raspaduras al resbalarse en un terreno arenoso. Dario Abranskihn, quien fungió como entrenador, no tuvo



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Tommy Thompson
Jugador de SJ Earthquakes

otra opción que sacarlo del juego.

Al minuto 17, el árbitro marcó un penalti a favor de los SQ Earthquakes, después que un jugador cometiera una mano en el área chica. El entrenador decidió que el jugador Tare "Cancún" Beltranchuc cobrara el penalti, quien con un potente disparo pegado al poste derecho anotó el primer gol del partido ante el júbilo de los aficionados.

Después de la anotación, los San Jose Earthquakes adelantaron sus filas y empezaron a sofocar a la defensa local. En más de una ocasión el portero Brian Holliday salvo su portería. Sin embargo, al minuto 29 Tommy (No Thompson) recibió un pase largo y con gran técnica individual le



El equipo visitante con los Earthquakes de SQ en la cancha de fútbol de San Quentin

dio un pase a su compañero Rohan Dorairaj, quien con pierna derecha venció al portero para empatar el marcador 1-1.

Al término de los primeros 45 minutos el partido estaba empatado. Mientras los jugadores se hidrataban, los entrenadores daban indicaciones para la segunda mitad.

El partido se reanudó y ambos equipos trataron de capitalizar los errores del equipo contrincante. Al minuto 52 el portero local hizo una atajada espectacular, pero el balón le cayó al delantero de los equipos visitantes quien inmediatamente le dio un pase filtrado a Tommy, quien tuvo que barrerse para anotar el segundo gol para los visitantes.

Con el marcador en contra, los pupilos de Refugio

"El Tuca" avanzaron su alineación para empatar el marcador. La estrategia dio resultado y al minuto 59, los de casa orquestraron una jugada genial que culminó en gol. Huizar, uno de los jugadores estelares los SQ Earthquakes, se quitó a dos jugadores y envió un pase filtrado para Luna, quien sacó un disparo potente. El balón le rebotó al portero quedando entre varios jugadores, pero Tare "Cancún" Beltranchuc, se barrió e hizo contacto con el esférico venciendo al portero de los visitantes para igualar el marcador a 2-2.

A escasos minutos del final, los de casa tuvieron dos grandes oportunidades para vencer por primera vez al equipo visitante y hacer historia, pero les faltó precisión a la hora de definir. El partido culminó con un empate 2-2.

A pesar del resultado, el encuentro fue muy divertido y emocionante.

Al término del partido, los jugadores intercambiaron experiencias y aprovecharon la oportunidad para tomarse fotos con Thompson y Shey Salinas, dos figuras del equipo profesional San Jose Earthquakes.

"Es un reto venir a jugar aquí porque los jugadores son muy competitivos", dijo Thompson.

Por su parte Salinas mencionó, "Quería venir el año pasado pero no pude. Sin embargo pude ver el video y me prometí venir este año". Respecto al nivel de juego, Salinas expuso, "están en buena forma y son rápidos". Ambos jugadores expresaron su deseo de jugar pero las cláusulas de sus contratos lo impiden.



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Shey Salinas
Jugador de SJ Earthquakes

Antes de culminar la visita los jugadores locales expresaron su agradecimiento por la bonita experiencia y oportunidad de jugar al fútbol, el rey de los deportes.

—Hugo López
contribuyo con esta historia

Conocer el reglamento de la prisión puede evitar problemas

Por Juan Espinosa
Diseñador gráfico y escritor

La ignorancia no fue excusa para Efraín Castañón, quien por decisión tuvo que pasar cuatro meses en segregación y agregó siete meses más a su sentencia.

Castañón dice que al llegar a prisión nunca se tomó el tiempo de leer el libro de regulaciones del Departamento de Correcciones conocido en inglés como "Title 15". Su falta de cuidado y la decisión al no tomarse el tiempo de aprender las regulaciones de la prisión lo llevaron a cometer errores que afectaron su vida en la cárcel.

Ya estando en prisión Castañón fue acusado de posesión de arma y poner en peligro la seguridad de la institución.

La posesión de arma, según Castañón, fue porque tenía una navaja que obtuvo de un rastriero para rasurar que proporciona la institución. El usaba la navaja para sacar punta a unos lápices de colores que utilizaba para dibujar y colorear tarjetas que hacía para su familia e hijos.

"Les expliqué que usaba la navaja para sacarle punta a mis lápices de colores pero no me hicieron caso", dijo Castañón. "Yo no lo sabía, pero la



Photo by FirstWatch
Efraín Castañón

ignorancia no es una excusa para la administración".

Muchas de las personas que terminan en la cárcel deciden no poner atención a las reglas de las prisiones, las cuales son muy estrictas y cuando el individuo rompe una de esas reglas la administración lo toma muy en serio.

Lo cierto es que las reglas y regulaciones de sistema carcelario son muy específicas y las personas encarceladas en el sistema deben estar al tanto de estas.

El título 15, sección 3315 (V) dice, "posesión no autorizada de materiales o sustancias que pueden ser modificadas o alteradas de su estado de fabricación original o propósito con el potencial de hacer, o en el proceso de estar siendo hecho, en una arma; explosivo o material que puedan fabricar un explosivo, veneno cáustico, sustancias cáusticas o un instrumento destructivo".

El título 15, sección 3005(a) dice "prisioneros o ex prisioneros deben obedecer las leyes, regulaciones, y procedimientos locales, y abstenerse de comportamientos que puedan llevar a la violencia o desorden, o de otra manera poner en peligro la institución, fuera de la comunidad o a otra persona".

El título 15, sección 3341.9 (B), también dice que "posesión o fabricación/fabricación de una arma incluyendo materiales alterados de su estado original o propósito y la cual fue modificada en un arma que una arma de fuego o instrumento explosivo y que ha sido modificada en un intento obvio o capacidad de causar heridas serias, y que este bajo el control o control inmediato de preso". Por lo cual el individuo puede ser puesto en segregación por un lapso de entre cuatro a doce meses.

La experiencia para Castañón no fue muy grata. "Fue muy difícil estar en segregación. El estar separado del resto de la población fue una experiencia horrible", dijo. "Me sentí triste, deprimido, desesperado, y preocupado por no saber lo que pasaría conmigo. Estar separado de todos me hizo sentir humillado y me di cuenta de lo poco que valoran la vida de un ser humano en prisión".

Un reporte de Southern Poverty Law Center, encontró que las personas que pasan tiempo en segregación pueden sufrir de problemas de impaciencia, desarrollar pensamientos incoherentes y problemas con el habla. Otros pueden desarrollar desórdenes postraumáticos de estrés. Y aún más, los problemas pueden ser más graves y llevar a la persona al suicidio.

"Un estudio nacional realizado en 401 cárceles descubrió que dos terceras partes de los suicidios, (o intento de suicidios) en las cárceles fueron llevados a cabo por personas en confinamiento solitario. El pasar tiempo en segregación es una experiencia impactante para muchas personas. La separación del resto de la población también puede llevar a las personas a experimentar depresión y otros síntomas emocionales que pueden impactar la salud mental de las personas que pasan por experiencias similares", reportó Southern Poverty Law Center.

Después de pasar por todos los tramites disciplinarios Castañón fue transferido a la prisión estatal en Corcoran, California en donde purgó el resto de tiempo que tenía que pasar en segregación. Al terminar ese periodo, Castañón fue transferido otra vez a San Quentin.

Correr le ayuda a superar la vida en prisión

Por Carlos Drouaillet
Escritor Contribuyente

Fidelio Marin nació en 1970 en el ejido San José, cerca de Izúcar de Matamoros, Puebla en México, y su niñez fue muy parecida a la de otros niños de su pueblo, con pobreza, limitaciones y quehaceres en casa sin tiempo para estudiar. El creció sin aprender a leer ni a escribir pues no había escuelas ni maestros en su pueblo.

Marin, se encuentra actualmente en la Prisión Estatal de San Quentin cumpliendo una condena de 16 años a vida, de los cuales ya lleva 11 años cumplidos. En sus primeros años en la prisión sufrió de tensión-nerviosa y obesidad llegando a pesar 205 libras en el 2013.

