

San Quentin News

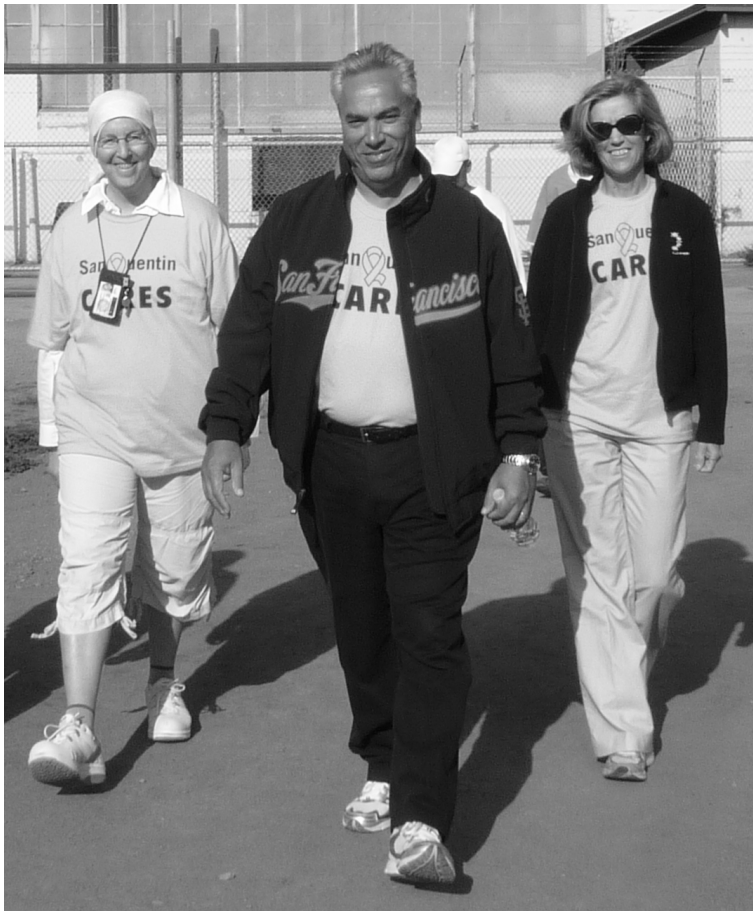
THE PULSE OF SAN QUENTIN

VOL. 2009 NO.7

AUG/SEPT/OCT 2009

SAN QUENTIN, CALIFORNIA 94964

POPULATION: 5,435



Acting Warden R.K. Wong joins volunteers on the cancer walk

S.Q. Closing on \$9,000 Goal For Its Breast Cancer Walk

By DAVID COWAN
Contributing Writer

Incarcerated men and the outside community united in the name of hope, faith, strength and survival. Cancer survivors, prison staff, including Warden Robert Wong, community volunteers and incarcerated men walked around the lower yard track on the weekend of September 19 and 20 in support of breast cancer research.

The fundraiser raised nearly \$9,000, with about \$1,500 of it coming from the incarcerated population.

"This is the first time that anything like this has happened in a prison – let alone a men's prison," one community volunteer said excitedly, astonished at the crowd of over 300 incarcerated men sprinkled with about 20 pink shirts worn by non-inmates.

The walk, dubbed "San Quentin C. A. R. E. S." (Compassion-

ate Accountability Remorsefully Expressed through community Service) was part of the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer and was originally scheduled to coincide with the Avon sponsored walk in San Francisco on the weekend of June 12. It was postponed in S.Q. because of quarantine due to an H1N1 flu scare at the prison.

S.Q.'s participation was the brainchild of William Packer, incarcerated for over 20 years, who was elected to become the Chairperson of the organizing committee. In addition to Packer the organizing committee consisted of George Lamb, Christopher Rich, Earnest Morgan, David Cowan, Sam Johnson Sr. and Stephen Pascascio, all incarcerated men. Jill Friedman, community volunteer and co-chairperson, oversaw fundraising in the outside community.

Community Partnership Manager Laura Bowman sponsored

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Taking a Thorough Look at the Federal Court Ruling

How R & R Works at San Quentin

By ARNULFO GARCIA
and JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writers

S.Q.'s Receiving and Release facility (R&R) processes bus loads of prisoners into this state prison, Monday through Friday. Buses arrive from all California prisons, in addition to many Northern California county jails. R&R also releases parolees and men who have finished their terms, seven days a week.

R&R is located on the lower yard of S.Q. in a fenced modular building. When prisoners are unloaded off the bus, they are interviewed at the door by a correctional officer regarding gang affiliation and/or safety concerns.

Each prisoner, including layovers who are going to other prisons, are medically screened prior to intermixing with the S.Q. general prison population. Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) Shalana VanHook said, "If one of these men has a serious medical condition, we want to refer them to the doctor immediately, because sometimes a layover prisoner may stay at S.Q. longer than planned and we don't want them passing on any diseases to the other prisoners. We check the layovers every day until they leave S.Q."

VanHook added, "Basically we check all the vital signs, eye test, chicken pox and TB screening. The prisoners are given the opportunity to take a HIV test in addition to any other relevant tests that may be performed."

Nurse Onica Brown assists in the preparation of medical files for each prisoner. One of the

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Willie Nelson

WILLIE TO PLAY AT S.Q?

Will-he, or won't he?

Administration officials have confirmed that talks are under way which could result in country music legend Willie Nelson headlining a spring time concert on the lower yard at S.Q. in March of 2010. While emphasizing that nothing has at yet been decided, prison Public Information Officer Lt. Sam Robinson acknowledged that discussions with Nelson and other entertainers have been ongoing for some time.

In addition to Nelson, representatives for guitar virtuoso Carlos Santana and former *Who* front man Roger Daltrey have also expressed interest in performing at what has been tentatively slated as a tribute performance to the late Johnny Cash. Cash headlined a show 40 years ago at S.Q. Last March Cash impersonator David Stone and his band performed two shows at the prison's Garden Chapel.

SALT & PEPPER

Salt and Pepper will no longer be provided to inmates in their lunches. Food service officials say that health concerns led to the decision.

By DAVID MARSH
News Editor

The following information is from the 184-page ruling released by the three-judge panel on Aug. 4, 2009. The panel consists of U.S. District Judges Thelton Henderson of San Francisco and Lawrence Karlton of Sacramento and Judge Stephen Reinhardt of the Ninth U.S. Court of Appeals.

The ruling outlines the judges' intentions as determined by the evidence presented at a trial which commenced on Nov. 18, 2008 and concluded Dec. 19, 2008. Fifty witnesses testified during the trial.

The number of early releases anticipated by the judges, (46,000 as stated in the ruling), is based upon the official California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation population figure of in-state inmates as of Aug. 27, 2008. That number was 156,352 prisoners.

The court noted that California's prisons are operating at essentially 200.2 percent of design capacity, and that two of California's 12 inmate reception centers are currently operating over 300 percent of capacity. The court's ruling states that the prisons' population must be reduced to no more than 137.5 percent of capacity, and perhaps even less than that figure as safety dictates.

California's 33 adult prisons were designed to hold 79,828 male and female prisoners. Three of the 33 prisons are womens' facilities. Federal standards for overcrowding are 130 percent.

The ruling does not affect the state's numerous forestry camps, community correctional facilities or out-of-state facilities, only the 33 adult prisons in-state.

The court noted that state officials have at no time denied that the prisons are critically

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Van Jones: A Life With Ups and Downs

By MICHAEL R. HARRIS
Editor in Chief

and
JULIANLENN PADGETT
Journalism Guild Writer

Who is Van Jones?

Van Jones is a human rights activist, Yale Law school graduate and founder of the Ella Baker Center and Green for All, both Oakland based organizations. Jones's early morning resignation as Special Advisor to the

Gone from the White House

President on Green Jobs and the Environment on September 6 led the Sunday morning political talk show circuit.

He started his human rights work in San Francisco with an internship at the Lawyer Committee for Civil Rights. Jones graduated from Yale Law School in 1993 then came back to the Bay Area and created the Bay Area Police Watch, a referral service

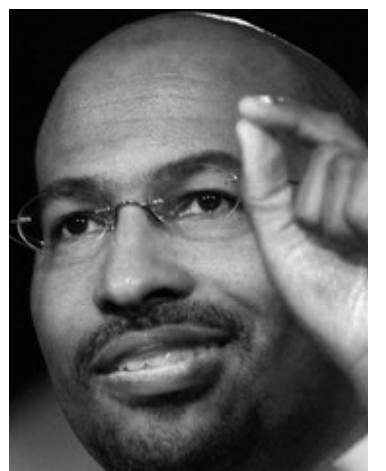
for victims of police misconduct. Leslie Fulbright, a staff writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, wrote in 2008, "Jones quickly earned a reputation for his brash remarks and aggressiveness in fighting against racial bias, high incarceration rates and police brutality."

In 1996 Jones opened the Ella Baker Center and then relocated the police watch center to that lo-

cation. He was actively involved in defeating Proposition 21 in the 2000 campaign, the law that made it easier to try minors as adults. He also started Books Not Bars, a campaign that promoted education and jobs over jails," Fulbright said in her article.

Jones was catapulted to the national stage in 2008 with the release of his book, "The Green Collar Economy: How One Solution Can Fix Our Two Biggest

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Activist Van Jones

He Made It Happen

Donald Specter's PLO

Started the Overcrowding Suit

By DAVID MARSH
News Editor

Sitting in the main visiting room, Donald Specter answers with an easy familiarity questions concerning the organization that he heads, the Prison Law Office (PLO). Each response follows a slight pause for thoughtful reflection. Twenty-five years at the head of the PLO have left Specter well prepared to address inquiries concerning his organization, which is the principle defender of the rights and living conditions for those imprisoned in each of California's 33 state prisons and numerous satellite facilities.

The low buzz of constant work-a-day noise and activity nearby has seemingly little effect on Specter, who has spent more than a little time behind the walls of San Quentin State Prison, much of it in this same visiting room. This is where he often meets with many of the inmate clients that he has represented during his 29 years at the PLO.

With a slight nod and a half-smile, Specter acknowledges that though his work directly impacts the lives of virtually all of California's approximately 170,000 male and female prison inmates on a daily basis, many of those same inmates would be hard-pressed to explain just what it is that Specter and the PLO's 12 staff attorneys have done on their behalf over the years. And this is in spite of the numerous "Notice of Settlement" placards which grace the walls of virtually every room inhabited by inmates throughout the state's vast prison system.

PROFOUND CHANGES

The placards themselves attest to the PLO's relentless successes in bringing about often-profound changes in many diverse areas. Those areas include access and assistance for disabled inmates, the timing of Lifers' parole hearings, access and continuing improvements to dental care and mental health care and the long-running battle over access and quality of medical services and care.

It is the evolution of this last case, a case filed by the PLO in 2001 over unconstitutionally poor health care, that has come to define the 29-year career in public interest law for Specter. For this is the case that has come to be known as the "overcrowding" case, a case that has resulted in a ruling from a special three-judge federal panel calling for the early release from prisons of up to 46,000 California inmates. Specter is the lead attorney for the inmate plaintiffs in the landmark class-action lawsuit.

"Who could really know, in the beginning, the scope and the eventual impact of this case. It has taken on a life of its own," he commented.

Public interest legal work is



Donald Specter of the PLO

commonly recognized as among the lowest-paying areas for attorneys, but I expressed the hope that perhaps this case might bring to the PLO some recognition for its arduous work after the many years its staff has toiled in relative obscurity on inmates' behalf.

"It (public interest law) is, for the most part, low-profile work," he said. "But it has been very rewarding for us to know that we have been instrumental in bringing about major improvements in the quality of lives for those imprisoned, that we have managed to make a difference."

The PLO was founded on New Year's Day in 1976 by two recent Berkeley law school grads, Paul Comiskey and Mike Satris. They located their offices right outside the S.Q. walls with the intention of providing free legal services to inmates needing assistance with such issues as divorces, property loss and appeals.

