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File Photo

Viewing area of New condemned chamber

New Effort Launched To End Death Penalty

By JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writer

A new attempt has been launched to abolish capital punishment in California with claims it is an expensive failure.

Supporters of Senate Bill 490 include the author of a 1978 ballot initiative that greatly expanded what constituted a capital crime, and a former San Quentin warden who oversaw four executions.

Testifying before a Senate committee in support of the bill were Don Heller, who wrote the 1978 ballot measure that expanded capital punishment, and Jeanne Woodford, a former San Quentin warden and former director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Both pointed to the enormous costs of capital punishment.

See *Death Penalty* on Page 4

Gov. Brown's Realignment Approved by the Legislature

By JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writer

On the same week the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that California prisons are unconstitutionally overcrowded, San Quentin and New Folsom prisons broke out in riots involving over 350 prisoners, leaving at least four hospitalized.

"As we work to carry out the court's ruling, I will take all steps necessary to protect public safety," said, Gov. Jerry Brown, "These offenders will be returning to our communities perhaps sooner than we'd planned."

ELIMINATING BEDS

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Secretary, Matthew Cate issued a press release, "California's inmate population has been reduced to levels not seen since 1995, and non-traditional beds have been eliminated by nearly 13,000. We've come a long way in both population reduction measures and in the quality of care given to inmates."

State Senator Loni Hancock told the San Francisco Chronicle, "Our prison system is an expensive failure. It is a threat to

both public safety and the financial well-being of California. It cost \$49,000 a year to keep a person locked up in California prison – almost seven times what we spend on each child in our public schools – yet California is getting a disappointing return on our huge investment of tax dollars in corrections."

National Public Radio's (KALW) Rina Palta interviewed Secretary Cate regarding CDCR's plan to comply with the landmark decision capping the prison population at 110,000.

BUDGET WOES

As California severely cut spending for public schools, social services and health programs, the new state budget provides nearly \$5.6 billion in sales tax revenue and other money to pay for Gov. Brown's "realignment" plan that keeps 40,000 felons convicted after Oct. 1 in the county jails for supervision while simultaneously reducing parole oversight for prisoners with low-level, non-serious, non-violent crimes.

"Nobody who is currently in prison right now will be re-

See *Gov. Brown's* on Page 4

Former CDCR Chief Leads Anti-Death Penalty Group

Editor's Note: This is the first of two articles on the Aug. 2 interview Editor-in-Chief Michael R. Harris conducted with Jeanne Woodford, a former San Quentin warden and former chief of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Please explain where the disbanding of California's executions stand as of right now.

Senator Loni Hancock, has introduced Senate Bill 490. If it's passed by the Senate and Assembly that would place the initiative on the 2012 ballot. The initiative would seek to abolish the death penalty in California. It would also change the people on Death Row's sentence to life without the possibility of parole as the harshest sentence in California.

What steps are you and your organization taking to make sure the death penalty



Official Photo

Jeanne Woodford

is no longer a part of California's landscape?

Our efforts (at Death Penalty Focus) are to educate the public about what we call "The myth about the death penalty." Many people believe that it's cheaper to execute people than to have them imprisoned with life without possibility of parole. \So, we really talk about those kinds of myths, including the fact that

many people believe that victims deserve to have the death penalty, but in fact we have a very broken death penalty system in this state and very few people are actually executed. Of the many homicides that occur in California and around the country, very few people are prosecuted as a capital case. So, it is as people talk about, like being struck by lightning. Very few people are prosecuted, and of those, very few are ever executed. So, it's really a false promise to victims.

So, we really do a lot to try to educate the public about how costly the death penalty is, and that there could be better use of that money. There could be more teachers in classrooms, more police on the streets, and it would be better for public safety to have those dollars going to a much more pro-active approach to criminal justice.

See *Woodford* on Page 9

S.Q. News Website

The San Quentin News is available at its own website:

www.sanquentinnews.com

We welcome and encourage your feedback.



Photo: Lt. Sam Robinson

2011 graduates listen to the speaker during ceremony

74 Graduated at San Quentin

By ALY TAMBOURA
Design Editor

Prisoners' family members, volunteers, educational and corrections staff packed the San Quentin Garden Chapel to witness extraordinary achievement in an unlikely setting. Prisoners from Robert E. Burton Adult School and Patten University received awards of completion for their General Education Development, Associate of Arts Degrees and Vocational Training.

The Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin Color Guard initiated the annual graduation ceremony June 23 by a presentation of the American flag.

"How proud your families must be of you and how you have educated yourselves," said Acting Warden Michael Martel.

"Continue learning and continue trying to achieve."

The warden praised the prison education staff and volunteers who tirelessly devote their time and effort in bringing higher education to the men at San Quentin.

"I've never met a more dedicated staff that is so dedicated to your well being," said Warden Martel.

Guests and a sea of black caps attentively listened as the keynote speaker, Oakland Mayor

See *S.Q. Students* on Page 4



Photo: Lt. Sam Robinson

H-Unit mural by Mark Wilson

See *Artists' Beautify H-Unit*, Page 7

Violence is The ‘Tragic Expression of Unmet Needs’

By SHARRAN ZELEKE
AND
JOHN PORTER
Contributing Writers

Violence is a tragic expression of unmet needs. Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a program which helps us look beyond violent actions in the world to address the root causes of the violence.

The founder of NVC refers to violence as the “tragic expression of unmet needs,” whether in the form of physical violence, substance abuse, domestic violence, or emotional abuse. Needs refer to what we all need for life—air, food, water, sleep, and also to our deepest values such as love, consideration, or to matter. If, for example, we believe that others do not care about us, we may turn to drugs, alcohol or violence to deal with our unmet need to matter. NVC gives us tools for working with life’s difficulties and what they bring up in us in ways that we do not end up regretting.

NVC CONCEPTS

NVC concepts can be challenging to convey inside prison. At some point in the students’ first exposure to NVC, someone in the class will say, “We can’t talk like that here.” The “like that” being referred to is telling someone what is going on for them, using feelings and needs words

and checking in with others about their feelings and needs. And yet these two components of the NVC model are very powerful gateways to recovering a nonviolent connection with ourselves and others.

As students continue to take the NVC classes, we see a deepening of their understanding of the model, increased ability to express feelings and needs, and changes in the way they engage with difficult circumstances and other people. Below are changes some of the students have experienced after taking NVC.

Prior to attending a class in NVC, the only tools for handling domestic disputes between my girlfriend and me came from my experience at home. When my parents had problems, they yelled, threw things and fought a lot. NVC has helped me see the destructive results of yelling and fighting when faced with a problem. I began to see that in relationships with women I was not respectful. My language toward them was attacking. My demeanor was violent when things did not go my way — never accepting responsibility for my actions, always blaming my girlfriend. I didn’t know how to communicate in the relationship because I didn’t consider my girlfriend’s needs to be as important as mine. No one likes to be talked to like a dog. NVC has given me tools

to understand and acknowledge my needs, free myself from destructive cultural conditioning and break patterns of thinking that lead to arguments and anger. I know now that it is necessary to consider the needs of my partner, and NVC has given me tools to know how to do this. —
Bobby Evans, Jr.

EMPATHY FOR ONESELF

Through taking NVC classes, I have learned how to have empathy for myself. I used to believe that everything I needed came from outside me, from someone other than myself. Once I starting taking care of myself and checking in with my feelings, needs, desires and wants, my need to be fulfilled by another diminished. This is my 16th year in prison. Finally I feel nearly fully healed and self-fulfilled. —
Curtis Roberts

This class is making a difference. This week I remembered to use my tools, both my NVC tools and my spiritual tools. I work in P.I.A., and at the end of one day two tools were missing, a razor blade and a drill bit. The guards had all the guys who work in the shop standing in the yard a long time while they searched for the missing tools. In the past, I would have been really angry about that, but this time I thought to myself, “Remember to use your tools.” My NVC tool was to ask myself, “What do I need

here?” I saw that what I needed was for them to find the missing tools. Then I used my spiritual tool to practice patience. I was much calmer than usual for a situation like this. I felt good about myself for remembering I can choose how to respond to what happens instead of just reacting. —
Jon Cope

I started NVC Basics because it was recommended to me by one of my friends. I almost left after the third class when the giraffe and jackal puppets were introduced. My friend urged me to stick with it. I did and I was one of those guys who checked in with “I’m cool,” “Everything is okay.” I got away with it for half the semester until the teacher said, “You are not telling me anything. How does cool feel?” Then I was introduced to the empathy map, where I traveled the map on the floor as I told my story: from blame, self-criticism, deserve language, judgment to ending up (with the help of the instructors) in observation, feelings (what I was feeling and guessing what the other person might have been feeling), needs, and even eventually ending up with understanding, empathy and accountability for my thoughts, feelings and actions. I learned my boundaries were not universal, and when people acted in a way that I did not enjoy, it was not to annoy me or anger

me; it was because they were meeting needs of their own.