Marin llegó a San Quentin en agosto de 2018 y en poco tiempo se dio a conocer por su dedicación al deporte como corredor y su deseo de superación. Actualmente estudia inglés y matemáticas en la clase ABE 1 del programa educacional de San Quentin, donde acumula créditos "Rehabilitation Achievement Credits" que se dan a los alumnos por su dedicación en las clases.

Como miembro del club de corredores de las 1000 mile club, Marina completó las primeras mil millas en un tiempo record entre octubre del 2018 y mayo del 2019. El club de corredores de San Quentin le otorgó el certificado, "Completion Award" por su esfuerzo.

Sus conquistas más notables como corredor han sido el ½ maratón (13 millas) con un tiempo 1:22 horas; las 10 millas las corrió en 1:04:28; en la carrera "The Skid Row Running Club One Hour Fun Run" en San Quentin el 20 de julio quedando en segundo

lugar, solo unos cuantos pasos atrás de "La Gazela de San Quentin", Markelle T. Taylor. Taylor se anotó 10-11/16 millas; seguido por Fidelio Marin con 10-5/8 millas, siendo su nuevo record en una hora.

Antes de que empezara la competencia, Taylor se refirió a Marin como "el próximo nuevo campeón".

Su más reciente hazaña la consiguió el 2 de agosto en el Décimo Medio Maratón Anual de San Quentin, donde Marin obtuvo el primer lugar.

En el reporte del San Quentin 1000 Miles Club, el entrenador Frank Ruona escribió, "Fidelio Marin continúa su dominio en las carreras del club competecia en San Quentin, desde que Markelle Taylor recibió su libertad condicional en marzo 2019, ganando fácilmente su tercera carrera seguida con un tiempo sobresaliente de 1:24:05 que es el tercer Medio Maratón mas rápido de San Quentin".

Marin es reconocido por los que conviven con él como una persona muy jovial, humilde y amistosa.

"El entrena fuerte y esucha; está aprendiendo la técnica de un buen corredor", dijo Darrell Mora, uno de sus compañeros. "Él es probablemente el nuevo líder; lo que me gusta es que es humilde".

Durante el tiempo que Marin ha estado en prisión ha participado en "Programas de Ayuda Personal" (self-help-programs) como: Alcohólicos Anónimos (AA), Manejando



Photo by Juan Espinosa, SQN
Fidelio Marin corriendo detrás de Markelle Taylor

el Enojo (Anger Management), Justicia Restaurativa (Restorative Justice), y Estudios Bíblicos en la capilla, entre otros.

"Gracias a Dios y a los programas ofrecidos en San Quentin he logrado superarme y he aprendido a tomar buenas decisiones en la vida; y los programas han sido de gran ayuda en mi rehabilitación diaria", comentó Marin. "Y le agradezco a San Quentin por los programas de rehabilitación que están disponibles; pues en otras cárceles que he estado no tienen los programas que hay aquí".

Marin ha estado anteriormente en Wasco Reception Center y en Soledad State Prison que fue donde empezó a prepararse como corredor.

"Estando en prisión he decidido y he logrado dejar los vicios, los malos pensamientos, los rencores y las impaciencias en el pasado", dijo. "Aquí también he aprendido a leer y escribir en español que es mi idioma natal".

Concert showcases Mad Mama, the Bona Fide Few, and the Bangers

By Marcus Henderson
Editor in Chief

The sounds of guitar riffs being shredded and vintage rock 'n' roll rang throughout San Quentin's Lower Yard for the prison's annual Rock Concert.

The July 27 event showcased Mad Mama and the Bona Fide Few and punk rock band the Bangers. Mad Mama's band hails from San Francisco and the Bangers made the trip from Sacramento.

The lively personality of Mad Mama Lopez set the stage ablaze with her bubbly demeanor and sharp wit. Mad Mama's airy high-pitched vocals, similar to Minnie Mouse, the iconic Disney character, blended perfectly with the impressive play of the Bona Fide Few.

The band's musical vibe was a mixture of '50s and '60s rock 'n' roll with a modern twist and a country twang, known as Whisky Soaked Americana.

"I'm here to shed a little light in a dark place," said Mad Mama. "You are not alone. We all make mistakes. We're meant to be loved."

"We all are struggling," she added, encouragingly.

After a few moments of technical difficulties with microphones and equipment, Mad Mama led the band in a sizzling 45-minute show. The group performed "Texan Boy" a spicy relationship song.

"I didn't tell my mama I was coming to sing in prison—not because I was coming into a dangerous place, but because Mama knows I love a bad boy!" yelled Mad Mama as she started the song.

The infectious fast paced beat sounded like a Chuck Berry tone mixed with some Johnny Cash. Mad Mama, with her squeaky country vocals, swayed left and right as she played her ukulele.

Tony Velour's magical fingers danced around the large upright bass, Paul Monteiro provided the masterful

rhythm on the drums, and Steve Egelman rounded out the band with superb guitar riffs and vocals.

"It's a blessing to bring in this music," said Egelman. "Good or bad, we're still people. Music is only going to be a good thing."

Armed with an array of original songs, the band performed "Trouble," "Mercy Me,"

"Honey Tonight" and "God, What's Your Plan for Me?" The mid-size crowd of 60 to 70 men showed the band appreciation with loud ovations and whistling to each chorus of the songs.

Mad Mama worked the crowd into a frenzy with the cover song "Mojo"—with a call-and-response on the song hook: "I got my mojo working." She yelled it and the men responded.

Mad Mama showed her vocal range as she performed Janis Joplin's hit "Me and Bobby McGee," generating a sing-along fest by older prisoners. Mad Mama and the Bona Fide Few left the audi-

ence with huge smiles, as the band enchanted the men with something old mixed with the new rhythms.

"I loved it," said Chris Thomas. "This bought me back to my childhood. Music makes me feel good. I love this," Thomas added, bringing his hand to his heart.

The Bangers kicked off the show with their heavy metal-inspired and punk rock flavored set, inspiring a lot of head banging by the crowd. The band entertained

with songs such as "Breaking the Law," "Lost," "Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll" and a crowd favorite, "Mistreated."

As the band's lead singer and guitarist, Bill Heston's gravely vocals complemented the frantic tempo played by group members: Brian Young, drummer; Zoran Theodorovic, bass; and Guy Jone, on guitar. All the members provided background vocals.

Heston, the self-proclaimed "Crank Sinatra" and "Lord Banger" teased the



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Zoran Theodorovic

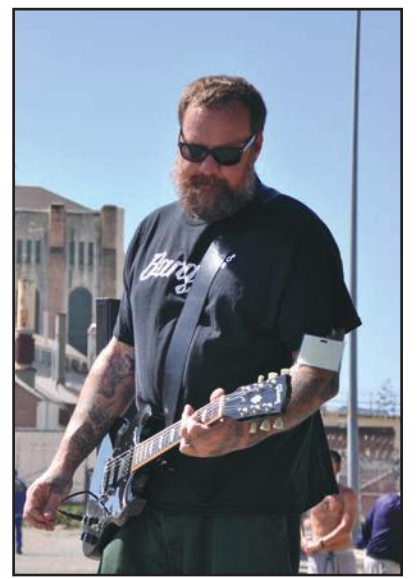


Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Bangers' Guy Jone

crowd by yelling "Are We Too Loud?"

"This was a surreal moment playing here," Heston said later. "It's so healthy to be able to do this. It felt great. I pray for everyone to get back out, but everyone should learn to respect each other: when you give, you get respect."

The band closed their 45-minute set with the song "Killed by Death" by the group Motorhead. The diverse crowd left the band with a standing ovation and repeated whistling. Both

groups of entertainers signed autographs and mingled with the audience before driving off the yard. The prisoners and guests all waved goodbye, ending a totally satisfying concert.

"I'm into rock music—I heard they were coming. I figured I'd come take a listen," said Glenn R. "It's nice to hear a live band. It's been 15 years since my last concert, Iron Maiden. It was awesome and a great experience."