The PLO is a non-profit,

*Specter
joined the PLO
after working
with the Marin
Public Defender*

privately funded organization originally funded through charitable donations by San Francisco organizations, including the San Francisco Foundation and Catholic Social Services. The current 20-member staff works out of offices in Berkeley and is now solely funded through the attorneys' fees that are awarded through the courts in the many cases the PLO has won and is currently pursuing.

After graduating from the University of San Francisco, Specter served an internship with the Marin County Public Defender's Office before joining the PLO in 1980. In addition to managing and directing the legal and administrative operations of the PLO, Specter maintains

an extensive appellate practice which has taken him to the hallowed halls of the United States Supreme Court as well as the California Supreme Court on numerous occasions.

The primary function of the PLO today is to identify and litigate cases which affect the confinement and overall quality of life behind bars in California's prisons. In addition, a wide variety of free self-help and informational material is provided to inmates, including a habeas corpus manual, parolee rights manual, and a personal injury lawsuit packet, plus material regarding divorce, immigration, plea bargains, release dates, worktime credits, guard brutality and more.

The PLO publishes and periodically updates The California State Prisoners' Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide To Prison and Parole Law. Specter notes that his office currently receives an average of 100 letters per day from inmates requesting information, assistance and legal advice.

Asked what the future holds for him, Specter replied: "It is important to note that five California Department of Corrections directors have told me that they're gonna 'clean things up so you don't have a job anymore'."

But the results of the recent "overcrowding" trial would seem to indicate that, within the walls of California's sprawling prisons, there is still much to do.

With "still plenty of gas left in the tank," Specter, 58, says he's looking for a "visiting rights for Lifers" case to take on, and would also relish an opportunity to weigh in on the "deplorable" state of juvenile prisons.

"There's still plenty of work to be done," he said, noting that each year the U.S. Supreme Court chooses a case to hear that allows it to define and lessen prisoners' rights.

Does this, then, spell trouble for his overcrowding lawsuit if, as is appearing more and more likely, it should eventually wind up in the hands of the nine justices on the Supreme Court?

A STRONGER CASE

"I still expect to win," Specter says. "We presented a very compelling case which would be hard for the justices to ignore. California's own governor has declared his prisons in a critical state of emergency due to massive overcrowding. The governor's proposals actually makes our case stronger."

"This is a very politically charged issue," he noted. Specter expects that the U.S. Supreme Court will issue a temporary stay to prevent early releases pending a hearing before the full court, adding, "The court will rule in our favor. I expect to see the inmates released."

Federal Court's Ruling

Continued from Page 1

overcrowded, or that the quality of health care in the prisons is at an unconstitutional level. The state's contention at trial was to deny that the overcrowding was the "primary" cause for the poor level of health care. In order for the court to order early releases, the law requires that overcrowding must be identified as the "primary" cause of the constitutional violations. The judges ruled that this was, indeed, the court's finding.

POPULATION JUMPS

California's prison population has increased 750 percent since the mid-70's due to determinate sentencing, mandatory minimums and three-strikes laws.

The Prison Litigation Reform Act, under which the trial was held, requires that a release order must be a remedy of last resort, and have no detrimental effect upon public safety.

The judges noted that California has no immediate prison construction plans and thus lacks the means to build its way out of the overcrowding dilemma in a reasonable period of time.

The judges pointed out that four former prison administrators testified as expert witnesses on behalf of the inmate plaintiffs, three of whom had never before testified in any court on behalf of inmates. Two of these prison administration experts were not paid for their expert testimony. The experts all agreed that crowding affects every aspect of a prison's ability to operate effectively.

Former S.Q. Prison warden and CDCR director Jeanne Woodford testified extensively on behalf of the plaintiffs and repeatedly condemned the overcrowding and the level of health care. "Two officers to supervise 200 is grossly inadequate," Woodford testified, noting that the practice is common at S.Q. and most other CDCR facilities.

Testimony during the trial established that at least one inmate was dying unnecessarily each week as a direct result of poor quality health care, or, in some cases, a complete lack of medical attention.

California also has an extraordinarily high suicide rate attributed in large part to a lack of mental health care and/or intervention. In 2006 (the last year for which figures were available) 25.1 inmates per 100,000 were dying as compared to a national average of 14 per 100,000.

Only one expert witness testified for the state, and the court noted that this witness wrote his report before visiting a single prison in California. The court noted there was "...no credible evidence presented by the defendants," and characterized the defendants' witness as "unreliable."

The court blasted the state's

plans for transferring inmates out-of-state as woefully inadequate in scope and size, and questioned the potential adverse effects such moves have on the inmates.

Expert testimony established that California DOES NOT incarcerate felons at an unusually high rate, and the average sentence served in California is lower than the national average. The problem lies in the fact that the state has one of the nation's highest return-to-prison rates. Experts also testified that there is no lessening of recidivism rate associated with length of stay behind bars.

NO WORK OR REHAB

Experts for both sides supported expansion of "Good Time" credits. In addition, the court suggested that the state could explore enhancing program participation credits, extensive parole reforms, sentencing reforms and increasing viable rehabilitative programming for inmates.

Testimony in the trial established that for the previous year, 2007, fully 50 percent of exiting inmates had no work assignment or rehabilitative program assignment.

The records reflect that 134,000 inmates are released annually from California's prisons, while 70,000 parole violators are returned to prison each year. Of this total, 17,000 are technical violators meaning that they have committed no new crime.

"The evidence," stated the court, "is clear and convincing, indeed overwhelmingly persuasive. We do not find that overcrowding is the only cause, but simply that it is the primary one."

'Get Involved'

An advisor to California senators who draft laws concerning public safety and policy came to San Quentin last month to inform prisoners about the reality of how laws are made in California and how that process profoundly affects prison reform.

Steven Meinrath, counsel to the Senate Committee on Public Safety, wanted prisoners to understand that the perception of being soft on crime is a position politicians fear and heavily influences their votes and policy.

"You must see yourselves as a part of the solution by working on your life stories," Meinrath said. "The people who decide how your lives are lived, don't know who you are. They need to hear from you directly." Meinrath stressed, "Inmates have families. They need to vote!"

He said that the lawmakers need to know what rehabilitative programs are beneficial to inmates and why. He suggested that prisoners write about Arts in Corrections, college programs and vocational programs, among others. Inmates may address their comments and responses to Steve Meinrath, Counsel, Senate Committee on Public Safety, Room 2031, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814 —*Arnulfo Garcia and Juan Haines.*



Inmates, staff and volunteers walk the lower yard in San Quentin's two-day event supporting breast cancer funding and research

Continued from Page 1

the committee and served as the liaison between the incarcerated men and the administration as well as between the administration and the outside community. Chief Deputy Warden Vincent N. Cullen, Public Information Officer Samuel Robinson, CEO of Health Care Services Jackie Clark and Associate Warden over Health Care Services K. J. Williams also supported the event. Early Saturday morning before the general population was released for breakfast, event coordinators moved tables and chairs from the education building to the yard, still covered in dew. The tables and chairs served as

rest areas for various self-help groups that operate within SQ and whose incarcerated and free volunteers came to participate in the walk. Makeshift barriers were also set up to establish a visibly contained walking area around the track that encompasses “San Quentin’s Field of Dreams” – the name of the baseball field. A small stage rested in the middle of the field on which the S. Q. Arts in Corrections program set up a sound system that would provide not only the music that would encourage the walkers to persist, but would also serve as a platform for speakers and survivors to address and inspire walkers and also to have opening

and closing ceremonies. Around 7:30 a.m. the incarcerated walkers purposefully trickled down to the track. Soon afterwards one could hear excited chatter as they looked past the new \$160 million hospital to see the outside community walkers appearing from behind the building and headed toward the track wearing pink shirts – the color of breast cancer awareness. The shirts were made especially for this event and were printed with the words “San Quentin C. A. R. E. S.” The Catholic Chaplain, Rev. Stephen Barber, lead a prayer and representatives of the Native American community David Levett, Henry Frank, Joe Hoaglen, Robert Colbert Michael Alfaro and Zuni opened with a song and drumming honoring women. The walk began with Warden Wong and cancer survivor Jaimee Karroll leading a unity walk for the first lap. Then the walking groups became clear as people walked at different paces while engaging in casual conversation.

Midday, some walkers broke for a lunch consisting of turkey sandwiches and water. Most tables were encircled by people drawing posters in commemoration of breast cancer survivors and the meaning of the day. Women who are either survivors of breast cancer or whose lives have been touched by knowing someone who had breast cancer gave inspirational speeches. Saturday’s walk ended at 2:00 p. m. and everyone returned to their homes or their cells to prepare for the next day of walking. The second day of the walk went just as the first. Ceremonies ended with closing remarks from Bowman and the organizing committee. Lamb stated that we all have important women in our lives who have for many of us been the one stabilizing force and that this was our opportunity to be faithful to those who have been so faithful to us. Finally, the men presented a mock check to State Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner who, in her acceptance speech, recalled memories of her mother’s fight with breast cancer.



Joining Faith, Survivor, Strength and Hope

National Prison News Briefs

SACRAMENTO – Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has given the go-ahead on planning for a new Death Row at San Quentin State Prison. Legislators have attempted to block the construction fearing that the state’s plan to double-cell up to two-thirds of the inmates will not withstand a federal court challenge.

ROME – A Rome based human rights watch group announced that there were 5,727 executions worldwide in 2008. Hands Off Cain said the total was a decrease from the year before. China remained the world’s top executioner, while executions in the U.S. were down.

CHINO – Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger toured the California Institution For Men where more than 1300 inmates were involved in a riot. Schwarzenegger said the riot was a direct result of the massive overcrowding that plagues California prisons and clearly shows the need to reform sentencing laws.

BURGIN, KY – Rioting inmates severely damaged several buildings at a state prison. Eight staff members and eight inmates were injured and hundreds of other inmates had to be relocated to other prisons.

NEW YORK CITY – Plaxico Burress’ lawyer says his client

has hired a prison consultant to prepare him for life behind bars. Burress, 32, has agreed to a two-year prison term for criminal possession of a weapon after shooting himself in the thigh at a Manhattan nightclub.

LOS ANGELES – A 55-man crew made up of inmates from the CDCR and their supervisors narrowly escaped death when a fire they were fighting in the Los Angeles National Forest unexpectedly roared through their camp. Two members of the Los Angeles County Fire Dept. were killed in the incident when their truck rolled down a hillside.

DENVER – Officials plan to release 15 percent of Colorado’s 23,000 prisoners early over the next two years. The move will save the state millions of dollars.

HATTIESBURG, MISS. – A private prison van carrying three guards and nine prisoners ran off an interstate and overturned, killing the driver. One guard and two prisoners were in critical condition.

TOKYO – Japan executes mentally ill prisoners, some of whom are driven insane by decades of solitary confinement. The prisoners are not told when their execution will be carried out until the morning of the execution.

Counting Up the Costs Of the Big Inmate Shuffle

By **ARNULFO GARCIA**
and **JUAN HAINES**
Journalism Guild Writers

The big shuffle of inmates within the California prison system over the past several weeks has led to a more “logical” housing of inmates but to all kinds of difficulties for many of San Quentin’s prisoners themselves. California classifies its inmates into four groups, ranging from Close A, which calls for the most supervision, on down to Close B, Medium A and Medium B, which requires the least. The changes at S.Q. have mainly been to acquire space in cellblocks for Close B prisoners from other facilities. That has meant moving out the Medium A inmates who have been living in those cells, often for many years.

MOST WANT TO STAY

An outsider might think an inmate would welcome being moved from a S.Q. cell to a dormitory in a less restrictive prison. A few inmates do, but most do not.

S.Q. is known as the “program prison” among the state’s 33 adult facilities. There’s a lot going on to keep an inmate occupied, become educated and rehabilitated and perhaps qualify earlier for parole. No other California prison comes

close to having the same number of programs. Among the programs are on-site college courses, not present at nearly any other state prison. Also, racial tensions at San Quentin are at a much lower level than at some other facilities, making it a good place for inmates not involved in those issues.