What has NVC done for me? It has given me tools to accept myself, love myself, forgive myself, understand myself, connect with myself, communication with myself, to be aware of myself and to accept, love, forgive, understand, connect, communicate and be aware of others. —
Henry Edward Frank

HOW TO GET STARTED

NVC Basics 1, Basics 2 and Next Step classes are taught on the Hill on Wednesdays, from 3-5pm in the Education Building. Sign-up sheets are posted in the Education Building and in North Block two weeks before a new series begins. The next series will start just after New Year’s.

NVC Basics and Next Step classes are taught in H-unit on Wednesday evenings, from 6:30-8:25p.m. Students can get information about and sign-up for classes in dorms 4 and 5 through Stand Up inmate program advocates. Students can also come to the registration evening the week before classes start and talk to NVC teacher(s). The next series will start just after New Year’s.

—*Sharran Zeleke and John Porter are volunteers who teach non-violence classes at San Quentin.*

Legalized Discrimination: The New Jim Crow

A Review of Michelle Alexander’s Popular Book on The American Criminal Justice System

By MICHEAL COOKE
Journalism Guild Writer

In her book, “The New Jim Crow,” Michelle Alexander writes, that when a prisoner is released from incarceration, he or she enters a metaphorical universe in which discrimination in nearly every aspect of economic, political, and social life is legal.

Incarceration marginalizes vast portions of the African American and Hispanic communities. It ostracizes them physically (in prisons, jails, and ghettos), then sanctions discrimination against them in employment, education, housing, voting, and public benefits, according to Alexander.

According to a Bureau of Justice Statistics study, about 30 percent of released prisoners are rearrested within six months of release. Within three years, nearly 69 percent were rearrested at least once for a new crime. A small amount are rearrested for violent crimes; the vast majority are rearrested for property crimes, drug offenses and public disorder offenses.

For those released on parole, the risks of reincarceration are especially high. They may be stopped and searched (with or without their consent) for any reason. Parolees are at increased threat of arrest because their lives are governed by additional rules that do not apply

to everyone else. Restrictions on their travel and behavior, such as a prohibition on associating with other felons, paying fines, remaining drug free, being employed, and meeting with parole officers, create opportunities for arrest. Violation of these special rules can land someone right back in prison.

Most ultimately return to prison, sometimes for the rest of their lives. Others are released again, only to find themselves in precisely the same circumstances they occupied before, unable to cope with the stigma of the prison label and their permanent pariah status.

Unless the laws and policies that keep ex-offenders marginalized from the mainstream society and economy are eliminated, those labeled felons will continue to cycle in and out of prison. Obtaining reform through local or state legislatures may be unlikely. Few politicians will leap at the opportunity to help people labeled criminals.

A myriad of laws, rules and regulations operate to discriminate against ex-felons and effectively prevent their reintegration into the mainstream society and economy. These restrictions amount to a form of “civic death.”

Anyone convicted of a felony is automatically ineligible for public housing assistance for at

least five years. Even after the five-year period has expired, those labeled “criminals” face a lifetime of discrimination in the public and private housing markets. Housing discrimination against ex-felons (as well as suspected criminals) is legal.

People whose only crime is drug addiction or possession of a small amount of drugs could find themselves locked out of the mainstream society and economy — permanently. In 1996, President Clinton declared that public housing agencies should exercise no discretion when a tenant or guest engages in criminal activity, particularly if it is drug-related. In its final form, the act, together with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, not only authorized public housing agencies to exclude automatically (and evict) drug offenders and other felons; it also allowed agencies to bar applicants believed to be using illegal drugs or abusing alcohol — whether or not they had been convicted of a crime.

The “no-fault” clause contained in every public housing lease requires tenants to do far more than simply pay their rent on time, keep down the noise and make sure their homes are kept in good condition. The “One Strike and You’re Out” policy requires every public housing lease to stipulate that if the tenant or any

member of the tenant’s household, or any guest of the tenant, engages in any drug-related or other criminal activity on or off the premises, and then tenancy will be terminated. Prisoners returning ‘home’ are typically the poorest of the poor, lacking the ability to pay for private housing and routinely denied public housing assistance.