—Anthony Faulk
contributed to this article



Mad Mama Lopez (right) with the Mad Mama

Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN



The Bangers on stage on the Lower Yard performing

Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Thống Đốc Newsom Ngưng Hoàn Việc Tạm Tha

Vietnamese

Tác Giả: Noel Scott
Hội Đoàn Tác Giả Nhà Báo

Vẫn còn quá sớm để biết được nếu Thống Đốc Gavin Newsom sẽ làm theo chủ ý riêng—hoặc là nhiệm kỳ của ông ta trùng hợp với nghị trình của cựu Thống Đốc Brown, được tường trình bởi Anita Chabria và Taryn Luna cho tờ báo LA Times.

Từ khi nhậm chức, Thống Đốc Newsom đã ngưng hoàn sự tạm tha cho 46 người phạm tội giết người. Chuyện này đánh dấu sự gia tăng cao so với hành động của cựu Thống Đốc Brown, người chỉ có sáu người phạm tội giết người trong năm 2018. Newsom đi với tốc độ ngang hàng với cựu Thống Đốc Brown về việc lấy lại 133 sự tạm tha vào năm 2014, báo cáo bởi Chabria và Luna.

Lập trường này trái ngược với quyết định ngưng án xử tử của Thống Đốc Newsom, mặc dù cử tri Cali không chấp thuận bãi bỏ án tử hình trong năm 2016.

Thống Đốc Newsom cũng xét lại 33 vụ tạm tha cho những người phạm tội nghiêm trọng

chẳng hạn như tội có liên quan đến tình dục.

Trenton Veche là một trong 33 vụ bị xét lại. Veche bị kết tội vào năm 2003 và bị tuyên án chung thân cho nhiều tội lạm dụng tình dục với trẻ em. Tuy nhiên Veche vẫn được hứa tạm tha, báo cáo bởi Chabria và Luna.

Sự can thiệp của Thống Đốc Newsom làm cho nhiều người đặt câu hỏi về chính sách của ông ta và không biết ông ta đang cố gắng giữ những người phạm trọng tội trong tù hay là chỉ thận trọng cho tương lai chính trị của ông ta.

Luật sư của Veche, Charles Carbone, tự hỏi không biết là hành động của Thống Đốc Newsom tiêu biểu cho chính sách mới hay chỉ là lo âu về những cái cách trong hệ thống công lý như là Proposition 57.

Trong năm 2016, những thay đổi về pháp luật, chẳng hạn như Proposition 57, và những phán quyết theo pháp luật đã cộng thêm nhiều tội mới vào danh sách được thả sớm. Luật sư Michael Romano, người đứng đầu Three Strike Project tại Stanford Law School nói rằng, "Hiện tại tình trạng trị tội không tin được" khi nói đến parole hearings, và chỉ riêng Proposition 57 có thể cộng thêm 4,000 vụ vào danh sách.

Một trong những sự tạm tha mà Thống Đốc Newsom ngăn chặn là cho Jesus Cecena, 57 tuổi, người đã cố sát cảnh sát viên Archie Buggs vào năm 1978 trong lúc anh ta 17 tuổi và bị phán án chung thân. Trong năm 1982, án được giảm xuống từ 7 năm cho đến chung thân. Trong sự quyết định, Thống Đốc Newsom viết rằng "Mặc dù sau nhiều năm giam cầm, ông Cecena không có giải thích đầy đủ về hành động nhẫn tâm của mình trong đêm phạm tội."

Căn cứ theo bộ sửa chữa và cải tạo của tiểu bang Cali, 15 trong 33 vụ mà Thống Đốc Newsom xét lại có liên quan với tù nhân phạm tội về tình dục.

Chỉ có Thống Đốc Newsom mới biết được nếu ông ta sẽ đi theo đường lối của cựu Thống Đốc Brown về việc tạm tha cho tù nhân hoặc là thiết kế một lập trường khó hơn. Những thành viên chủ trương thay đổi hệ thống công lý chờ đợi sự biểu lộ lập trường của Thống Đốc Newsom. Dù sao thì sự lạc quan của cựu Thống Đốc Brown đã cho tù nhân niềm hi vọng, và niềm hi vọng đó đã thúc đẩy tù nhân tham gia vào các chương trình cải tạo.

—Dịch giả-Hiếu Thái

Di Dân Và Tội Phạm

Tác Giả: Anthony Manuel Carvalho
Hội Đoàn Tác Giả Nhà Báo

Nghiên cứu gần đây cho biết không có sự tương quan đáng kể giữa những di dân bất hợp pháp và tội phạm.

Một nghiên cứu mới do Marshall Project và New York Times tiết lộ rằng tội bạo hành và trộm cướp tài sản trong khu vực mà những di dân bất hợp pháp cư trú đã giảm từ 2007 đến 2016.

Nghiên cứu đó cũng bác bỏ những lời Tổng Thống Trump nói trong cuộc vận động tranh cử. Theo báo cáo do David Knowles của Yahoo News, ông Trump cho rằng quốc gia Mỹ đang gởi qua Mỹ những người có rất nhiều vấn đề. "Họ mang qua thuốc ma túy. Họ mang theo tội phạm. Họ là những người cường dâm."

Nghiên cứu đó cũng phù hợp với kết quả từ những phân tích quá khứ:

- Trong năm 2018, học viện Cato tại Texas đã xác định những di dân tại Texas—

hợp pháp và bất hợp pháp—phạm tội ít hơn những cư dân sinh tại Mỹ.

- Một nghiên cứu khác của Cato đã kết luận rằng xác suất của những di dân bất hợp pháp vào tù thấp hơn những người sinh tại Mỹ.
- Báo tội phạm học (Criminology) đã làm một nghiên cứu riêng vào tháng ba năm 2018, thuật trình rằng những tiểu bang với nhiều di dân bất hợp pháp có mức phạm pháp thấp hơn so với những tiểu bang ít di dân bất hợp pháp.

Trong một bài báo vào ngày 13 tháng 5 năm 2018, New York Times nhận xét rằng bản báo cáo của Marshall Project và Upshot là một sự phân tích qui mô đầu tiên về những di dân bất hợp pháp đã ảnh hưởng đến tội phạm như thế nào từ năm 2007. Nó cho thấy rằng những thay đổi trong dân số

di cư bất hợp pháp không có ảnh hưởng hoặc ảnh hưởng rất ít đến sự phạm pháp trong những khu vực đã thăm dò.

Pew Research ước lượng khoản 10.7 triệu di dân bất hợp pháp sống trên đất Mỹ vào năm 2016, giảm 1.5 triệu từ năm 2007.

Những nghiên cứu phân tích về tác động của tội phạm gây ra bởi những di dân bất hợp pháp thường xuyên xảy ra. Giáo sư Robert Andelman theo dõi những nhóm như Marshall Project qua sự nghiên cứu của ông tại đại học ở Buffalo, SUNY.

Kết quả của ông xác nhận những kết luận của Marshall Project rằng di dân bất hợp pháp không có ảnh hưởng đến tội bạo hành và có liên quan đến sự giảm bớt tội trộm cướp tài sản.

Yulin Yang, một thành viên trong đội nghiên cứu Andelman, bình luận rằng những người di dân, hợp pháp hay không, "thông thường đến Mỹ để tìm việc làm, không phải để phạm tội."

—Dịch giả: Dũng Trần

Original play offers intimate look at doing time in prison

By Allen Burnett
Contributing Writer

Behind miles of razor wire and an electric fence, 23 prisoners housed in California State Prison – Los Angeles County (Lancaster) performed an original theater piece titled “More than a Number.”

For 10 weeks, the men gathered in the same place, at the same time, in preparation for their performances for the Theatre Workers Project led by Susie Tanner.

“I am touched by the humanity and willingness of the men and women to share”

Like clockwork, Tanner and her performance troupe traversed the Progressive Programming Facility (Yard A) waving and smiling in the direction of the clustering men. It was the evening of their final rehearsal before their show and for most of the men; it would be their first time performing in front of an audience.

“Our performance speaks our truth in a way that words alone could not express,” said Larry Torres, one of the participants, who is serving 70 years to life. “I want to share this experience with others—I want people to see how prisoners can change.”

The mood was lighthearted, yet they understood the weight of the rare opportunity to share their truths and demonstrate their growth and rehabilitation.



Photo courtesy of Allen Burnett

Instructors and the performers of Theatre Workers Project's More Than A Number

Tanner had reminded the men that there is strength in vulnerability.