PLUG-INS BANNED

Those are not the only reasons for the upset. In their S.Q. cell inmates can have a television, electric typewriter, radio, pot for heating water and plug-in razors and clippers. At the prisons to which some inmates are being transferred, those items are often prohibited. Only battery-operated appliances are allowed. Prisoners who recently bought plug-in items with the help of their families now find that the items can’t be used at their new location.

Aggravating the situation is the fact that the prison system is under tremendous pressure from the financially strapped state government to cut costs. This has led to a push from Sacramento to get bodies on the transfer bus irrespective of any hardships that might be involved, hardships that notably include transfer away from the inmate’s family, generally considered a positive influence.

Going Green

Welcome to a Life in Sustainability

By MICHAEL R. HARRIS
Editor in Chief
and JULIAN GLENN
PADGETT
Journalism Guild Writer

Every Friday morning in the education building 12 individuals gather with a leader in training inmates for careers in the fields of renewable and sustainable energy.

Topics like solar panel and wind generator installation, water power, aquaponics, perma-composting, high yield gardening and living off the grid are the norm at these gatherings. Welcome to the Green Life.

Angela Sevin, who holds a Master's Degree in experiential education, is the official sponsor of "The Green Life," and the former sponsor of "Keepin' it Real."

Sevin said, "The Green Life is a peer-educated, self help course with an intensive curriculum of topics that relate to subjects like anger management, substance abuse and father son relationships."

"These peer educated classes integrate pathways toward obtaining necessary skills and temperament to successfully perform in the new environmentally conscious America."

She went on to say, "Our program is combining efforts of various prison assistance groups to make S.Q. the first California prison, and the second in the country, to go green. It is a directive program to enable or empower these men to discover what it is they actually want to do."

Peer educator Michael Harris said, "Van Jones said when he was here, you guys are great entrepreneurs. He gave a shout to that. But he said you just chose the wrong product."

PUBLIC SAFETY

Lawrence Blankenship, a Green Life peer educator housed in H-unit, emphasized, "It is a learner centered, performance based program for inmates who want to be an asset to public safety and not a liability. By having employable skills we become positive helpers in our communities and not destroyers." He pointed out that, "We're like community builders. This gives me the chance to encourage people to do the right thing. That's what I am happy about."

Sevin explained, "The idea was inspired by Van's talk with the men and this is now his mantra: '... if we care enough about our planet to recycle and to not throw away aluminum cans, we can also salvage and maintain the lives of humans. Giving second chances to our prison population equals no 'throw away people'."

Courtney Mazzola is a facilitator for The Green Life and a Marriage and Family Therapy Intern Psychologist. Mazzola said, "The Green life is a progressive movement answering

Jones' call to help improve our planet by harnessing sun, wind, and water for renewable and sustainable power. We're using nature's most precious resources to lesson our carbon footprint. This is an opportunity to be involved in courses that will prepare these men inwardly by showing them how to be active participants in their own lives"

Mazzola added, "The men, at S.Q. will learn new green technology trades taught by professionals in their respective fields. Mazzola ended by saying, "This in turn helps our neighborhoods, and promotes public safety, upgrades the planet and eventually the entire universe."

GIVING BACK

"To be in S.Q. is a unique opportunity to really look at life how we use to live it," said Cornelius Wigfall, another Green Life peer educator and an inmate at S.Q., "These kids are constantly coming in and out. They have no directions, no life skills, they have nothing. To be a part of giving them something, a chance they did not have is Karma to me, and that feels good."

Beth Waitkus the director of Insight Garden Project, better known as (IGP), is also an organizational consultant. When asked what motivated her to become involved in The Green Life, Waitkus said, "Inside Garden Project has been down in H-Unit for six years. It evolved from a very tiny little program way back in 2002. We started when Jeanne Woodford was the warden and our goal is to help rehabilitate men through the process of organic gardening." She commented further and said, "We believe that process helps us to reconnect to ourselves, our communities and our natural environment."

Said peer educator Samuel Hearn, "I was drawn to this program because nobody out there taught me that there was a better way. Everyone that reached out to me said, 'Here's a gun. Go do this.' I came to prison when I was 19 and as I look back over my life I try to figure out what could I have done that would have made things better, what decisions could I have made as opposed to being a part of the problem itself? No one ever told me that if you go to school you can do this. In these courses you can build a plan here and map out your life for success."

Troy Williams said, "It's time for a change and The Green Life is the new revolution. I cannot think of any other movement that is peaceful and necessary to save the planet and all of mankind. I want to be a part of the driving force that wakes America up by stopping the violence in our neighborhoods, and keeping our youth from walking down the same destructive paths I did. The Green Life is a grass roots



Planning session for San Quentin's Growing Green Initiative

movement that has the potential to do all that, as well as provide economic outlets for urban communities."

Joanne Connelly, the curriculum developer for The Green Life, said, "These courses are designed for the inner growth of each individual person. Our curriculum includes identifying negative mental triggers and how to overcome them, realistic and

attainable goal charting and an assessment of life skills. In addition we will also focus on the emotional preparedness and core needs of the students. Connelly also revealed, "Our plan is to invite companies to S.Q. who want to train inmates for renewable energy jobs. Connelly finished by saying, "I have enjoyed the passion and individual initiative in this group of men."

Inmate Kevin Tindall said, "I destroyed my community. After one destroys, you want to rebuild your community. I didn't have anyone support me so I want to give of myself by helping others. With the skills taught here I can do that."

Sevin also revealed, "We need to collaborate to come up with a better plan not only for ourselves but for San Quentin, as well."

Growing Important Connections

By JONATHAN
HARRINGTON
Contributing Writer

The Insight Garden Program (IGP), which has an organic flower garden on the H-Unit yard, relies heavily on establishing outside community partnerships so we can support awareness for our program. For instance, we have established solid relationships with other like-minded service providers, the media, and made numerous presentations to academic institutions, gardening programs, community associations and employees..

We have developed these outside connections to gain support, understanding and raise awareness of our program and the inmates' predicament. Many of the aforementioned have also visited our program, become volunteers and financial supporters, as well as "Ambassadors" for our program and prison reform.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

With community partnerships established between IGP, its class participants and the surrounding communities, those of us in the program have a chance to meet and interact with possible employers and connections with other job placement programs to lay the ground work for a network of post-release support. In developing that continuum of care, these connections help people and potential employers understand



Tower 9 looms over the garden at San Quentin

prisoners' challenges to employment after release, and strategies to move through these barriers so men can find work and become successful employees and community members.

IGP's staff is made up of a group of dedicated and committed volunteers. Beth Waitkus, the founder and director of IGP, designs the curriculum and manages the program and builds many of the community relationships inside and outside of the prison walls. Mark Stefanski, a high school biology teacher, provides the scientific framework for gardening, plant biology and ecological issues.

START GIVING BACK

John Pateros, a process coach, teaches a self-transformation process with an emphasis on the "inner gardener" – helping people learn to heal themselves. Quin Ellis, a professional landscaper and gardener, teaches the basics of gardening and landscap-

ing. And finally, Christi Vaughn provides her essential gardening and administrative skills to help Waitkus run the program.

We've also had the honor of welcoming some wonderful guests to our program, including internationally renowned system thinkers, ecologists and authors; perm culturists; landscape architects; directors and producers of environmental documentaries; reentry specialists and staff from local green jobs programs.

With all the community involvement and help from volunteers, IGP wants to start giving back. With a new vegetable garden in the works (see previous article), it will be possible to do just that. When inmates harvest and donate food, it will be given back to the community and non-profits most in need. It will also help us build a stronger sense of community in the prison, helping men gain the skills they need to reconnect to themselves, their communities and the natural world.

San Quentin Honors the Heroes of 9/11

America changed irrevocably on September 11, 2001, when terrorism struck in New York, Washington D.C and Pennsylvania. Each year people around the country set aside time to remember those who died on that horrific day. We call it Patriot Day. New York/Washington, Sep 11, 2001.

Mourners in the U.S. gathered Friday to remember the nearly 3,000 people killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. President Obama has declared Sept. 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

In New York, Vice President Joe Biden and Mayor Michael Bloomberg gathered with families of the victims near the site of the attacks, now known as Ground Zero.



S.Q. Fire Department turns out to join the ceremony

President Obama joined families of the victims for a memorial service at the Pentagon, which was also hit by another hijacked airliner on that fateful day.

Across America people gath-

ered to mourn the lives lost that day. Including a ceremony at the gates of one of America's oldest prison's, San Quentin.

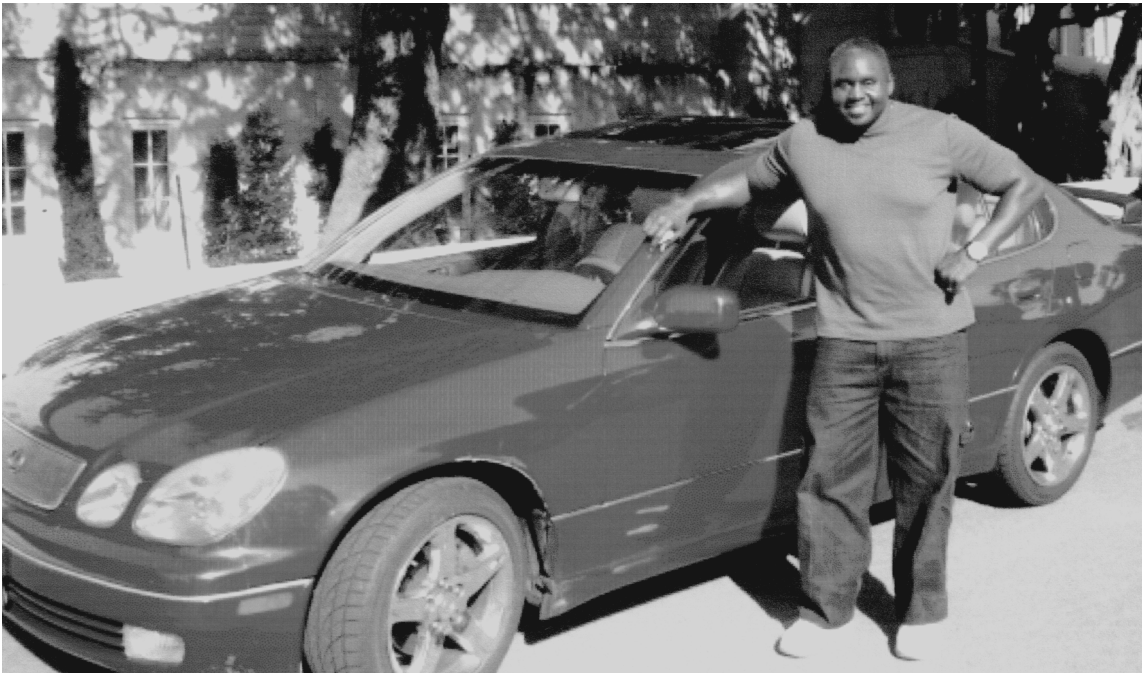
According to Public Information Officer Samuel Robinson,



CDCR officers honor the many who lost their lives

the ceremony at the prison was presided over by Chief Deputy Warden Vincent Cullen, with a number of the prison's staff in attendance. At one point in the ceremony "Taps" was played while a

moment of silence was observed. Also attending the ceremony was S. Q.'s finest; a group of inmates who are trained to attend to emergency situations that occur throughout the prison.



Jesse Reed is ready to roll with a college degree from Patten University

Jesse Reed Says Goodbye After 24 Years

By **RAPHAEL E. CALIX**
Contributing Writer

On a quiet Thursday morning of June 11, 2009, convict Jesse Reed stepped out of San Quentin and into a new life, freed on parole after 24 years in prison. In 1985 he was convicted of first-degree murder/robbery, and sentenced to 25-years-to-life.

He describes the California prison system at that time as like a smoking cauldron for gang violence.

NO GUARANTEE

Racial tension led to open riots and bloodshed in the cellblocks. Convicts were becoming more ruthless in the attempt to wield control over prison politics. There was no guarantee that every soul entering prison would walk out alive, or even like a man.