Every state and the District of Columbia, requires parolees to “maintain gainful employment.” Failure to do so could mean more prison time for failing to fulfill a “condition” of parole. Nearly every state allows private employers to discriminate based on past criminal convictions. In fact, employers in most states can deny jobs to people who were arrested but never convicted of any crime.

For most people coming out of prison, a criminal conviction adds to their already problematic profile. About 70 percent of offenders and ex-offenders are high school dropouts. According to at least one study, about half are functionally illiterate. Their job prospects are forever bleak.

The most severely disadvantaged applicants in the job market are ex-offenders. A criminal record — regardless of race — harms the prospects of all job applicants. The stigma of a criminal record makes employers unwilling to hire them. The

jobless rate for young black male dropouts, including those incarcerated, is a staggering 65 percent.

Welfare reform legislation signed by President Clinton in 1996, ended individual entitlements to welfare and provided states with block grants. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) imposes a five-year lifetime limit on benefits and requires welfare recipients, including those who have young children and lack child care, to work in order to receive benefits.

The law also requires that states permanently bar individuals with drug-related felony convictions from receiving federally funded assistance. No exceptions are made to the felony drug ban. Accordingly, pregnant women, women raising young children, people in drug treatment or recovery, and people suffering from HIV/AIDS are ineligible for food assistance for the rest of their lives — simply because they were once caught with drugs.

However, there is another path. Rather than shaming and condemning an already deeply stigmatized group, we collectively, can embrace them — not necessarily their behavior, but them — their humanness, she says.



Photo: Laura Bowman

Family members and recipients of the scholarship awards seated at the head table 25th Annual Veterans' Scholarship Ceremony Honors Area Students

By **ARNULFO GARCIA**
Staff Writer

Military veterans incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison continue giving to their country by awarding scholarships to local high school students.

"This highly ceremonial event reflects our respect for American values," said Chairman Fernando Lemus of the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin (VVGSQ).

High school seniors with military parents or guardians submit essays. Winners are selected by the VVGSQ Scholarship Committee.

Banquet tables were arranged in the shape of sergeant chevrons.

Flags were displayed repre-

senior at Pittsburg High School in Pittsburg. This soft-spoken, shy, winner plans to attend Xavier College in New Orleans, La.

She said she was initially apprehensive about coming inside San Quentin, she reported she was glad she did because the veterans made her feel accepted.

Her Aunt Carla commented, "I'm so proud of her. She has great goals and aspirations and I'm here to watch her succeed. She can relate to the disadvantage (of growing up in poverty), because that's the way she grew up."

"I look around and see the things that you guys are doing here today. I wish that society could see the things that I see here. It's a lot different than the

a mature young man. "Maybe after he gets some college he'll sign up to serve his country," his father said. His mother added, "I am really proud that he is taking advantage of every opportunity."

The Mary Manley Inspirational Scholarship Award of \$1,000.00 went to Ke'Ana Coverson of Benicia High School.

Coverson's grandfather fought in Vietnam. Her essay expressed her feelings; "I feel proud to raise my hand and say, 'My papa is a Vietnam veteran.' I acknowledge and thank my papa for serving our country. It feels good to watch so many people thank him. This teaches me to speak up and respect others."

Judy Lynn Manley, VVGSQ's Webmaster since 2005, says she came in as a volunteer after her daughter, Mary, submitted an essay that was so moving to the VVGSQ members they named an inspirational scholarship in her honor.

Lt. K. Evans has been the veterans' group chief sponsor for two years. He said, "Their cause is good. They work out their problems and support the youths."

As usual, this 25th annual VVGSQ scholarship awards is financed through profits from their prison food sales.

The following donated money to this cause, for the second time: Marcy Orosco, The Salvation Army, \$1,000; Marilyn Murphy, the Episcopal Diocese, \$1,000

—*Juan Haines contributed to this story.*



Photo: Laura Bowman

Sponsor Lt. Evans with scholarship selection committee

senting the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Vietnam Veterans of America, and POW/MIA. The POW/MIA flag carries the message: You Are Not Forgotten.

The first award of \$1,500 went to Rosa Valdés of Vanden High School in Fairfield. She plans to study biology as she works toward a degree in medicine at The University of California at Berkeley.

Valdés acknowledged the need for more positive role models for the younger generation.