“This theater (program) touched my life, heart and soul,” said Athan Phillips, who is serving life without parole. “The volunteers made me feel like a human being and given me hope.”

“I want people to take away from our performance

[that] on the other side of these walls are human beings; we are all under the same sun, and we are capable of change,” Phillips added.

Many of the men have been incarcerated for most of their adult lives and are beginning to learn healthier ways to express their emotions while developing positive solutions to life’s chal-

lenges before returning to their communities.

The prison theater program is a safe space where the men can retell their experiences creatively through movement, writing and performance.

Inside the main room, the talented choreographer Alexa Kershner, renowned poet Ruben Guevara and famous teaching artist Whitney Wakimoto mingled with a group of the men while others talked quietly near center stage, discussing their scene.

The men were thrilled to learn their families would be able to attend the show and that the performance would be filmed by teaching artist Marlene McCurtis and cameraperson Megan Mitchell.

“The first prison I performed in was in Massachusetts,” said Tanner. “I was a teaching artist then. I’ve taught and performed all over, but it is something special about working in prison.”

“I am touched by the humanity and willingness of the men and women to share,” she added.

Tanner, standing behind an oil-stained wooden podium just inside the chapel’s hallway, was dressed in black pants, black blouse with a

black sequined scarf and bright red tennis shoes.

There was a low buzz of excitement filling the room as everyone prepared to begin. The men formed individual groups with the volunteers and began rehearsing their scenes. The scenes were emotional and traumatic, some were funny, yet they all addressed forgiveness and second chances.

“When artists share their artistry it is a high point in my life, it is a reminder why I do this work,” said Tanner. “They have a hunger for our work that is so satisfying.”

The men clustered together for the epilogue. Their bodies swayed rhythmically side to side, then angling slightly back, their hands reached upward toward the evening sun. Slowly one of the men stepped forward directly in front of the audience. “My name is Dara Yin. I am more than a number. I am a human being.”

Theatre Workers Project
presents
MORE THAN A NUMBER

An original theatre piece written and performed by

Kenyon Aikens	Juan R. Montoya
Tyson A. Atlas	Athan L. Phillips
Louie P. Brash	Jermaine Pina
Allen D. Burnett II	Darryl J. Polk
Donnell R. Campbell	Lester “Lovable” Polk
Jerimichael Cooley	Deville D. Simmons
Mario Franco Jr.	Ed D. Smith
Anthony D. Graham	H. Daniel Taylor
James Heard	Larry L. Torres
Justin S. Hong	Dara C. Yin
Jessie A. Luna	Coach Jeffrey T. Young

Created in collaboration with
TheatreWorkers Project Artists

California State Prison, Los Angeles County
March 13, 2019

Offered as part of the California Arts Council's Arts in Corrections Program
Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

Program of More than A Number

Each man began to step forward one at a time, saying their names, repeating the mantra “My name is: Anthony Graham, Jesse Luna, Tyson Atlas, Louie Brash, James Heard and Jerimichael Cooley...”

“An artist takes something they really believe strongly in and wants the rest of the world to know,” concluded Tanner. “These men are rehabilitated, and I’ve been rehabilitated too.”



Scene from “More than A Number”

Photo courtesy of Allen Burnett



Scene from “More than A Number”

Photo courtesy of Allen Burnett



Scene from “More than A Number”

Photo courtesy of Allen Burnett

Bringing to life the personal stories of those who carry a life sentence

BOOK REVIEW

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Despite our politically polarized country, most people agree that ending mass incarceration is necessary. There is also widespread agreement that non-violent drug offenders need treatment, not punishment. However, the focus of most reform is almost entirely on nonviolent and drug offenses. Nonviolent drug offenders make up 5% of the prison population. Violent offenders make up at least 50%. If the U.S. is serious about undoing mass incarceration, the long sentences violent offenders serve must be addressed.

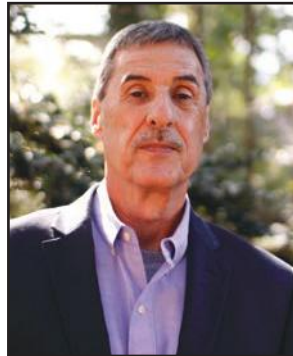
Two recently published books do just that: *The Meaning of Life—The Case for Abolishing Life Sentences* (2018) by Marc Mauer and Ashley Nellis, (Kerry Myers, contributor); and *Until We Reckon—Violence, Mass, and A Road to Repair* (2019) by Danielle Sered.

While most people know that the US has more people serving life terms than all other countries, how many more is surprising. The authors of the *Meaning of Life*, point to a 2016 international study of life imprisonment revealing that the number of people serving life sentences in the U.S. is higher than the combined total in the other 113 countries surveyed.

A cross-country comparison with the U.S. disclosed that:

- The U.S. accounts for 40% of the world's lifer population.
- The U.S. locks up its citizens at five to 10 times the rate of Canada and western European nations.
- State and federal governments in the U.S. spend \$60 - \$80 billion annually on incarceration.

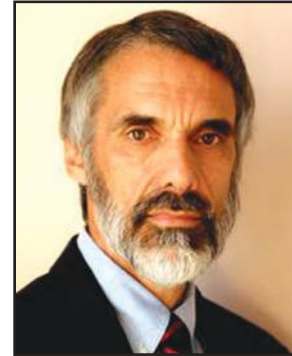
In *Meaning of Life*, contributor Kerry Myers, an award-winning writer and former lifer, chronicles the lives of six people, whose reckless behavior was responsible for destroying or damaging many lives,



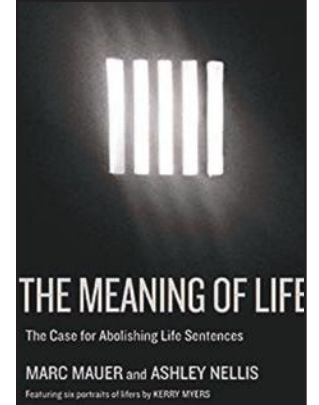
Kerry Myers



Ashley Nellis



Marc Mauer



including their own. The book, however, is not about hopelessness. Lifers in the book were able to achieve a degree of redemption but only after honestly confronting the ways in which their behavior seriously damaged their victim's lives. Accountability is also one of the focuses of *Until We Reckon* by Danielle Sered.

Sered proposes that we reconsider the purpose of incarceration and argues that the needs of everyone, perpetrators of violent crime as well as the survivors of those crimes, are better

met by asking people who commit violence to accept responsibility for their behavior and make amends in ways that mean something to the people they have hurt.

One of the six lifers featured in *The Meaning of Life* is Sam Lewis, who was convicted of a gang-related killing when he was 18 years old.

While incarcerated, Lewis took advantage of every available educational and life skills opportunity. He used his own life experience to offer gang members a way toward societal betterment.

When Lewis got out of prison 24 years later in 2008, he made time to come by the *SQNews* office with Scott Budnick, a movie producer and the founder of the Anti-Recidivism Collation (ARC) a non-profit that advocates for criminal

justice reform and works to prepare prisoners for life after incarceration. Budnick had just appointed Lewis executive director of ARC. In *The Meaning of Life*, Myers writes that Budnick appointed him because he was impressed by Lewis' transformation and believed his experience would be invaluable to people in the same situation. Budnick may have been impressed but, according to Myers, Lewis insists that he's not the exception to the rule.

"There are others like me who want to do good things and give back, so I try not to allow anyone to exceptionalize me," Lewis said. This was consistent with the attitude he expressed when we talked in the *SQNews* room.

There is now a wide body of research that has concluded that the deterrent ef-

fect of the criminal justice system is not achieved by long sentences; deterrence is a function of the certainty of punishment, not its severity. These assumptions hold true for crimes ranging from shoplifting to murder.

Mauer and his Sentencing Project colleague, Ashley Nellis argue that there is no practical or moral justification for sentences longer than 20 years.

Myers/Nellis cite numerous studies, reports and statistics that show keeping a person incarcerated for life is not only inhumane, it's counter-productive. Harsher sentences have been shown to have little effect on crime rates, since criminal thinking declines as people mature. Thus we're spending a fortune on geriatric care for older prisoners who pose little threat to public.