During the 1980s the corrections department had a "no warning shots" policy. A simple fistfight could become deadly as bullets fired from the guards would pierce the flesh, and for some convicts hot lead was not deterrence.

Early on Reed realized that the physical/material world had driven him into a life of crime and drug addiction and he called unto God for help. "I was the one who had turned away. After

serving time at other prisons, I got down on my knees and asked God to intervene. He sent me to S.Q. and I made a promise to him that I would depart from evil and do good, and that I would seek peace and pursue it," just like the Psalmist David had lived (Psalms 34:14).

He earned a vocational certificate in computer software application and an Associate of Arts degree from Patten University at S.Q.. He entered the seminary and continues to pursue his goals for a higher education. During his last years at S.Q., the Board of Parole Hearings found him suitable for parole three times, and each time the governor rejected its decision.

Reed again turned to God and the courts. His prayers were answered when Judge Larry J. Goodman ordered his release over the governor's veto

It has been over four months since his release. His stability has not wavered in the face of an economic downturn in the Bay Area. Jobs are scarce and unemployment has affected his immediate goals.

"Nothing has frightened me out here," he said. "I cherish and appreciate each day. There are many things that I took advantage of while inside. The Incarcerated Men Putting Away Childish

Things (IMPACT) program helped when it made me realize who I am. The 'image vs. reality' module helped me take off the mask. In the past, false pride prevented me from reaching out to others in the community. But today, through patience and the ability to let-go and let-God, I am now connected to my family and community."

SING PRAISES

On Aug. 16, he delivered a sermon at the Union Baptist Church in Vallejo. "I was humbled by the out-pouring of support. Everybody, including Pastor J.W. McCoy, made me feel loved and needed. I was able to sing praises to the Lord with all of my brothers and sisters on the outside!" Reed said.

Asked how the prison system can be improved, he said, "The CDCR lacks preparation programs for inmates re-entering society. A mandatory educational/vocational program should be in effect for everyone. Re-entry education should be emphasized. No prisoner should leave prison unprepared. Treatment centers with residence status should be available. Behavior modification opportunities are essential. Simple things like a birth certificate and a Social Security card would help for a smooth transition into the community."

J. T. Evans Heads Out the S.Q. Gate

By **JULIANGLENN PADGETT**
Journalism Guild Writer



Officer J. T. Evans

"San Quentin is my second home and I'll miss it a lot," said Correctional Officer J.T. Evans as he spoke about his upcoming retirement. "I started working here Aug. 18, 1980. I was 21 years old and right out of college. I've done all of my 29 years here." Nicknamed "The Brick" because of his imposing stature, Evans is 6 feet, 4 inches tall and weighs 275 pounds.

He credited his father, a respected law enforcement officer, for guiding him. "My dad was a policeman. He wanted his sons on the police force or in the military," he explained.

"When I first walked in here it was tough because of the level of violence. There was hatred all around, of officers and of inmates. You had to be strong or you didn't make it," he said.

Asked about rehabilitative programs being cut due to the budget crisis, he said, "I've seen the positive end of it and by cutting those programs inmates revert back to who they were. It's going to be a big downfall for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). The 'R' might as well be taken out if you're going to slice rehabilitation programs. Cuts affect the outcome of public safety in the long run and make higher recidivism rates."

BAD PAROLE SYSTEM

Does he see a federal takeover? "No, the state will rebound."

Asked what he would say to Gov. Schwarzenegger, he said, "I think that we have the worst parole system in the world. Either restructure it or get rid of it. Save California some major money."

As for the Board of Parole Hearings (BPH), Evans said, "I feel the one problem with the BPH is that they get shot down

(by the governor). Why have a board when you don't trust their recommendations?"

Asked if he plans to be involved with S.Q. after retirement, he said, "Yes, I'd like to work here in some capacity, either part time or as a sponsor. S. Q. is my second family, I feel the administration here are all competent. We are the best prison in the state."

H1N1 UPDATE

Prison health care workers are awaiting delivery of vaccine for the H1N1 flu strain. According to Public Health Nurse Allyson Tabor, the prison has asked for 7000 doses of the new vaccine, but officials in Sacramento originally calculated the prison's needs at 4,300 doses, leaving Tabor and other health care workers unsure of how much S.Q. will receive. The new supply will include both versions of the vaccine, inhaled as well as injectable.

The inhaled version of the H1N1 vaccine is a live, weakened form of the flu strain, says Tabor, and is licensed only for those aged 2-49 years. People with any sort of compromised or weakened immune system should not take the inhaled form of vaccine.

S.Q. held an initial round of regular seasonal flu vaccinations Oct. 2, but ran far short of the amount needed to serve the entire prison population. Tabor estimates that 22 percent of inmates at S.Q. who were seeking a flu shot were able to receive a seasonal flu vaccination. More of the seasonal flu strain vaccine will arrive with the H1N1 supply.

Spencer Michels’ Penetrating View of the Crisis in California’s Prisons

By DAVID MARSH
and MICHAEL HARRIS

Television news correspondent Spencer Michels recent trip to San Quentin prison was a return to places where he has gathered news in turbulent times past, and has come once again on a new mission to gather information for his latest assignment.

His assignment is to investigate three very complex issues such as the impending drastic cuts in California’s prison programs, the potential early release of thousands of the state’s inmates to the streets and the impact of federal medical Receiver Clark Kelso’s on-going spending plan in California’s prisons. Mix in three enlightening interviews with the likes of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Secretary Matt Cate, federal Receiver Kelso and state Attorney General and would-be-governor-again Jerry Brown. Then carefully weave together highlights of his interviews with these very volatile topics in order to produce five or six minutes of hard-hitting and informative, fact-based TV reporting intended to capture the attention of a nationwide audience.

That is the challenge facing Michels following his recent trip through S.Q. on Wednesday, Aug. 12, in search of a story for his employer, Jim Lehrer of “The News Hour With Jim Lehrer.” The *SQ News* was invited to tag along with Michels and his cameraman as they made their trek around the aging prison by the bay.

SEARCH FOR NEWS

Following Michels’ search for the news on what was a very pleasant afternoon, we were promised a few moments with him in order that we might record for our readers Michels’ perspectives on these important issues which are beginning to reshape the lives of every inmate behind the walls of California’s 33 prisons.

But first we watched as Michels engaged inmate Ernest Morgan in a prearranged interview in the Garden Chapel area. What, Michels asked of Morgan, a San Francisco native currently serving a 15-years-to-life term, does the potential loss of most or all of the educational and vocational programming offered at the prison mean to SQ’s inmate population?

Morgan, with the sharp perspective of a man who has spent the past 22 years of his life behind bars, shared some profound insights of an inmate population that would find itself severely handicapped in its critical efforts at rehabilitation. Michels listened attentively, voicing his surprise when Morgan noted, for instance, that Lifers have a recidivism rate of less than 1.0 percent.

Following the Morgan interview, Michels sat for a few moments to answer our own questions about his interviews with Cate, Kelso and Brown.



Spencer Michels has Emmy awards to his credit

“It is absurd,” said Michels, “this level of overcrowding in California’s prisons. And it is important to note that although Cate seemed to articulate some very good ideas for change, I have interviewed a few other CDCR heads in the past that also had some very great plans for change. But for whatever the reasons, change just hasn’t come.”

Regarding Receiver Kelso, Michels said, “I think the

attention the receiver has put on this issue is astounding.” Still, Michels pointed out from his many years of experience in the news business, the real problem is with a public which seems to have very little empathy with a person who has been convicted of breaking society’s rules and is then placed out of sight behind bars to receive their punishment.

As for Jerry Brown, Michels expressed great admiration for a

man of such advanced years who has survived for so long in politics. “But still,” he pointed out, “he is still a politician. And in this state, he’s not going to stand up and say that he is in favor of releasing inmates. So it’s impossible to know where he really stands.”

LIVES IN MARIN

Michels, a Princeton-educated San Francisco native who resides in Marin with his wife, acknowledges the mountain of work before him in preparing his segment for airing on a future edition of “The News Hour With Jim Lehrer.”

“A lot of film will wind up on the floor in order to get what I need for my segment,” said Michels with a smile. The difficult choices made in the editing process will play a large role in determining the eventual face of Michels’ report when it airs.

Michels has 48 combined years in print and electronic media, taking his first job in 1961 as a reporter for the Palo Alto Times, and he remembers well coming to S.Q. in 1972 to cover the aborted escape and shooting of Black activist and author George Jackson.

He has held his position in the San Francisco office of “The News Hour” since 1991 and has produced hundreds of five- to ten-minute segments for the show on issues including politics, health, science, the environment and art. He has won several Emmys for his work.

How R&R Works at San Quentin

Continued from Page 1

most common illnesses observed is hypertension.

The nurses report they examine 70 to 85 prisoners per day, with 85 a mandated maximum set by Sacramento headquarters.

Younger prisoners were more likely to be disruptive; older prisoners are usually calmer.

Registered Nurse Mike Sokoloff said, “After the prisoner leaves the lab, where blood is drawn and packaged for further testing, and the LVNs have taken the prisoners’ vital signs, they are sent to me, where I ask them a series of questions. I review their current medical status to determine appropriate treatment or appointments for further consideration by doctors. We don’t necessarily perform major treatment at or in R&R. That is not our purpose; serious medical conditions are treated at the main hospital.”

Besides processing prisoners in and out of S.Q., R&R is responsible for materials such as packages coming in and out of the prison. This responsibility falls upon Correctional Officers Plagman and Moore.

Plagman, a veteran correctional officer at S.Q., takes great care in the delivery of packages to the prisoners. He is well respected by all prisoners. Plagman said, “I look at everybody as a human being. I learned even before being a correctional officer that you have to give respect to get respect.”

S.Q. R&R will be moved to the first floor of the newly built hospital when it is completed.

SPORTS

Sports Trivia

By DARRELL HARTLEY
Staff Writer

(1). What is the nickname of Dallas Cowboys Hall of Famer Michael Irvin?

Answer: The Playmaker.

(2). Who is the NFL’s All-Time Sack Leader?

Answer: Former New York Giant Defensive End and Super Bowl champion Michael Strahan.

(3). Who is the St. Louis Cardinals all-time leader in stolen bases?

Answer: Vince Coleman.

(4). How many Super Bowls did Thomas “Hollywood” Hen-

derson play in?

Answer: Three. One versus the Denver Broncos and the Pittsburgh Steelers twice.

(5). Where is Larry Bird’s hometown?

Answer: French Lick, Indiana.

(6). What two college teammates were called the Pony Express?

Answer: Eric Dickerson and Craig James of Southern Methodist University.

(7). What is the nickname of former Seattle Sonics forward Shawn Kemp?

Answer: Rain Man.



Runners pass the gate to Prison Industries

Thousand Mile Club Churns Laps

By JONATHAN COPE
Journalism Guild Writer

Abraham Yera Ortiz and Ronnie Goodman led the charge on a sunny summer day as the San Quentin Thousand Mile Club reeled off laps around the Lower Yard. The event was run without alarms or fanfare but the runners did have a gauntlet of sorts.

They had to make their way past and through practice for a basketball team and a field full of football players, plus the construction site with men at work.

The top performances by Ortiz

and Goodman were 52 laps, or 13 miles, in 1:29:50 and 1:30:55, respectively. Following them, also with 13 miles, was Eddie Tate, 1:59:06. Finishing 10 miles were Bill Pillars, 1:31:35; Malcolm Jones, 1:44:11, and Ronnie Richardson, 2:06:06.

Completing five miles were Mike Villanueva, 37:08; Eddie Tate, 37:36; James Hall, 39:34; Jerome Black, 45:26; Noel Valdivia, 49:00, and Paul Cooksey, winner of the over-60 division in 55:08. The run was supported by Laura Bowman, Coach Frank Ruona, Community Volunteer Jill Friedman and SQIMK Chairman Steve Pascascio. .