"I think it's amazing that you guys are doing this from the inside. I hope that this will get out to the community so others can participate. Thank you for all this, you guys have really made me feel good," she added.

The second scholarship of \$1,250 went to Kameryn Ray, a

things I see on the television. This is why my niece was scared to come in," she added.

The third award of \$500 went to Jon Rich of Rancho Cotate High School.

Rich was valedictorian of his class. He gives his parents much credit as good role models.

His parents expressed pride at the way their son developed into



Photo: Laura Bowman

Color guard members posting the colors as all look on

Richmond Teens Offer Advice to Community

By **MICHAEL R. HARRIS**
Editor-In-Chief

If you were mayor, what would you do to make Richmond a better place to live? That question was posed to high school students whose ideas included more jobs, focus on youth, safer neighborhoods, better schools and even a picnic for police, firefighters and the community members they serve.

"The first initiative I would take is to build more teen centers," wrote Daniela, first-place winner in an essay contest sponsored by the San Quentin Richmond Project at Leadership Public High School. "...the centers will help the students understand the material they are learning in school, helping them get good grades; and it will help the students' fitness and, more importantly, keep them off the streets."

KNOW ONE ANOTHER

She added, "The second idea I want to accomplish is a picnic, as a community, where we all get a chance to impact and get to know each other. There would be fun activities for all citizens of all ages. The main part of this event is to bring out policemen, firefighters, etc., to interact with the community members."

Finally, Daniela wrote, "I would (establish) a student recognition dinner/fundraiser for those individuals who excel in school and give Richmond a good name."

Second-place winner Sarah said, "One way the mayor of Richmond can change the community is by making rehabilitation centers for people who get out of jail and are looking for help."

Senate Bill (SB9) Gives Juveniles a Second Chance

By **MICHEAL COOKE**
Journalism Guild Writer

Juveniles sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole could get a second chance under legislation approved by the State Senate.

Sen. Leland Yee's bill would let courts review juveniles sentenced to life without the possibility of parole (JLWOP) after serving between 10 to 25 years in prison if the offender meets certain criteria. It passed 21-16 in June..

REDUCE SENTENCES

Senate Bill (SB9) would allow judges to reduce sentences to 25 years-to-life for offenders who show remorse and are working to be rehabilitated.

SB9 recognizes that all young people, even those serving life without parole have the capacity to change for the better, and should have access to the rehabilitative tools to do so. The bill recognizes that teenagers are

Sarah also urged counseling for kids from broken homes and job opportunities.

There was a tie between Karina and Edger for third place.

DECREASE VIOLENCE

Karina wrote, "The first thing I would do is decrease the violence in Richmond. Additionally I would help raise money for all schools here in Richmond. Lastly, I would help make Richmond a better and nicer place to live so all people could have a voice and not be discriminated against (because of) the color of their skin, eyes, or anything else."

Edger wrote, "I would establish a curfew for adolescents, encourage more entrepreneurs to open more businesses in Richmond, and hire qualified teachers for our public schools."

The essays were read by a panel of Richmond citizens, including someone from the mayor's office, a clergy person and a teacher.

Checks were awarded to the students with the highest number of points. Richmond Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, teacher Kelli Rice, Kathleen Jackson (Chief Sponsor of T.R.U.S.T.), and neighborhood house of North Richmond, who all helped orchestrate the contest on the outside, presented the awards at the Leadership's Awards Assembly, June 10, 2011.

RICHMOND PROJECT

The Richmond Project is sponsored by the San Quentin T.R.U.S.T. For more information about the Richmond Project and/or, to read the contestants complete essays, visit sanquentin-trust.org.

still maturing, and under this act, youth sentenced to JLWOP could petition a court to review. It now goes to the Assembly, where a similar bill died last year.

275 PRISONERS

Yee, a San Francisco Democrat, says about 275 California inmates are serving life without the possibility of parole terms for crimes committed before they were 18. He says the United States is the only nation that lets children be sentenced to life without parole.

Over 2,500 prisoners are currently serving juvenile life without parole in America. According to the Huffington Post, they were convicted at age 15, 16, 17, and 18—and they will die in prison regardless of how well they live their lives while incarcerated. Many of these young prisoners have already served 10, 15, 20 years, and are now mature adults.

S.Q. Students Graduate

Continued from Page 1

Jean Quan, gave the commencement address.

"America lets you redefine yourself," said Mayor Quan "Prisons too can be institutions of higher learning."