NEWS BRIEFS

1. USA — After a nearly two decade lapse, United States Attorney General William P. Barr is clearing the way for the federal government to resume capital punishment for five death row prisoners. Federal executions follow protocols that replace a three-drug procedure with a single drug, pentobarbital.

2. USA — The national death row population went down for the 17th straight year in 2017, while the period from sentence to execution increased to 20 years, three months, according to the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics. The number of individuals sentenced to death fell by 94 to 2,703, which would be lower if included were the more than 900 condemned prisoners in Colorado, Oregon, Pennsylvania and California (moratoriums on executions). The 23 executions in 2017 were half the number in 2010. Only eight of the 32 states with capital punishment conducted executions in 2017. There were 34 new death sentences imposed in 2017 with 23 executions, 21 died of natural causes, two died by suicide and one died in a traffic accident.

3. USA — Justice Department officials announced that 3,100 inmates are being released from federal prisons across the country because of a change in how their good-behavior time is calculated, *The Washington Post* reports. In addition, \$75 million was redirected for a new system to assess prisoners' risk of reoffending as well as a program that would bring earlier releases.

4. Lansing, Michigan — Sharee Miller, 47, went to court to assert her First Amendment right to report prison abuse, the *Detroit Free Press* reports. Miller says she saw a prisoner "stripped naked and painfully hogtied for hours and another, also left naked, deprived of food and water until she foamed at the mouth and went into cardiac arrest," according to a 2015 lawsuit. Miller complained, first to officials at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility, where she is serving



a life sentence for first-degree murder, and then to prison watchdogs on the outside. The Michigan Department of Corrections responded in 2014 by firing Miller from her job as a prisoner observation aide, a job that requires her to watch troubled prisoners 24 hours a day and keep detail recorded notes, every 15 minutes, of what they observe. Miller sought \$200,000 in punitive damages, plus more than \$2,500 in lost wages. She also wanted U.S. District Judge Sean Cox to prohibit prison officials from punishing prison observation aides who report abuse and to order them to give her back her former job. The trial was set, but under a settlement, observation aides will be allowed to report mistreatment to a government oversight agency or state-designated protection and advocacy organization. Miller will be reinstated to her position, compensated for her lost wages, and have her record cleared of having been terminated for violating prison rules.

5. Philadelphia — District Attorney Larry Krasner, who took office in 2018 and vowed that he would "never" seek the death penalty, is asking the state's highest court to make the death penalty unconstitutional because it is racially biased, is arbitrary, and discriminates against the poor, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reports. "The most jaw-dropping statistic is that out of 155 Philadelphia death sentences, 72 percent of them have been overturned," Krasner said after reviewing every case in which a Philadelphia defendant was sentenced to death over a 40-year period

ending in December 2017.

6. New York City — In a letter to Department of Correction Commissioner Cynthia Brann, the Legal Aid Society asked that prisoners in city jails be protected against heat waves, *HuffPost* reports. "Most crucially, we ask that the city move all individuals confined to their cells to air-conditioned units," the letter said. "This includes individuals held in Enhanced Supervision Housing, who are typically locked into un-air-conditioned cells for a minimum of 14 hours, and up to 23 hours. When people are not in air-conditioned areas, the city must provide free access to cool showers and ice to all persons confined in non-air-conditioned units."

7. Arizona — Attorney General Mark Brnovich wrote a letter to Gov. Doug Ducey in support of reinstating capital punishment, KVOA reports. "I'm worried about the lack of transparency that Arizona has shown in the past with regard to where it was getting the drugs, what drugs it was using and the qualifications of the people who would be administering the drugs," said Emily Skinner, Assistant Director of the Arizona Capital Representation Project, a nonprofit that works with death row inmates to improve their defense. "More than 100 people are on the state's death row — 14 have exhausted their appeals."

8. Pennsylvania — Prisoners held in solitary confinement at a state prison are reportedly on hunger strike to protest health and living conditions and to bring an end to long-term isolation.

Pennsylvania under scrutiny after prisoner dies in custody

Family of deceased raise questions about cause of death in legal action against prison administrators

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

Everett Palmer Jr. died in custody from injuries that York County Prison in Pennsylvania deemed were self-inflicted, reported *The Washington Post*.

"There was so much mystery and unanswered questions in a way that violates every policy and procedure the state has," said Lee Merritt, a civil rights attorney representing the family.

Palmer, a Black man, was arrested in Pennsylvania in 2016 for driving while under the influence (DUI) and causing a single-car crash. Emergency responders at the time said they could smell alcohol on Palmer. His blood alcohol level tested 0.148—whereas Pennsylvania's legal limit was 0.08.

Palmer returned to Lancaster County in 2018 to clear up the warrant for the DUI, and ended up being detained and sent to York County Prison.

Palmer was in single-cell housing on April 9, where he was reported to have been in an "agitated" state while repeatedly hitting his head on his cell door.

When custody officials noticed Palmer's behavior, they placed him in restraints and then took him to the prison clinic for evaluation. The coroner's report said that's when Palmer was "noted to be unresponsive."

Staff's attempts to resuscitate Palmer proved unsuccessful. He was then pronounced dead early the next morning.

Palmer's official cause of death was "complication following an excited state, associated with methamphetamine toxicity, during physical restraint." The manner of death was undetermined, according to the coroner's report.

His death has prompted a possible grand jury investigation into his death.

"My son was a perfectly healthy young man, and my son is not going to bang his head on a cell. My son was not a troublemaker, not at all, he was a very gentle, kind man," his mother, Rose Palmer, told the *Washington Post*.

The county contracted with an independent firm, Forensic Pathology Associates (FPA), to perform an autopsy, York County Coroner Pamela L. Gay told the *Post*. She said that the result for methamphetamine toxicity meant that the level of methamphetamine in Palmer's system "was sufficient enough that it could have contributed to the death." Yet she questions how Palmer could have got the drug while in custody. These findings prompted the family to pursue civil and criminal charges against York County Prison.

They continued to have questions regarding his death a year later.

"My brother was a good man, he comes from a good family, if he did something wrong with regards to the DUI then clearly he should be held accountable for that. But that should not be a death sentence," said Dwayne

Palmer, regarding his brother's death.

When the Palmer family did get Everett's body, it was missing his brain, heart, and throat. At that point, they hired an independent pathologist to determine what had happened; the independent pathologist, after investigating, said Palmer's death should be considered a homicide. At first, the coroner's office denied removing Palmer's organs; it took several months before they admitted that they had removed the organs and that FPA had them. Gay, the county coroner, said that "it was not uncommon for those organs to be removed and kept by a lab."

"We're gonna get answers to what led to his death, and we do that with everybody. We're going to do this the right way," Gay said.

In recent years, police and law enforcement have been scrutinized for their handling of African Americans during police stops, arrests, or while in jail.

Sandra Bland was another such suspicious death. She died in a Texas jail cell in 2015. Her death was classified as a suicide. A traffic stop led to her incarceration. She was videotaped being confrontational toward officers. An officer was recorded during the incident threatening Bland with a Taser. The video recorded him saying he would "light you up." Within three days of her arrest she was dead. The emergence of this video prompted nationwide outrage while her family sought answers.

Imago Dei routs the Warriors ... but our very own G. Derrick is the star

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Contributing Writer

From a wheelchair on the sidelines, Leonard King got to watch veteran San Quentin Warrior Allan McIntosh put up 32 points but still fall short to Imago Dei, 119-102. King got to attend the game because Inmate Disability Assistance Program worker George Derrick, who also plays for the Warriors, used part of his day off to stop by the fourth floor of the infirmary and picked him up.

"George is a good person; he's made getting out here really easy," King said. "It's a mental struggle losing something you had for 62 years to a fungal infection (which was compounded by having diabetes) but I get encouragement from the people around me and that has made the transition easier." King lost his leg in April. It would be another month before he could get fitted with a prosthetic. In the meantime, with the help of Derrick, he comes



Photo by FirstWatch
George Derrick and Leonard King

to yard at 8 am on Saturdays to watch the Warriors play.

"It's good entertainment," King said. "There's a lot of talent out there. Makes you think what could have been."