An Explosion of Notes

Linda Rice, the Harp Lady

By JOHN EAGAN
San Quentin News Adviser
and JONATHAN COPE
Journalism Guild Writer

To tens of thousands of prison inmates across the nation, she is “The Harp Lady,” who charms and amazes audiences with her blue 47-string acoustic/electric harp and the heavenly music it echoes in concerts from San Quentin to Florida.

She is Linda Rice, whose musical specialty is weaving several songs into one amazing explosion of notes and tunes and rhythms.

“If you listen closely you will hear *Turkey In The Straw* on *Go, Tell It On The Mountain*, *Shortnin’ Bread* on *Revive Us Again* and Ravel’s *Bolero* running parallel to *Silent Night*. I enjoy taking familiar gospel hymns and giving them new rhythms and new life,” Rice explains.

“I’m always experimenting with the harp. I love to weave things in the strings of my harp. I have various shoestrings, parachute cords, ribbons, piping, waxed paper, luncheon napkins and paint chips in my brief case. Audiences are always amazed at the different sounds these household items can make. A simple hair ribbon can imitate the sound of the lute stop on a harpsichord. I use it when I play, *Jesus, Joy Of Man’s Desiring*. I especially like *Sweet Hour Of Prayer* (based on the chords of *Basin Street Blues*), *His Eye Is On The Sparrow*, and *Higher Ground*.”

THE BLUE HARP

Other favorites include *Stairway to Heaven* by Led Zeppelin with *Jacob’s Ladder*; and Jimi Hendrix’s *Purple Haze* with *Wayfaring Stranger*. Sometimes she even weaves four or five tunes into one selection.

She weaves her Christian testimony into her performances, which have covered 25 states, sprinkling her talk with humor. As for her attire, “I always try to look inconspicuous by wearing a blue sequined jacket to match my blue harp.”

This year she performed in 70



Linda Rice and her harp have traveled thousands of miles

prisons in nine states: California, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. She appeared at two S. Q. concerts on June 28.

She has also performed

‘The Harp Ministry is a calling’

in churches and state prisons in Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Kansas, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Washington state.

Concerts have also been performed in federal penitentiaries in Florence, Colo., Leavenworth, Kan., Terre Haute, Ind., Coleman, Fla, Pollock, La., Tucson, Ariz., and Atwater, Calif.

She also provided harp music

for a White House Christmas open house in 2007 and piano music for another Yule event in the White House last December.

Accompanying Linda on her travels is her husband of 42 years, Willis, a retired Air Force pilot who sets up the sound system. “This harp ministry is a ‘calling’ on our lives,” she explained. “After Willis retired from the Air Force, we both felt that God was calling us into a full-time harp ministry. That was 1992. We still have our motto ‘You call, we haul.’ We travel everywhere in a big van, and play 70 concerts a year in prisons.”

The van has logged 346,000 miles around the country.

GIVING TESTIMONY

Willis gives his testimony at the end of each concert. He then invites anyone who wants to become a Christian to raise a hand. Hundreds of inmates have done just that. The Rices do not receive any money from any state or federal prison. Referring to an appearance at Forest Park United Methodist Church, Panama City, Florida, Dr. John Friedman wrote, “She plays with her hands, but what you really hear is her heart.”

Religion

Explaining the Path and the Goal of Church Discipline

By DARRELL C. HARTLEY
Staff Writer

In the confines of any organization, discipline is a mechanism of correction that should ultimately lead to restoration of the offender. This holds true in the church in situations of unintentional error and/or private sin. In this San Quentin News feature, Garden Chapel Christian Fellowship Protestant Chaplain and Senior Pastor Dr. Morris A. Curry Jr. provides scriptural and spiritual insight regarding church discipline.

Pastor Curry, what is the goal of church discipline?

Based upon Matthew 18:15-17, (dealing with a sinning brother or sister) the goal of church discipline is to protect the church from being permeated with sin and false doctrine. Correct erring church members. Restore an erring member.

What initial steps does the church take to correct the offense of the member?

- Go to the person and show them their fault in private.
- Should the person not listen, return with one or two witnesses.
- Should the person refuse to listen, bring the matter before the church.

Would this be a process of gentle restoration for the member?

Indeed. The discipline must be handled carefully, straightforwardly and lovingly. The correction should never be vengeful, instead it should be given to bring about a cure. Discipline is in hope that the experience would bring the person to God, to destroy their vice through repentance.

Is there a moral code in regards to church discipline of the member?

Yes. The church has the responsibility to maintain standards of morality that are found in God’s commandments. Transgressions cannot be tolerated in the church because it affects others as well as the responsibility to encourage, pray for and build up each member

What occurs to the member should they not adhere to the initial steps of restoration?

Should the offender not adhere to the initial steps, the final steps are:

- Remove the one in error from fellowship. The church gives united disapproval, but forgiveness and comfort are in order should the offender choose to repent.
- Do not associate with the disobedient person: and if you must, speak to them as one who needs a warning.
- After two warnings, reject the person from fellowship. Again, the purpose of church

discipline is to lead the person to repentance, not being too lenient and not correcting the mistakes, or being too harsh.

Is the common theme to make the member aware that the church loves them?

Absolutely. The church demonstrates its love by honestly sharing their concerns in order to assist the offender and to do their very best for God. Sometimes people make choices that we know are wrong. Should we ignore their behavior and allow them to continue in it, we are demonstrating that we don’t love them. When we don’t assist, we demonstrate that we are more concerned about being well liked than about what will happen to them. There is a time to confront and a time to comfort. Restoring the person to fellowship is the goal of church discipline.

Taking the First Step to Recovery

After countless attempts to prove otherwise, many experts say alcoholism and drug addiction are incurable, progressive and potentially fatal.

Alcoholics and drug addicts should not disregard their diseases. Neither should they feel disgrace or shame.

Medical science does not explain their cause but medical experts point out that each can lead to grim, unwanted and dangerous problems. However, there is hope.

The first step in recovery is admit there is a problem you need to fix, followed by the ability to have a sense of worth, keep an open mind, change thinking habits and past routines, remain free from alcohol and drugs and practice the teachings of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous: the 12 Steps, Serenity Prayer and Promises.

This proverb speaks volumes in regards to the realization of where one has been, where one is and where one longs to be:

“I, wisdom, dwell with prudence. And I find knowledge and discretion”. (NAS: Proverbs 8:12)

Choose to remain well. Follow the guidelines to treatment, continue living and remain serious about it!

With greater emphasis being placed on recovery, pharmacology, diagnostic measures, proficiency in multidisciplinary treatment planning and healthcare delivery, these diseases have been isolated and arrested in their development so that the vast numbers of those that have been afflicted can live a manageable and productive life.

What Is Ramadan About?

By JEREMIAH “HASSAN” BRENNEN
Contributing Writer

Ramadan is the ninth month on the Islamic lunar calendar. Muslims observe fasting in this month all over the world. In fact, it is incumbent upon all adult Muslims, and children that have reached puberty, with exceptions for the sick, pregnant and the traveler. Ramadan is considered the month of mercy, and fasting gives Believers a chance to tame their base desires.

There are various and/or different levels of abstinence in the Islamic fast. First, one must refrain from eating and

drinking from daybreak to dusk. During the same period you should not reach an extreme state of anger, have sexual intercourse, smoke, etc.

Ramadan also offers a believer the opportunity to look at their “true selves”. In explanation, it is believed by Muslims that during the month of Ramadan, the accursed devil (Satan) is literally chained up by Allah Almighty (SWT) for the duration of the month. Therefore, with the lack of satanic influence, a believer is able to identify which faults of his are “truly his,” and can not be blamed on Satan.

The following words are accounts from two new Muslims

about their experiences of fasting for the first time.

Brother Aswad and Brother Latif both say that they were able to focus on what Allah (SWT) and his messenger Muhammad (PBUH) say about these things such as being steadfast in prayer and constantly doing deeds of righteousness.

They said that Ramadan gave them the needed discipline to strengthen their weak points, and made them much stronger at fighting the struggle within themselves. They anxiously wait and look forward to the next Ramadan!

Kicking the Habit

Addiction Recovery Finally Gains a Foothold at S.Q.

By **ARNULFO GARCIA**
and **JUAN HAINES**
Journalism Guild Writers

After witnessing a steady increase in drug-addicted men being committed to prison, two San Quentin inmates set a goal: create a certified drug treatment counselor-training program and cultivate peer counselors.

Launching new prison programs always has bureaucratic hurdles but Rusty Trunzo and Dennis Pratt succeeded in overcoming those challenges with the help of Christian Institute.

With support from Sam Lawrence of Christian Institute, Addiction Recovery Counseling (ARC) began at S.Q.

Chaplain Earl Smith assisted by approving use of the Protestant Chapel every Friday.

Sponsor Kelvis Love began the first session in 2005, using seven

instructional modules created by Christian Institute.

Immediately, the program was jeopardized when hurricane Katrina forced Love to go to New Orleans to help his family.

Claire Elizabeth DeSophia agreed to become Program Director and brought Sara Wilds of the STAND UP Program as a sponsor.

After completion of the first module, the program was again in jeopardy with no qualified person available to continue the students' educational endeavor.

ARC found a fully certified California Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (CAADAC) member, who is an H-Unit inmate, to continue teaching the class within the prison population. This example gave the men seeking to become CAADAC certified themselves a boost of confidence, after seeing



Rick Baez (center) and the crew of the ARC Program

a fellow prisoner actually doing what they aspired to do.

Richard Baez, the current Program Director of ARC says, "That the theory and reality of this program was that it would make more sense to have prisoners run the ARC program. Prisoners have more insight on how to deal with other prisoners, and they can better relate the reality of their

particular situation."

Other drug treatment programs inside and outside of prison have caught wind of ARC and have donated time, energy and resources to the success of the program.

Laura E. Bowman, Community Partnership Manager, for the last five years, is instrumental in connecting ARC with volunteers

in the local community. She credits former S.Q. Warden Robert Ayers for allowing ARC's existence.

"Warden Ayers is wise beyond his years for listening to the men who introduced this program that changed the lives of a lot of men."

Trunzo has since been paroled.

The Strong, Clear Voice of the Federal Court

By **JULIAN GLENN**
PADGETT
Journalism Guild Writer

The three-judge panel has thrown down a bold ruling in the Plata/Coleman v. Schwarzenegger battle. The legal triumvirate consists of United States District Judges Lawrence Karlton, Thelton Henderson and Ninth Circuit Judge Stephen Reinhardt.

Their ruling mandates that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) must comply with the minimal constitutional required standards for the mental and physical health care of every inmate housed in prison. The judges also ordered CDCR to lighten its load by reducing the body count by approximately 40,000, to a percentile capacity of 136.0 to 137.5 percent. Judges Henderson, Reinhardt, and Karlton ultimately found prison overcrowding to be CDCR's primary cause for their severe and continuous medical violations.

EXPERT OPINIONS

Former San Quentin Warden Jeanne Woodford, who worked for S.Q. for 27 years and as acting Secretary of CDCR, was among the panel of experts who testified that she "absolutely believes that the primary cause [of medical problems] is overcrowding." Woodford further stated, "I think it's unbelievable that in this state we have the kind of overcrowded conditions that we have; that we do little or nothing to prepare people for the return to society."

Joseph Lehman, who has 35 years of corrections experience with 15 combined years as head of corrections in Pennsylvania, Washington, and Maine said in his August 15, 2008 report that, "crowding" "is the primary cause" of the inability to pro-

vide medical and mental health services. "It's overwhelming the system both in terms of sheer numbers, in terms of the space available, in terms of providing health care."

On January 23, 2008 the court appointed J. Kelso as the Plata/Coleman Receiver. Kelso reviewed inmate deaths to determine whether they were preventable. In 2007, of the 110 deaths not the result of homicide or self-inflicted injuries, 44 deaths (40 percent) were found to be preventable or potentially preventable.

Doctor Robert Shansky stated in his report that, "CDCR's medical care delivery system cannot provide a constitutional level of care because the prison system incarcerates more prisoners than can be adequately treated."

Doctor Craig Haney followed in his report by saying, "This overwhelming overcrowding problem has incapacitated the system's ability to deliver constitutionally adequate health care."