She reported the City of Oakland has won federal funds to invest in infrastructure and will need workers to fill future construction jobs. "You need a high school diploma or a GED to get a construction job," she noted.

Mayor Quan also urged the men paroling to Oakland to help mentor youths and be positive role models in the community. "If you're from Oakland, I expect you to show up to one of our outreach programs."

Between speakers, the musical group Neu Dae sang songs of inspiration and praise, entertained the crowd which reciprocated with cheers and applause.

Valedictorians were Achilles Williams, GED; Angelo Falconi, Coastline College, and Christofino Kenyatta Leal, Patten University.

"I came, I saw, and I accomplished and ripped that nemesis off my back, the ignorance that had tugged away at my self-esteem," GED valedictorian Williams said.

Gov. Brown's Realignment Plan Approved

Continued from Page 1

leased to the local community," said Erin Sasse, chief of external affairs for CDCR.

"The sheriffs say they have about 10,000 beds that are either vacant today or could be put into use if they had the funds to hire the staff to support those facilities...that will take up the first big portion of it," Cate said. He also indicated that another 10,000 beds may come from fire camps and community correctional facilities.

California District Attorney Association spokesperson Scott Thorpe says a bigger worry is whether "realignment" would crowd county jails.

Thorpe said, "There are some counties who literally don't have the beds, so they don't have the physical facilities and the realignment doesn't provide enough money to build jails quick[ly] enough. There are other jails that have the beds, but they don't have the funding for the personnel so they can't put people in some of those beds."

"We currently are under capacity but we will be at, or over capacity in approximately 90 days after realignment goes into effect," said San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey.



Photo: Lt. Sam Robinson

Special guest speakers listen at Mr. Kellum's address

Next to address the graduation audience Coast Line College valedictorian. "Here we succeed, not only as individuals, but as a community. Why? Because we learned that we need each other," said Falconi.

Finally, valedictorian Leal told the crowd. "The more opportunities we in prison have to learn to value education and see possibilities for ourselves, the greater chance we will break the cycle of incarceration, not just for ourselves but for future generations."

Seventy-four men received certificates and degrees at this year's ceremony. Just two years ago, there were 157 graduates. The decline in graduates is a reflection of drastic budget cuts to prison basic education and vocational programs.

The 2011 graduating class included men from the vocational machine shop, vocational sheet metal and from the vocational landscape program, which will

be eliminated this year due to the education cuts.

San Quentin is unique for programs it offers to incarcerated men and is the only prison in the state to have an on-campus college program, which is free of charge to incarcerated men. Patten University at San Quentin provides approximately 20 courses each semester in the humanities, social sciences, math, and science leading to an Associates of Arts degree in liberal arts, as well as college preparatory courses in math and English, to nearly 300 students.

In a separate ceremony the same day, five prisoners were awarded diplomas in Christian Ministries (Conceptualized Leadership Development) from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. They are Michael Adams from Wisconsin, Larry Histon from Georgia, Eddie Lee Johnson II and Garrett Martin from California, and George Lamb from New York.



File Photo

Prisoners in an overcrowded dormitory

Imperial County jail officials reported that they do not know how many low-risk offenders will be housed locally as the state plan to reduce prison populations get underway.

"We don't have enough bed space as it is," Riverside County Sheriff Stan Sniff said.

"Pushing inmates back to overcrowded county jails guarantees that neighborhoods in Riverside County will again be threatened by criminals in the justice system needed to be locked up for years to come," Assemblyman Brian Nestande, R-Palm Desert, said in a statement.

More than a dozen Lassen County Jail personnel will be receiving layoff notices because the state did not renew a contract with the Lassen County Sheriff's Office to operate the Lassen Community Correction Facility run from a portion of the jail.

When asked about the future of CDCR, Cate said, "I want to take the model that we have at San Quentin where we have over a thousand visitors who are in and out of that prison all the time, providing services and try to replicate that throughout the state. It's going to be much harder to do that in Blythe, or in some parts of the Central Valley that are rural. But nonetheless, with all these budget cuts we've got to open up the prisons, bring in volunteers. And I think it's great for the culture of the prison, I think it's great for the inmates. Inmate idleness is a huge problem. But, ultimately if you look at the other models around the country or Europe, in other parts of the world, they're going to this open-prison model and I'd like to see more of that involvement by the communities and what we're doing in corrections."