Imago Dei came down the hill with six players, including sixty something year old Don Smith. On the surface, it may have looked like the Warriors had the advantage, but the least athletic player in the starting five for Imago was a legend at Grinnell College for his three point

shooting ability. Steve "Raise a J" Diekmann dropped 21 points, including nailing five baskets from behind the arc. But it was former St. Mary and ABA player Teohn Conners and former New Mexico State player Jon Williams who lead Imago with 38 and 30 points respectively. Conners added a whopping 25 rebounds, 5 steals, 4 assists, and 2 blocks.

"They put up a fight," Williams said. "We were limited but we made shots when it counted."

In the first quarter, the teams traded baskets with Warrior Rick "Rick Rebound" Joseph, a six-foot center, snatching rebounds and adding a couple of scores.

"I worked hard and it feels good," Joseph said. "I just want to play and do my part."

Imago broke away with the hot shooting of Williams and finished the quarter up 31-24.

After two quarters, Imago led 65-51.

Williams had 24 points in the first half.

"I'm going for 50," Williams, who just came back from vacationing in Cabo, Mexico, said.

At half-time, both teams circled around center-court to share.

Derrick, a 6-foot-4, 38 year old from San Francisco, said, "It's an honor to play with great players. It brings out the best in me and teaches me to deal with not getting what I want, like not getting to play today."

Imago Center Ervin Anderson, a former ABA player, gave a short sermon about how "God is love."

Warriors Coach Tony "Barefoot Tone" Evans added, "IDAP workers don't have to bring people to the yard. George is expanding the program and that touched my heart."

In the third quarter, Donte "Twin" Harris came off the bench to run the point and hustled hard, attempting a Warriors comeback. Every time the Warriors got within four points, Imago pulled away again.

In the fourth quarter, up 104-91 with 3:55 points

Imago sat power forward Brett "BC" Collins, who also played for St. Mary's, and put the 5-6 Don "Donnie Fabulous" Smith in the game.

"Lay off him on offense and go at him on defense," yelled SQ Warriors fan Cesar "C-Money" McDowell.

That plan didn't work. Smith found himself open and nailed two short-range set shots.

Three Warriors, beside McIntosh, scored in double digits including Anthony Ammons with 23 and 10 boards, Walter Cook with 10 points, 5 assists and 2 steals and Harris with 10 points, 5 assists and 4 steals. Joseph had 9 points, 11 rebounds and 4 assists.

For Imago, all five starters scored in the double digits. Collins added 17 points, 8 rebounds, 4 assists and a steal. Anderson added 12 points, 13 rebounds, 4 assists and 5 blocks.

The tequila and tacos Williams enjoyed in Cabo kicked in during the second half — after starting with 24 points first-half points, he added only 6 points in the second period.

"Jon ran out of gas so I had to take a couple of shots," Diekmann said after the win with a big smile on his face.

The ReBirth of Cool

By **Aaron Taylor**
Sports Editor

The United States Women's Soccer team are champions of the world again.

It's the fourth time. '91, '99, '15 and '19.

Their co-captain, Meagan Rapinoe, is the coolest of them all.

No, not the Swaggiest, she's the Coolest.

Meagan Rapinoe exudes The Cool.

The shades. The hair. The self-confidence. The articulation.

As an athlete, Rapinoe is a fierce competitor and a leader on and off the field. During her post-game interviews, she resonates the definition of "Cool."

No, not "Swag," she's "Cool."

Miles Davis had an album titled "Birth of the Cool."

Meagan Rapinoe is the "ReBirth of Cool."

She voices the frustrations of any athlete—man or woman—who feels they aren't receiving their legitimate financial worth (especially

when you're a champion), and, she asks the simple question that doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out:

"If we have more championships, a bigger viewing audience, and we bring in more revenue, how come we're paid less than our male counterparts? How come we are treated as if we aren't the best on the planet?"

Those are legitimate questions. She's not ranting or raving. She's not shrill. She's not screaming.

She's Cool.

Even more, they deserve an answer worthy of the team and all women.

The WNBA isn't bringing in the revenue through their viewing audience, so if they asked for bigger contracts, The response would be "Huh?"

However, these women of the US team are four time world champions. Even more, they actually have Haters. Some people hate the way they celebrate their goals; Some people hate that they've

sued for equal pay.

Some people really hate that Rapinoe doesn't sing the national anthem on the international stage — in front of a television viewing audience (she was the first non-Black athlete to kneel with former NFL QB Colin Kaepernick).

However, when you're competing on the field against the world's best athletes, and you have to step off the field and fight for your rights within the country that you represent on the world stage, and

you even have the President of the U.S. criticizing you?

Don't forget, Rapinoe and the team are fighting not just for them, but for all the young kids coming after them—to be treated equally no matter their gender, what they worship, their political association or who they love.

To engage in these types of battles, you have to be "Cool."

And, that's why Meagan Rapinoe is the "ReBirth of Cool."

A competitive spirit reigned during the Fourth of July celebration at SQ

By **Juan Haines**
Senior Editor

San Quentin's Lower Yard opened on Independence Day to a carnival-like event that kept hundreds of prisoners entertained all day. A Christian coalition of young incarcerated men, Graced Out Ministries, sponsored the festivities.

"The idea was to bring young men and people of all ages together to express their gifts and talents and to let everyone know that God loves them no matter where they are," said Graced Out organizer Dwight Kennedy.

Graced Out Ministries and the Protestant Church collected donations to give away cookies, chips and

sodas as prizes, in addition to providing more than 900 burritos and bags of chips to everyone.

Fifteen people lined up to devour a Honey Bun at top speed to win a "pie-eating" contest. The Ironman Contest was a grueling task of 40 pull-ups; 40 bar dips; 40 squats and 40 pushups, followed by a lap around the Lower Yard. Finally, a 100-pound heavy bag had to be carried about 50 yards and brought back by pushing it on the ground to the start line. There was also a Three-Legged Race, Potato Sack Race, a Homerun Derby, Basketball Three-Point and Skills Contest, a Four-Man Push-up Contest and a Rock/Paper/Scissors Contest.

Referring to Graced Out Ministries, Trinidad said, "I like them because it's us talking to us." Trinidad is a participant in numerous self-help groups at San Quentin, including the Prison

University Project, Criminal Gangs Anonymous as well as Vocational Plumbing "I didn't expect that many people to show up," said Graced Out organizer Antoine Waite.

The most popular comment from hundreds of men for the day was "fun."

The Honey Bun contest went like this: with hands behind your back, eat a Honey Bun as fast as you can. The first man chewing and then opening up an empty mouth is the winner.

"I need water!" said first place winner, John Ray Ervin. "I'm going to pay for it."

Cones lined the basketball court for the Three-Point Contest, Half-Court Shot Contest and the Skills Challenge.

Half-Court Shot Win was Anthony Guillebeau. Coming in second and third respectively were Raiveon "Ray Ray" Wooden and James Harrison.

As the yard's PA systems announced, "In five minutes, the Three-Legged Contest will begin in Right Field," the old tied themselves to the young, Black to White, tall to short — they took off racing — step, step, hop and some tumbled in laughter while rolling in the grass.

The contestants for the Rock/Paper/Scissors Contest lined up, five men facing five opponents to play two out of three to determine the winner. Each contest began with smiles and handshakes; once they began; their

hands shook three times to reveal — Paper covers Rock, Scissors cut Paper or Rock breaks Scissors.

The Four-Man Push-up Contest completed 25 push-ups. Winner Vadim Zakharchenko led the winners.

The day ended with a raffle to give away leftover prizes. Remarkably, there were no alarms sounded the entire day.

Graced Out Ministries organizers were Dwight Kennedy, Antoine Waite and Aaron Tilas.

Fellow incarcerated men Kevin Kelly, Norman Willhoite, James Benson, Paul Salseda, Danny Pita and Armando R. Gonzalez assisted Graced Out.

The other "Jerry Brown" offers some insight

Jerry Brown is the head coach of the Intramural League team *Hit Squad*.

Before Brown arrived, the team was a group of players that didn't have any direction. After he agreed to coach the team, he taught them the fundamentals of playing a 2-3 zone defense. He also taught the team basic dribbling and passing drills, as well as infusing his decades of experience with local Oakland players (some who have went on to play professional) and AAU.

Brown is 52 years old, and in December 2009, he was sentenced to 44 years to life for kidnapping, of which he's served ten years.