Doctor Pablo Stewart, a licensed psychiatrist with over 22 years of experience in correctional psychiatry, testified on the nature of constitutional violations. He cited "inadequate suicide monitoring and prevention, inability to timely access appropriate levels of care, inability to access mental health care clinicians due to shortage, and inadequate medication management practices."

CRITICAL MASS

Prison overcrowding pushes wardens to choose which emergency situation takes place over the others such as the recent riot in a Kentucky prison and at

Chino's Medium A prison yard here in California. Events such as these make health care less of a priority. Added to the fact that double and triple bunk beds automatically produce less and less space.

This forces prison officials to go outside the norms and use empty spaces, hallways, and gymnasiums. Structures not designed to be used by humans as "living pens." Such usage is not approved under California building and safety codes. These makeshift housing zones quickly become cramped, unsanitary and toxic and the continuous understaffing potentially makes these living quarters volatile for the inmate.

This modality of prison "unhealth care" ultimately effects those housed there as well as prison staff. These correctional officers leave their shifts possibly carrying staph infections such as influenza, tuberculosis and viruses like "H1N1", home to their own families and friends.

THE COURT'S DECISION

In making their ruling the judges weighed many different measures to stop the problem but found them lacking. They did not accept the defense's theory that the population reduction order might have a negative effect on public safety.

Also, various plans endorsed by the Governor were looked at which would subtract numbers from the prison population without playing Russian roulette with public safety. Measures studied included sentencing reform, good behavior credits, an increase in prison rehabilitation programs, and diversion of low risk offend-

ers and technical parole violators.

Continuing on in this vein, the defendants argued that; resources in the community would not be able to handle the influx of released prisoners.

The court rejected this argument. The panel calculated this based on expert opinions, that releasing inmates would not have a major effect on the population of local jail facilities.

In addition, the judges said that supervision of parolees would not be affected because many of the ordeals related to parole arise from improper channeling of funds. This was pointed out especially concerning low-risk parolees and technical violations.

Judges Henderson, Reinhardt and Karlton also rejected the idea that resources for rehabilitation and reentry would be taxed by prison population reduction. The tribunal reasoned that a financial windfall of savings from reducing prison overcrowding could be used in a positive manner.

They suggested creating more needed programs geared toward public safety, such as more rehabilitation and reentry programs. The panel found no evidence connecting early releases with a rise in crime statistics. Evidence put forth to the court by experts noted that several other states have adopted "prison overcrowding reduction measures without harming public safety."

The judges also denied the defendants' request to exclude mentally-ill inmates from the release order. However they did agree that some could do better being cared for and treated inside prison. They found that most health care treatments would cost less and produce more effective results outside of prison.

After the decision was rendered the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

stated its intent to appeal to the United States Supreme Court. The battle could take months and even years to resolve.

In reviewing the court's decision, as a team each justice used a plethora of evidenced based expert information. And wielded focused judicial precision by sticking to and supporting every legal standard of the Prison Litigation Reform Act. Although, the most intensive opposition was the timing of events around the ruling.

The Federal court decision came days after Governor Schwarzenegger unveiled his own reduction strategy involving 23,000 inmates.

But the court used the defendants' own experts and plans to pump up their decision. The court decreed that prison overcrowding has become a catastrophic sickness with only one undeniable remedy, reduction of the population.

It is apparent; the inmate explosion is a financial negative in every section of CDCR. It has been most harshly felt by California's prisoners, who have for 14 years received unconstitutional physical and mental health care.

CORRECTION

In the June/July issue, in the article on Prison Sentencing Reform, Kenneth Packnett's name was misspelled. *The San Quentin News* regrets the error.

Prison Notes

Recent extended lockdowns have caused disruptions in the publication dates of the San Quentin News. The Staff of the newspaper wishes to apologize for any inconvenience to our readers. We hope to resume normal monthly publication.

Poetry

Submitted by Arnulfo Garcia
Journalism Guild Writer

The Captive’s Past

By Pastor R. D. Frazier

Stifled cries of yesterdays
pain
Are haunting memories of
a runaway train
The moans and groans of a
troubled past
Are like a ship that’s been
torn rattled and thrashed
The only resemblance of
what once was
Are scattered pieces of a
broken mast
The chains and shackles of
the captives past
The flower fades and the
grass is gone
The hills are barren and
there is no song
Endless people are among
the throne
With no direction or even
a song
The past is master of an
evil demise
For the lost sails captive
hoping for reprise
Memories and pain fused
with sin and stain
Have become black as
night and blind our ways
There seems no hope from
shackles and chains
From this captives past of a
life of continual pains
How can I wash away the
blackness of sin and blight
To set free this captive
shackled by night
Which is framed within the
hope of
His washing power
Made available this very
hour
The prisoners of memories
pain replete
Can only be loosed at Jesus
feet
The power to take away the
sting of
the captive’s memories

past
Lies in a hope of a die that
was cast
Deep within the belly of
hell
Came a defeat that eternity
would tell
That the captives past of
memories hell
Could no longer confine
them within its shell
Christ is the answer for you
today
If you would only kneel
and pray
To be free from the captives
memory past
Is to believe that He is able
to wash
the pain and memory of
the captives past

I Write For My Children By Watani

I write for my children
In words only hearts can
fathom.
I write for my children
Pen-drenched in love
storms
And magical poems;
Each alphabet a teardrop,
Every page a river
I write for my children;
No longer can I see their
glow—
A soft and tender sadness
Illuminates their souls.
I write for my children
To invoke their spirits,
Faint breaths upon my face
As sprinkles of giggles
Tickle my lobe.
I write for my children
To rescue my drowning
faith
In a pool of regrets.
I write for my children
In a language that dances
On lyrical islands
And miracle streams.
I write for my children
Because writing is a
blanket
I weave around their hearts.
I write for my children...

Snippets

The Twin towers of New York City measured 208 feet by 208 feet on each floor and had its own zip code. Each tower had 110 stories and was measured just 300 feet shy of taking up an entire acre of land/

Rat fink is a derogatory name that dates back to 1964.

Arctic terns are birds that-migrate 25,000 miles round trip and see more daylight due to their flight patterns, than any other creature on Earth.

Nip & Tuck did not always mean plastic surgery. In the United States during the nine-teenth century, it actually meant that you’d run neck and neck in a close race

Shrew is not truly the name of a difficult female, but actually derives from a creature that must hunt constantly or it will feed on itself after going only a few hours without food.

Five O’clock shadow was first used in an add campaign for Gem razor blades in the 1930’s. Though the product may no longer be available, Five O’clock shadow is still a household term.

English Muffins are not from England as the commer-cials describe. In truth it is an Americanism created to sell the product.

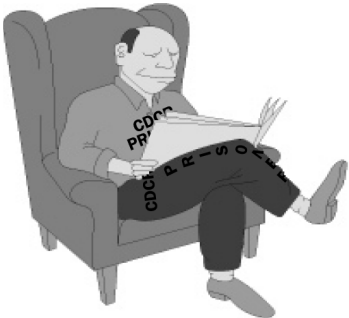
Retina, did you know that the retina actually consists of cells split into two categories, cones and rods? You have up to 120 million rods in each retina, which are used for perceiv-ing light and dark, and about 75 million cones that discern color. Rods are extremely sen-sitive to any light, even a single photon, which would be the equivalent to seeing a candle’s light one mile away

Scorpions have a transparent film, (referred to as the Hya-line layer,) in their exoskeleton that glows when placed under a black light! Even the Hyaline layer of a hundred million year old fossilized scorpion still glows when exposed to ultra-violet (black) light!

Last Month’s Sudoku Solutions

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

S.Q. Variety Book Club



Book Reviews

By RANDY MALUENDA



TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE (By Mitch Albom): A journalist learns life lessons on regular visits to his dying mentor.



FREAKONOMICS (by Stephen Levitt): Economic science applied to interpret modern day trends.



FARENHEIT 451 (by Ray Bradbury): A futuristic society where a fireman’s job is to destroy printed material (books)!



WORLD WITHOUT END (by Ken Follett): Sequel to **PILLARS OF THE EARTH**.

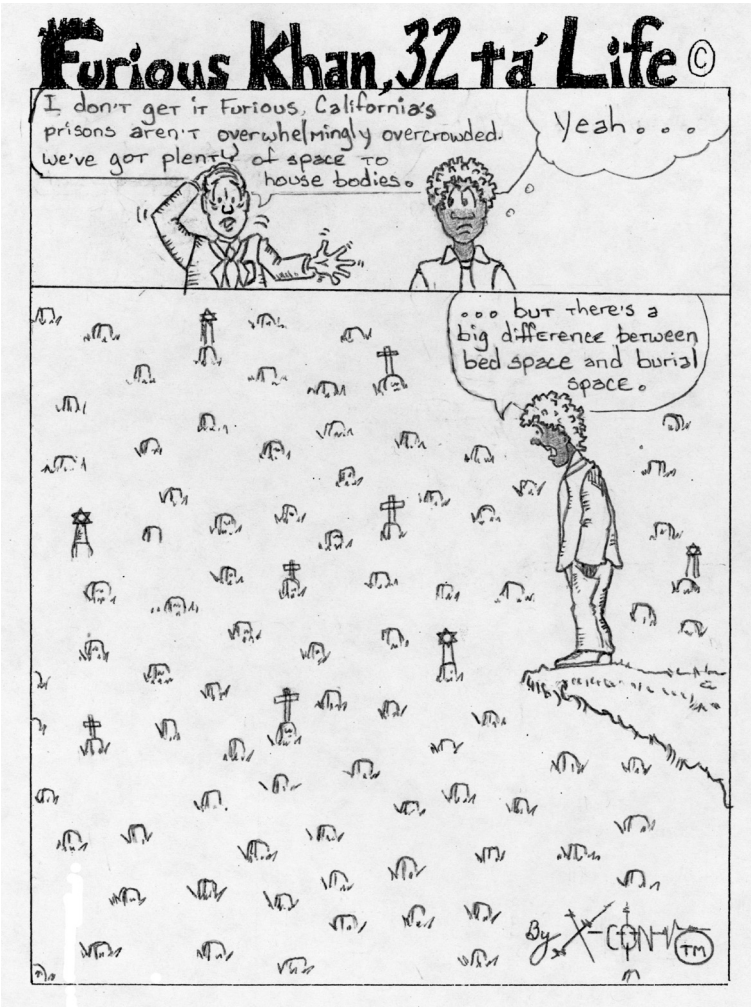


I AM LEGEND (by Richard Matheson): Post apocalyptic action adventure.

RATINGS:

Top responses are four ribbons progressing downward to one:

Responses which are two ribbons or less are not recommended reading:



Sudoku

By GEORGE LOWE

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

Recent Deaths On the ‘Row’

Michael Dee Mattison, 55, received on death row from Los Angeles County on April 14, 1980, died of natural causes at an outside hospital facility on July 17, 2009.

Fred Harlan Freeman, 69, received on death row from Alameda County on October 7, 1987, died of natural causes at a community hospital on July 25, 2009.

Miguel Angel Martinez, 39, received on death row from Los Angeles County on December 28, 1998, died of natural causes at a community hospital on July 26, 2009.

David Arisman, 61, received on death row from Los Angeles County on January 27, 1999, died of natural causes at the California Medical Facility Hospice Unit on September 5, 2009.

'So Tell Me, What's So Bad About San Quentin?'

New Arrival Says Many State Prisons Are a Whole Lot Worse

By COLE BIENEK
Journalism Guild Writer

Having just arrived at San Quentin on July 29, 2009, some would say that I have not *really* experienced the 'Q' at all, that the grin permanently etched upon my face is nothing more than honeymoon glow. I would argue the opposite.

My first morning on the yard was a definite shock—sensory overload. There was simply too much to do, and everyone was doing. Everyone had a plan, it seemed. Men wore hats declaring their memberships in various groups and clubs. A man practiced Yoga and T'ai Chi, his slow, deliberate movements giving a surreal quality by the early morning S.Q. fog. A mixed group of prisoners played tennis on the immaculate court, the

sound of which played havoc on my childhood memories. A bulletin board in North Block listed all the programs I could join—the television even ran a scrolling channel proclaiming more activities.

As I walked the track that first morning, I smelled the salt of the ocean, saw palm trees blowing in the breeze; a man playing a *trumpet*—its crisp notes ringing clear and true.

A scoreboard in right-center field proclaimed the area as, "San Quentin's Field of Dreams." A *baseball field in prison*? Where was I? What was this place that had everything?

Well, not everything. Something was definitely missing—a few *some things* in fact. Where are the guns, the oppressive regulations, and the lockdowns? The overwhelming atmosphere



The prison's setting on San Francisco Bay isn't exactly the worst in the world

of heavy, disconsolate dread that I'd lived under for the past 22 years--factions of opposing prisoners, engaged in a perpetual standoff under watchful hawk-eyed gunners. They had vanished, like the bayside fog beneath the late morning sun. None of

the several hundred men on the yard that morning seemed the slightest bit concerned with me or what I was about, at least not in a negative fashion. Within a half hour, I had a tennis racquet in my hand, laughing my way to a sore belly with a cosmopolitan

group of prisoners—stone walls disappeared, we could have been at any number of community tennis clubs.

By the evening of my fifth day in S.Q. I was signed up for the upcoming Patten University semester, enrolled in Non-Violent Communication, signed up for two Arts in Corrections classes, and joined the Pirates Baseball Team. Everywhere there was a current of moving forward—of dedication to a higher set of ideals—of prisoners taking charge of their own lives, dropping age-old habits steeped in nonsensical prison mentality. S.Q. has that elusive factor in successful rehabilitation: the *Therapeutic Environment*.

So, yes, I do walk around with a smile on my face all the time—even when it seems as though we are being harassed, I consider the alternative; I could be back in the war zones. Perhaps it is being new here which makes it all seem so profoundly innovative, and worth the little hassles. Or, maybe it's just that I retain a degree of perspective that tends to be lost after the years. Whatever the case, there exists here something which is special and unique, and worthy of our genuine participation in all it has to offer. After all, the rest of the system is waiting, poised to lock us up in one of the non-programming warehouses, content to allow us to feed on the miseries of one another until, at last, we die without ever having realized hope.

The Shocking High Cost of the State's Prison System

By R.F. GILLIAM
Contributing Writer

On November 4, 1995, Leandro Andrade stole five videotapes worth \$84.70 from a Kmart store in Ontario, California. For that and past crimes of burglary, transporting marijuana and petty thefts he was given a 50 years-to-life sentence.

There are approximately 167,000 men and women incarcerated in California's prisons. Each year it costs \$49,000 dollars to house, feed and care for each of them. According to Charles B. Reed, Chancellor of the California State University system, in an article published July 27, 2009 in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Reed states that the costs to taxpayers for one year of tuition for each year of tuition for each CSU student is \$4,600. "Therefore we could send 10 students to college for a year for what we pay to house one prisoner. Of course our children have to get there first, and with the massive cuts to K-12 education our legislators have undertaken it doesn't look like we'll be sending as many students to college anyway.

THREE STRIKES LAW

Let's look at more numbers. From 1994 to October 2005 California incarcerated more than 87,500 individuals under the second and third strike provisions of the Three Strikes Law. A total of 7,500 of those received 25 years-to-life sentences, according to Professor Elsa Chen of Santa Clara University. First, let's focus on the 80,000 prisoners sentenced under the second strike provision, those getting out in the relatively near future. At the current cost of \$49,000 per inmate per year. It costs taxpayers \$3,920,000 every year these men and women are locked up.

Compare this to the costs of K-12 education. The National Center for Education reports that we spend \$9,391 dollars per year for primary and secondary education. Round this up to \$10,000 dollars, which translates to approximately \$130,000 to give each child a high school diploma. So, the amount we Californians spend to keep all second-strikers in prison each year is equivalent to the amount of money we would spend to give 301,538 students a high school education. I think politicians' priorities are in the wrong place.

EDUCATION DOLLARS

Now let's look at the cost of imprisoning third-strikers, many of whom are serving 25 year sentences for crimes like petty theft, forgery and burglaries resulting (like Andrade above) in monetary losses to the victim of less than \$1,000. It will cost \$9,187,500,000 to imprison this population for the length of their sentences. That's a lot of possible educational dollars our children are being deprived of. It should be evident what a colossal waste of taxpayer monies that corrections has become. We are strangling our future to punish people. There's got to be a better way.

In a bulletin entitled "Common Sense Corrections Reform Can Allow California to Avoid Early Release" by California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Secretary Matthew L. Cate, he outlines his plan to cut \$1.2 billion from the corrections budget. I was stunned by this statement: "The administration has developed a proposal in coordination with local law enforcement that is smart on crime." If that were true they wouldn't resort to scare tactics every time the spectre of

prisoner releases comes up.

The CDCR ideology is guided by the desires of the guard's union, the California Correctional Peace Officers Association. The union wants to keep as many people as possible locked up to ensure job security for its members. That's smart on crime from the union's point of view, but it is costing your children their education.

I don't suggest just releasing vast numbers of inmates. What I am suggesting is that we must overhaul our current sentences and educate and rehabilitate those getting out so they're less likely to come right back.

The CDCR is mandated to do just that and has been for years. But in the same bulletin the Secretary of CDCR admits that only 1,600 inmates out of 167,000 have earned a GED and completed vocational training that will enable them to rejoin society once again as productive members. By any standard that's a dismal failure.

GREAT OBSTACLES

We have to get smart on crime from the public's point of view. To do this we have to change the way we administer corrections, change from a model that propounds retribution to one that supports education and rehabilitation. The two greatest obstacles facing newly released ex-felons are finding employment and housing. Without a job no one can afford housing, yet the average California parolee has a seventh grade education. There is little expectation that anyone will secure meaningful employment without a high school education at the minimum.

We don't need more guards or prisons. We can't afford them, for one thing. What we need are more teachers and classrooms and we need to make certain ev-

erybody we incarcerate is compelled to get a basic education. Many changes would have to take place in order to implement such a plan: sentencing laws changed to give incentives and time reductions to prisoners who successfully complete educational and vocational programs, (saving taxpayer money while bolstering public safety).

Parole must become a support and aftercare mechanism to assist parolees in obtaining jobs and housing instead of being a means for keeping prison beds full. This is not being Soft on Crime. This is being Smart on Crime, because a parolee with a job is paying taxes, not wasting yours. And, in the illuminating light of reason, wouldn't we all feel safer knowing that parolees' will come out of prison with the education, skills and support he or she needs to find a job and a place to live. That way they won't be as likely to break into yours.

OPINION

Back in the Day

Old Issues of the *San Quentin News*

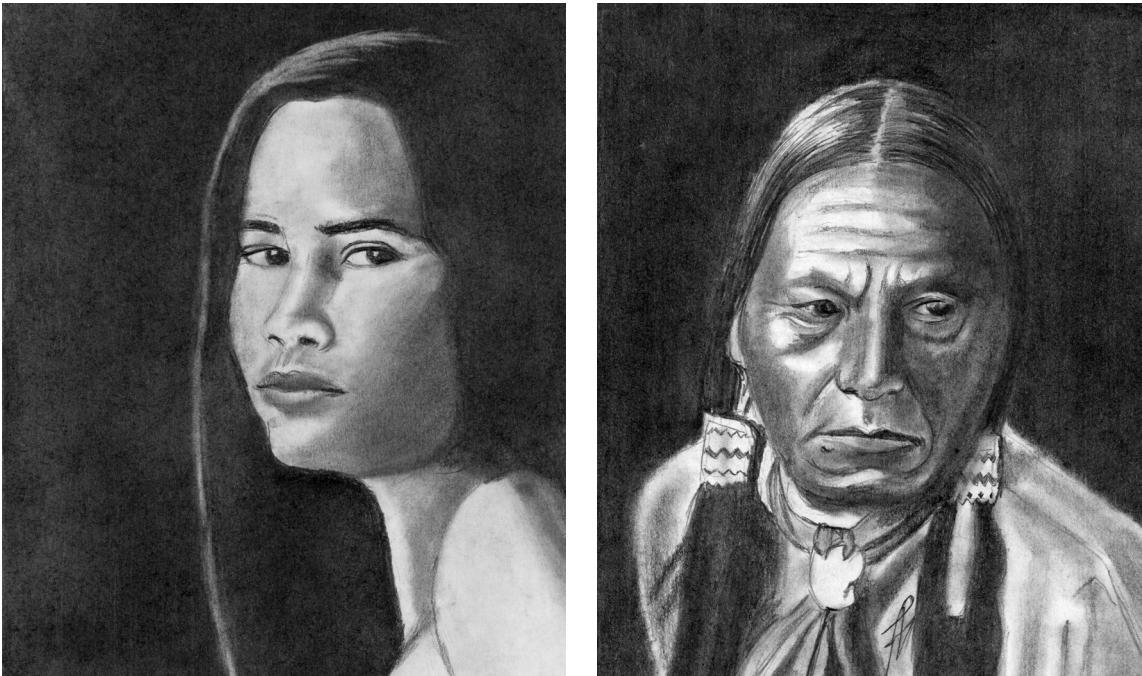
November 23, 1979 – After a four-month suspension for "slanting the news," the *SQ News* was officially back in business. On Aug. 31, Michael Satris of the Prison Law Office filed a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus in the Marin County Superior Court on behalf of the San Quentin News reporters. Subsequent negotiations with prison officials allowed the newspaper to continue publication.

June 13, 1980 – A U.S. District Court judge ruled that "brutality, overcrowding, idleness, poor physical facilities" and last

summer's long lockdown at the Washington state penitentiary at Walla Walla constitute cruel and unusual punishment. "There is just no question," that overcrowding constitutes such punishment, he said.

August 29, 1980 – Five shots were fired by the gunrail officer in East Block in order to break up an assault on a correctional officer. The incident was sparked when a cell search turned up illegal tools and a tattoo gun. The two inmates in the cell attacked the officer.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



The art work above was submitted by San Quentin inmate Richard Sanchez.
Above Left: a Polynesian woman from the Rapa Islands in the South Pacific
Above Right: Spotted Horse, a chief of the Pawnee tribe of the Great Plains

As I See It

By DAVID MARSH
News Editor

I am a reporter for the *SQ News*. Have been for a year or more now. I'd have to say that I have certainly had some enjoyable and, at times, enlightening moments through my work on the paper. And then there are those other times, where the going has on occasion gotten just a bit rough.

I'm often reminded that the paper is printed under the auspices of the Education Dept., and as such is meant to be a learning experience. And I'd have to agree that it has been just that, often on a daily basis.

In my wanderings throughout the mainline part of the prison, I am often approached by both inmates and staff wishing to express their opinions regarding our paper, which is *their* paper. Many of them have expressed an opinion that our newspaper has often fallen short of reflecting the true realities of prison life as we know it to be. The bad as well as the good, from both sides. As I see it, there are a number of reasons why this continues to be the case.

Despite the fact that our paper is some 12 issues old now and counting in its latest incarnation, it is still in fact a baby. And as much as I would like to see the baby get up and walk, I suppose we're still in the crawling stage. And all of the impatience in the world is not going to hasten the learning process for us on the staff, or for the prison administrators, who, like it or not, are the ultimate arbiters of what is going to appear on these pages.

It's a feeling out process, of what the staff would like to see on its pages, and what the administration feels we ought to know. And sometime, somewhere along



the way, we'll all most certainly meet someplace in the middle. And in the process the paper will continue to develop its own character and to take on a life of its own, as well. And I have faith that we reporters will begin to earn a reputation for credibility and honesty for our paper, amongst our peers here behind these walls, amongst the staff and administrators who interact with us day in and day out – and who are our partners in this sometimes uneasy alliance, and amongst the very broad spectrum of our entire reader base.

And someday in the not-too-distant future, I hope that you, the

reader, will be able to pick up the paper to read it, confident in the knowledge that in its pages you will generally find an accurate and honest portrayal and understanding of what our prison life is really all about behind these walls. The very best that we are able to do for you.