AT: How long have you been involved with organized sports?

JB: I've been coaching for 30 years. I've been involved with sports all my life.

AT: Is it just basketball?

JB: Yeah, just basketball.

AT: Where does the love of the game come from?

JB: It comes from being a part of the game for so long. I have a son that played pro (Jerry Brown Jr., Fresno State 2010-13; played with NBA star Paul George).

I'm looking for cohesiveness in anything I approach, and that includes basketball as well as life. I like to bring players together to learn the system, but that involves buy-

ing into the basketball philosophy and building unity.

AT: Your intramural team, Hit Squad; How did you get them to buy into coming to practice so that they would improve?

JB: It was me using the love of the game as well as their love of the game. They wanted it, but didn't know how to play it right. I had guys that wanted to learn and that's was key.

AT: Any educational pursuits since you've been incarcerated?

JB: I have a business certificate from Coastline College, 70 units of coastline. I need two math classes for an AA from coastline, and I'm

taking English 99b in Patton right now.

AT: Any self-groups?

JB: Elite and Criminals and Gangsters Anonymous; Alternatives to Violence Program & Cage Your Rage.

AT: So, you get to choose your all time all-star NBA team, but here's the twist: You pick one team that represents 1970-95; then, pick a team that plays them that represents 1996-2019...

JB: Okay, team of OG's are PG: Earl the Pearl Monroe; SG: Rick Barry; SF: Julius Erving; PF: Wes Unseld; C: Kareem. Off the bench, I have Wilt Chamberlain, Bill Russell, David Thompson, George Gervin, Pistol Pete,

Bob Cousy & Dennis Johnson.

My YG's are going to be PG: Michael Jordan SG: Scottie Pippen SF: LeBron James

PF: Karl Malone C: Olajuwon and on the bench are Patrick Ewing, Steph Curry, John Stockton, Kobe Bryant, Steve Nash, Kevin Durant & Allen Iverson.

AT: You're sitting in a room by yourself, and you journey back in time and see yourself at 13 years old; what one sentence do you tell yourself at 13 to prepare you for the future?

JB: "Seek a higher education."

AT: What's the one thing about basketball that transfers over to everyday life

experience that you teach the people that you coach?

JB: Trust. I teach them to trust in your teammates and that transfers over to trust in family because teammates become family.

AT: I want to thank you for taking time for this interview. What's one thing you want to close out with?

JB: I just want the players to know to respect the game. If you truly love it, play the game right. Play it with passion, honor and integrity. Just play the game the way it's meant to be played. Channel that negative emotion into a positive place and elevate.

—Aaron Taylor

Skid Row Club returns to the Lower Yard for "OneHour Fun Run"

By Aaron Taylor
Sports Editor

An award winning coach, a humanitarian judge, and two former San Quentin residents came together at The Q July 20, 2019 to participate in the 2nd Annual Skid Row Running Club One Hour San Quentin Fun Run.

The Skid Row Running Club was founded by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Craig Mitchell, whose mission is empowering the most marginalized. Mitchell believes that by giving people more opportunities, they make better decisions. The Skid Row Running Club seeks to elevate the human condition one mile at time.

"We just finished a documentary on The Skid Row Running Club. Its about



Photo by Juan Espinosa, SQN
Judge Craig Mitchell with Coach Frank Ruona (back)

Judge Mitchell, who trains drug addicts, homeless people, criminals and others to run marathons." Said Gabi Hayes, a documentary Filmmaker. "If the participants stay out of trouble, stay clean

and train hard and stay with the program. Judge Mitchell will take them on a marathon some where in the world." Gabi and her husband have followed The Skid Row Running Club to Rome, Vietnam, Jerusalem and headed to Ecuador to film the Club's run in the Maraton de Guayaquil in October.

"We brought about 20 people with us today. I talked with many of them as I ran the track, and they all said they were having a wonderful time," said Judge Mitchell.

During the event, Coach Frank Ruona was presented with the Jefferson Award by KPIX CBS for community service. "This is the first time 1000 Mile Running Club has had any outside running club to come in and run with us," said Coach Ruona "I know these guys really appreciate it."

Ralph Ligons, who is an original member and co-founder of The San Quentin's 1000 Running Club with the Coach Ruona in 2005 said the club is open to everyone who wants to join. He said that running improves your

physical, emotional and mental health.

Eddie Herena 36, a alumni member of The San Quentin 1000 Miles Club and former San Quentin News' Cameraman, was very instrumental in bringing awareness to SQ's 1000 mile club during his time at The Q, Herena returned to support both Running Clubs and to encourage many of the men that he had come to know that they too could make a successful transition back into society as he has done so.

"Its not even about the running club. Its beyond that. I was in this place for eight years and I got to know a lot of the people," Eddie said. "It's good to see them, but sad to see them still here.

Markelle Taylor 46, also a former resident of the Q and

an alumni member of The San Quentin 1000 Mile Club, who won the 2018 Skid Row One Hour SQ's Fun Run with a distance of 9.3 miles, returned this year to give back to the club that he got so much from. "I am not lying, I am happy to see you guys. I wanted that experience of being able to come in and then been able to just walk right back out prison," said Markelle who paroled five months ago. "I do race on the weekends. I've ran a full marathon and a total of 25 races since I've been out." Since his release Markelle has ran in the Dipsea Race on June 9, 2019 and the 2019 Boston Marathon April 5, and it showed, because he ran a blistering 10-1/2 miles plus in 60 minutes to win this years SQ's Skid Row Fun Run.

SQ's 1000 Mile Club Coach Kevin Rumon, said that try to keep every member after they are parole connected to the Club to the extent they want to.

A total of 62 runners completed the race. After the race, everyone chatted for a while as all the runners total laps were being counted, before making their way up to North Block Dining Hall.

"When I get around mile 20 in a Marathon. I say a prayer for the murder victims, because I want in some way for their presence to empower me for the last 6 mile of the race."

Judge Mitchell said addressing the crowd as everyone was socializing over a San Quentin Sack lunch.

—Leonard F. Brown contributed to this story



Photo by Juan Espinosa, SQN
Skid Row and 1000 Mile Club runners at the start of the race



Photo by Juan Espinosa, SQN
Phillip Peng with the Skid Row runners on the Lower Yard

Sports Quiz III Aaron Taylor

Think you know professional athletes? Your favorite team? Match the nickname to the player if you're good. This is third and final quiz in this series.

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Larry Johnson | Flo Jo |
| Minnesota Vikings | White Shoes |
| Vernon Maxwell | Pooh |
| Cynthia Cooper | Chapstick |
| Washington Redskins | Tiger |
| Kevin Durant | Worm |
| Derrick Rose | Rowdy |
| Pittsburg Steelers | Stretch |
| Florence Griffith-Joyner | Grand Ma Ma |
| Chad Johnson | The G-Men |
| Eldridge Woods | Purple People Eaters |
| Cincinnati Reds | Clark Kent |
| Dominique Dawes | Flipper |
| Dennis Rodman | Mad Max |
| Susie Chapman | Lady Jordan |
| Cleveland Indians | Slim Reaper |
| Kurt Rambis | Steel Curtain |
| Renaldo Neimiah | Ocho Cinco |
| New York Giants | The Big Red Machine |
| Jimmy Snooka | Awesome Dawsom |
| Roddy Piper | The Tribe |
| Willie Mays | The Hogs |
| Willie McCovey | Soopa Fly |
| Willie Anderson | Say Hey Kid |
| Billy Johnson | Skeets |

San Quentin Hardtimers Round Up

Dre'Quinn Johnson
Contributing Writer

Prison Sport Ministries, 16 vs. SQ Hardtimers, 23



Photo by Javier Jimenez
Ricardo "Rico Suavemente" Romero scoring on a play

Prison Sport Ministries took an early lead against the Hardtimers, and fell 23-16 in the end. Richard Zorns led the way with a home run in the bottom of the 2nd inning, followed Brandon-Riddle-Terrell who homered in the the 4th; Oscar Acosta hit a home run over the ARC trailer in right. Juan Navarro had 4 hits & 4 runs to help secure the victory.