And our paper will be able to comprehensively explore a wide variety of such sensitive issues as the transfer of inmates out-of-state, the pending and imminent release of a number of inmates from California's overcrowded prisons and the myriad issues that the many Lifers behind these walls must contend with in their quest for freedom. And, yes, we'll even post articles dealing with the occasional violence that erupts behind these walls in ways that don't glorify the incidents.

I hope to see all of these things in the coming year, the second year of our existence. And in the meantime, we on the staff will keep up the struggle to bring you, our readers, the truths, the realities and the triumphs of our lives behind the walls.

It's not easy, no siree, not at all! But then no one told me it would be. But it is, and has been, a learning experience. And I suppose that I'm grateful for that.

USED VS. LOVED

While a man was polishing his new car, his 4-year-old son picked up a stone and scratched lines on the side of the car. In anger, the man took the child's hand and hit it many times; not realizing he was using a wrench. At the hospital, the child lost all his fingers due to multiple fractures. When the child saw his father, with painful eyes he asked, "Dad, when will my fingers grow back?" The man was speechless. he went back to his car and kicked it a lot of times, devastated by his own actions. Sitting in front of the car he looked at the scratches. The child had written 'LOVE YOU DAD'

The next day the man committed suicide. Anger and love have no limits. Choose the latter to have a beautiful, lovely life. Things are to be used and people are to be loved, but the problem in today's world is that people are used and things are loved. Keep this thought in mind, "Things are to be used but people are to be loved." Be yourself, this is the only day we have. Have a nice day. Watch your thoughts, they become words. Watch your words, they become actions. Watch your actions, they become habits. Watch your habits, they become character. Watch your character, it becomes your destiny!

—Author Unknown

NEWS BRIEFS

SAN FRANCISCO, 7-30-09 – California state **courts** have been ordered to close one day each month as part of the state's budget compromise. The courts, including the state's Supreme Court, will close the third Wednesday of each month in order to save the court system \$84 million.

SACRAMENTO, 7-30-09 – Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has given the go-ahead on planning for a new Death Row at San Quentin State Prison. Legislators had attempted to block the construction because they feel that the state's plan to double-cell up to two-thirds of the inmates will not withstand a federal court challenge.

ROME, 7-30-09 – A Rome-based human rights watch group announced that there were 5,727 executions worldwide in 2008. China remained the world's top executioner, while executions in the U.S. were down.

BEIJING, China, 7-31-09 – China, with 13 million abortions, continues to be the world leader in that category. The official China Daily newspaper also reported that 10 million abortion pills are sold every year.

IRAQ, 8-02-09 – Three American vacationers hiking in the mountainous, poorly marked border area with Iran were arrested by Iranian authorities after wandering across the border. The two men and a woman were hiking near a popular waterfall.

WASHINGTON, 8-03-09 – A nearly two-decades-long search came to an end when the remains of Navy Capt. Michael Scott Speicher's jet were found in the Iraqi desert. The pilot was shot down in the opening days of the Persian Gulf War.

MANILLA, Phillipines, 8-01-09 – Former President Corazon Aquino died of cancer at the age of 76. After the assassination of her husband, Aquino rose to power more than 20 years ago in a peaceful revolution that brought down the regime of Ferdinand Marcos.



Before I Play My Joker

I am the dealer.
Who wants to play my game?
You see me now once you start to play
Your life will never be the same.

Now I must warn you
Before you get in,
You'll play your best,
But you're never going to win.

Now you can catch me on the corner
Or the middle of the block,
And I'll be glad to serve you:
Hennessey, weed, speed, heroin or a rock.

Because once you take a blast,
and your heart starts to race;
I'm going to reach up my sleeves,
and pull out my ace.

From the top of your head
To the bottoms of your feet,
I'll take all you have and you won't eat.
You gave me your money
And your wedding ring,
Don't stop now
I haven't played my king.

Because as you get high, higher than a rocket.
I'm going to stack me a grip of your money in my pocket,
I've got mo money then you've ever seen
I've got a bad lady and I call her my Queen.
Now just when you wonder, what

will come next,
You'll sell your body like a bag full of sex.
How did it feel lying on your back??
That's what happens when I played my jack.
I will be your lover, I will be your friend.
You don't have a card that's going to beat my ten.

I don't give credit and it's plain to see,
So you knock on my door with your color TV.

And now that I've got my hooks in you,
You can throw in your hand. Your life is through.
You hang around my house, just to kill some time,
You want to jack me, but you're scared of my nine.

I make easy money, and I live in style.
Do you want to play my game for awhile???

You'll never win I hope you know.
Now's your chance, grab your hat and go..
I've got a lot of nerve, I got a lot of heart;
I'll tear anybody's life all apart.

The "beggar" the "buyer" the "hooker" and the smoker;
They all lost!!!
BEFORE I PLAYED MY JOKER!!!

By Michael Knox 9-7-87



By **DAVID MARSH**
News Editor

To some they are a menace or a nuisance; to others they are amusement, entertainment and perhaps a friend. “They” are the abundant and prolific Canada Geese that can always be found throughout this aging prison by the bay.

Once hunted to a point where they were protected and considered threatened, these social birds can once again be found in every contiguous U.S. state and Canadian province.

Though migratory by nature,

warming temperatures and a keen ability to adapt to their environment have made these hardy fellows a year-round fixture in areas which feature bodies of water, such as parks, beaches and golf courses. Due to their adaptability, they have become the most common waterfowl species in North America.

Flying in a “V-formation,” with favorable winds they have been known to cover 1,500 miles in a 24-hour period, though generally

they fly at a much more relaxed pace.

Social by nature, they generally remain in flocks except when nesting. These geese can get quite mean when protecting a nest or their young, using their beaks and their wings to beat back predators.

The Canada goose will eat grains, vegetation and even fish and small insects. Locally, they seem to have a special affinity for PIA bread.

Adult geese are monogamous, and most will stay together throughout the 10-24 years of their lifespan in the wild. The male goose is the larger of the pair at 7-14 pounds, 30-43 inches long with a 50-71-inch wingspan), while the female is slightly smaller at 5-12 pounds.

After the female lays her 3-8 eggs, both adults lose their flight feathers and cannot fly at all during the entire 25-28 day incubation period. Canada Geese can

and will interbreed with domesticated geese, as anyone familiar with San Quentin’s resident population, and “Max,” can confirm.

The bacteria in their droppings, their loud noise and confrontational behavior have lead many to consider them as pests. They have been blamed for the high fecal coli forms found at some beaches. Fifty geese can produce 2.5 tons of excrement in a single year.

They have been involved in a number of “bird strikes” at many airports throughout the country, including the crash of US Airways Flight 1549 into the Hudson River on Jan. 15, 2009.

Van Jones Leaves the White House

Continued from Page 1

Problems.” His book was placed on the *New York Times* best seller’s list. The book included a forward by the late Robert F. Kennedy Jr. who wrote;

“The United States has far greater domestic energy resources than Iceland or Sweden.”

“We sit atop the second largest fund of geothermal resources in the world...”

“We need to create open national markets where individuals who devise new ways to produce or conserve power can quickly profit from their innovations.

“The Green Collar Economy is a step forward.”

On August 24, the internet news search engine Show Tracker reported, “Weeks prior to Jones’ resignation the Fox News talk show host Glenn Beck, in an appearance on the morning show Fox & Friends, accused President Obama of having “a deep seated hatred for white people or the white culture.”

Show Tracker also reported, “Beck used his popular Fox News show to attack the background of Van Jones, who co-founded an African American political advocacy group, Color of Change, in 2005. Color of Change organized an advertising boycott of Beck’s news program after statements he made about Obama.”

AD BOYCOTT

Beck’s latest assault on Jones came as Color of Change announced that they had 36 companies, including Sprint and Wal-Mart, that promised not to advertise on Beck’s popular news talk program. A Fox News spokesperson said, “The advertisers referred to have all relocated their spots from Beck to other programs on the network, so there has been no revenue lost.”

Show Tracker continued to report that during Beck’s 2 p.m. (PDT) news show he never mentioned the statement which he made last month on his own show that “he believes President Obama is a racist.” Instead he spent a large share of his program suggesting that “Jones, who co-founded Color of Change, is a radical...”

James Rucker, executive director of Color of Change, said, “Glenn Beck is trying to change



T. Boone Pickens goes green with Van Jones

the subject.” Rucker noted that Jones had not been actively involved in the group in almost two years. “The issue is baseless fear mongering.”

Jones stated in a quote on Ryan Grim on HuffPost.com Reporting: “On the eve of historic fights for health care and clean energy, opponents of reform have mounted a vicious smear campaign against me. They are using lies and distortions to distract and divide. I have been inundated with calls from across the political spectrum urging me to ‘stay and fight.’ But I came here to fight for others, not for myself. I cannot in good conscience ask my colleagues to expend precious time and energy defending or explaining my past. We need all hands on deck, fighting for the future.”

On July 28, Beck called the activist a “self professed communist” and questioned the role he was playing in Obama’s administration, reported Show Tracker.

Grim stated, “Jones has never denied his past affiliation with the radical left.” Grim disclosed that, “In the 90s, Jones was involved with the group Standing Together to Organize a Revolutionary Movement (STORM), which sympathized with the Maoist-inspired peasant movements across the globe and was organized to protest police brutality.” Grim went on to say, “Jones, however, left radical politics and made the decision to work within the system, rather than try to overthrow it.”

“During a six-minute biographical profile set to ominous music, Beck said, “Jones was twice arrested for political protests and has described himself as a ‘rowdy black nationalist,’” reports Show Tracker.

Beck cast the piece as part of a broader examination of the President’s ‘czars,’ special advisors to Obama who ‘don’t answer to anybody.” Beck asked, “Why is it that such a committed revolu-

tionary has made it so high into the Obama administration as one of his chief advisors?”

“However, Jones wasn’t just some crazy who insinuated himself with the Obama crowd under false pretenses,” reported *The Wall Street Journal’s* .com/Opinion Journal. “He has been a leading young light of the left wing political movement for many years and was praised across the liberal establishment.”

Ariana Huffington of HuffPost.com stated, “Thank you Glenn Beck. By helping force the resignation of Van Jones, you have done a great service to your country. But in the exact opposite way than what you intended... And the editors of *Time* who named him one the 100 most influential people in the world and one of the nation’s ‘Heroes of the Environment...”

STRONG VOICE

Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, thanked Jones for his valuable contributions to the Council. Sutley went on to say, “Over the last six months he has been a strong voice for creating 21st century jobs that improve energy efficiency and utilize renewable resources. We appreciate his hard work and wish him the best moving forward.”

Political Hotsheet said, “Jones turned into a political liability for President Obama after statements he made prior to joining the White House came to light. He apologized for a six-year-old petition he signed.”

Grim reported online that, Jones had signed a “Truther” petition back in 2004. Truther insist that there are unanswered questions about what U.S. officials knew about Sept. 11 terrorist attacks before they occurred and want further investigations.”

Huffington said, “I despise 9/11 Truther conspiracies. I’ve spoken to Van. He doesn’t be-

lieve that the Bush Administration orchestrated the 9/11 attacks or allowed the attacks to happen in a cold-hearted attempt to gin up support.”

“For Beck, however, Jones’ past statements were evidence that Obama is secretly marshaling a cadre of lieutenants pushing an agenda that is radical, revolutionary and in some cases Marxist,” Grim stated

Jones said in a letter posted online on HuffPost.com, “The main thing is to support both President Obama and the Green Jobs

movement. Spread the Green Jobs gospel. The ideas and ideals of the Green Jobs movement are grounded in fundamental American values, innovation, entrepreneurship, and equal opportunity.” Of course, some supporters actually think I will be more effective on the ‘outside.’ Those ideas remind me of Winston Churchill. After losing a hard fought election, a friend told him: ‘Winston, this really is a blessing in disguise.’ Churchill replied: ‘Damned good disguise.’ I certainly can relate to that.”

San Quentin News

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