North Bay Bombers, 6 vs. SQ Hardtimers, 26

The Hardtimers scored another victory in their 4th game against the North Bay Bombers, 26-6. After the game, in a show of sportsmanship and brotherhood, both teams gathered around the pitcher's mound and Terry Kitchen and Brandon-Riddle-Terrell shared their heartfelt testimonies of what it meant to play against people from the their home town of Santa Rosa.

Prison Sports Ministry, 15 vs. SQ Hardtimers, 38

Prison Sports Ministries came out swinging in the first

inning, scoring 4 easy runs, but went on to lose the match 38-15.

The Outsiders, 4 v. SQ Hardtimers, 16

The Outsiders came in The Q with two first time visitors, and looking to extend their season run of 7-1 playing against other teams, but came up short against The Hardtimers.

"Coach Matt gave me an opportunity to come in and play," said Gus who played in right field. "I was excited because I love this game."

Melissa said she had to get pass the jitters. "Once I got a hit, got on base and scored, all the nervousness was gone," she stated. She scored three runs and shook her head, saying "No, No, No! You're out!" as she caught several pop ups to first base where she played the entire game.

The game ended with both teams meeting at the mound, sharing a prayer, and The Outsiders promising to come back and tie the series 1 - 1 on their return.



Photo by Javier Jimenez
Hardtimer Oscar Acosta swinging away



Photo courtesy of North Bay Bombers
The North Bay Bombers Softball team

Celebrating a community led by peaceful intention

By Anthony Faulk
Staff Writer

The 2019 Day of Peace Celebration was a festival of music and healing featuring dynamic outsider performers and San Quentin talent.

"This music brings tears to my eyes. It's touching my soul, lowering my anxiety and depression," said inmate J.O. Chisom. "It's saving me from my inner thoughts as we speak."

"I feel blessed every time I come here"

The celebration on July 13th opened with prayers from Native American chaplain Hector Heredia, Christian Chaplain Mardi Jackson, and Islamic Community member Roosevelt Askari Johnson.

First on stage was rock band Continuum and after comedians Jesse Ayers and Jonathan Chiu brought laughter and applause.

Next, Hip Hop/R&B group AM/PM ignited the crowd with hard-hitting raps and smooth, jazzy pieces.

"My dad...performed in a talent show here. So this is like talking to my ancestors right now, talking to my father," said AM/PM front man Just Dizz, "This is where I'm supposed to be. This is community."

It was this type of unified gathering that a group of San Quentin men had in mind when they came together to form the Day of Peace Celebration. After a race riot in the recreation yard in 2006,



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Participants raising the peace sign at high noon for the moment of silence



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Lyricist Ashanti



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Curb Service's Rob Woods



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Maxx Cabello rocking out



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
The SQUIRES facilitators enjoying the day



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Members from the Non-Violent Communication table

the group decided to do something about what they saw as senseless violence.

"I've been to nine Day of Peace Celebrations. I was at the original," said longtime volunteer and self-described Healer, Jack Omega. He said the guys put it together "to commemorate the fact that we can all get along. The village can come together."

Many in the crowd were drawn to AM/PM lyricist Ashanti's neo-soul and

rhythmic swaying. In an Afrocentric head wrap, she held the crowd captive with her newly released single, "Lovin'."

"If you like what you hear, don't be afraid to get up and rock with it," she encouraged the men, her body swaying rhythmically.

While some inmates and guests enjoyed the music, others visited information tables set up by self-help groups or numerous art pieces displayed throughout the yard.

Curb Service headlined the show for their second San Quentin performance. Formerly incarcerated lyricist Rob Woods leads Curb Service.

Woods, with his extra thick dreads crowning a slim goateed face, worked the stage with a mix of hip hop, soul, and jazz. In the song, "Tiny Table", Woods raps about writing an album in his cell.

"It was deeply moving," Louis Salaam Gibson said of Woods' performance, "The Day of Peace...can inspire even the most wretched of men to change their heart. As I always say, heal, bless, and prosper."

During Curb Service's performance, an emergency alarm sounded, causing the recreation yard to "go down." All inmates sat in place, waiting for the alarm to clear. His audience frozen in place, Woods launched into his song "So Far From Perfect." On his knees, mic in two clinched fist, he belted out the lyrics:

"I admit that I done did a lot of #@! and I ain't never been perfect, been through it all but I feel like it was worth it. Not a perfect man, but I feel like I'm worthy, and if I'm worthy, then Lord please have mercy on me - Lord please have mercy on me!"

"I feel like I'm at a real music festival right now, just like it is on the outside," said Ear Hustle podcast producer, Bruce Wallace. It was his first Day of Peace Celebration.

Guitarist Maxx Cabello Jr. and drummer Jeff Minnieweather took the stage next. Maxx tore up the strings and the duo took listeners through an audio odyssey of rock, soul, and blues.

"I feel blessed every time I come here. It helps keep me grounded and I think I bring a little hope," said Cabello Jr., who has performed at San Quentin before.

Minnieweather said he hoped to bring good vibes and spirits to San Quentin with his music. "Nobody likes to think all day; they like to feel something, too. I try to bring something good to that," he said.

At the Non Violent Communications table, volunteer facilitator Sheryl F. talked to men as they passed. "I'm hearing about the progress of guys who have went through our program and what they're doing now. Many are students now or moving forward in other positive ways. I love hearing that," she said.

When asked about how guys find peace within them-

selves, Sheryl said, "Knowing self, having compassion for self, and caring for others is a good place to start."

After giving San Quentin performances to remember, the outside groups left the stage to more of San Quentin's own great talent. Rapper and lyricist Maserati-E performed his insightful crowd favorite Break the Mold, with the crowd joining in on the chorus:

"We can change the world forever if we come together... we can change the mode."

San Quentin resident David Jassy finished the show. The rapper and producer worked the stage delivering lyrics that reflected his professional experience before incarceration.

"Money makes the world go round, but real music makes the world go forward. And my message has always been about unity. You can speak about the problems, but you need to bring the solutions, too. When you speak the truth, you're going to touch someone that feels the way you do," Jassy said.



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
GRIP's Dennis Jefferson, Monique Thomas and Fateen Jackson

Sidewalk Chalk Contest-By Juan Haines Senior Editor

Just outside the Receiving and Release building 40 incarcerated men sat, squatted or bent over and held chalk of every color to decorate a 32 inch by 32 inch square on a tar surface with the artists' meaning of peace. It's all for The Day of Peace Sidewalk Chalk Contest.

Hines, who facilitates the William James Association sponsored Arts in Corrections program in San Quentin, would determine first, second, third and honorable mention.

Hines is familiar with the sidewalk art in the local community.

"San Rafael has an annual sidewalk chalk contest, so it's nice to have one here, too," Hines said. "The guys are expressing personal stuff that's related to how they see peace — it's also nice to see all the colorful pieces, the chalk allow them to do that."

First place was awarded color paper, watercolor paper and paint and color pencils. Second and third won, watercolor paper and paint as well as color pencils.

Volunteer Kat Morgan, from Urban Adamah (Earth) comes inside San Quentin every month to hold Shabat services. Morgan looked at all the pieces and liked No. 9 and No.17.

"I'm a musician," Morgan said about No. 9, "And music is peace."

"I think that if everyone practiced Loving Kindness, the world would be a better place," Morgan said about No. 17. While watching the artists work, Morgan added, "This is a chance for everyone to participate — it's great to have it out in public and everyone enjoying it."

Holly Stuckey drew No. 12.

"I was trying to thread the needle between making it and deer and "Kawaii," which means cute in Japanese."

Amy Ho said, "I feel like there's more people this year—more diversity of artists participating—more people who are not in the art program."

First: Holly Gustafson; Second: Eric Rives; Third: Holly Stuckey; Fourth: Myers (K47097)

Gustafson said, "It's a butterfly with peace signs in its wings. The heart and love represents peace in here." She added, "The colors go with peace — they are mellow pastels, rather than the bright colors."

Referring to the Day of Peace, Gustafson said, "It nice to have stuff like this—it shows that change is coming. More prisons should do this."

When asked to describe the day in one word, Gustafson said, "Beautiful."



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Participants of the Day of Peace on the Lower Yard



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Amy Ho and "Auntie" Jun Yamamoto with artists of the Sidewalk Chalk Art