Death Penalty End May be Coming

Continued from Page 1

If the Senate approves the bill by Sen. Loni Hancock, D-Berkeley, it will be sent to the Assembly for approval.

The Assembly Public Safety Committee voted 5-2 along party lines in favor of the bill after hearing testimony from Heller, a Sacramento attorney and former prosecutor, and Woodford, who is executive director of Death Penalty Focus, an anti-death penalty group.

Hancock told the Marin Independent Journal, "Capital punishment is an expensive failure and an example of the dysfunction of our prisons."

The IJ cited Arthur Alarcon of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and Loyola Law School professor Paula Mitchell claiming that the capital punishment system is "a multibillion-dollar fraud on California taxpayers."

Their findings, soon to be published, estimate that California has spent more than \$4 billion on capital punishment since the death penalty was reinstated in 1978. In that time, California has executed 13 prisoners, which they say equate to about \$308 million per execution.

Opponents of the measure, represented at the hearing by numerous law enforcement organizations and the victims advocacy

group Crime Victims United of California, said cost should not matter when punishing the worst criminals who commit heinous crimes. They also raised concerns about whether sentences would continue to be reduced and said not having a death penalty puts law enforcement officers in particular danger.

Ron Cottingham, president of the Peace Officers Research Association of California, said passing the bill "will put a target on the back of my members and every peace officer in California" because criminals will know they will face only "three hots and a cot" for killing an officer.

Opponents also said that the Legislature could take steps to speed up the execution process instead of abolishing the death penalty.

District Court Judge Jeremy Fogel halted California's executions in 2006 because of complications in the lethal injection method. Subsequently, a shortage of the execution drugs further delayed carrying out death sentences.

There are currently 714 prisoners condemned to death and awaiting execution in California.

Program Brings Families To Visit with Prisoners

Faith based organization "Get on the Bus" assists over 1000 kids

**By JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writer**

There were smiles, hugs, and tears of joy in San Quentin's visiting room on Father's Day.

Most of the children who visited their fathers live hundreds of miles away in Southern California communities.

Participants proudly wore their violet "Get on the Bus" tee shirts into the visiting room to see their fathers.

The children were given this gift from a non-profit, faith-based organization called "Get on the Bus."

getonthebus.com unites children with their parents on Mother's Day and Father's Day each year in order to strengthen the family unit.

Troy Williams has been incarcerated for nearly 15 years. During that time he says he's seen his daughter maybe five times, the last time nearly seven years ago.

This precious father-daughter moment gave Williams the opportunity to hug and talk to her face to face, which he said, "...is very different from the limited 15 minutes of talking over the

telephone or the distance of a letter."

"We think little of the actual harm we do to our families when we commit crimes," Williams said. "In the wake of the victims I left behind, there goes my children."

When asked why should prisoners benefit from a program like this Williams said, "It's not about me; it's about the children. It is said that 70 percent of children with incarcerated parents end up incarcerated themselves. What some people tend to forget is that a child lost is a victim gained. So, allowing my child to see me today and understand who I am right now strengthens her ability to build healthier relationships, relationships not base on perceptions of who her father used to be, but relationships based upon knowing who her father is today."

In addition to San Quentin, this program assisted more than 1,000 children and their caregivers in visiting fathers incarcerated at Folsom Prison, California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo, the Correctional Training Facility - Soledad, Salinas Valley State Prison, and Solano State Prison - Vacaville.

SPORTS

S.Q. Warriors Fall In Overtime Battle

By GARY "MALACHI" SCOTT
Journalism Guild Writer

Despite a valiant effort, the San Quentin Warriors basketball fell 98-97 in overtime to the outside team Imago Dei.

The Warriors nearly pulled off another in a string of victories over the visitors until Imago Dei rallied back for a fourth quarter tie.

The San Quentin Warriors played a tense game of score for full court basketball. The game started at a quick pace that did not let up throughout four quarters. Even though the players of Imago Dei found themselves down and surely beaten by the Warriors by 11 points late in the fourth quarter, they dug deep and rallied, hitting back to back three-pointers and came within two points.

As Imago Dei (Latin for Image of God) regained possession

of the basketball with seconds left. Steve Diekman of Imago Dei was fouled and dropped in two clutch free throws that tied the game, sending it into overtime.

With the game tied at three seconds left in overtime, a Warriors player committed another crucial foul on Diekman and he came through in the clutch again, making one out of two free throws. The Warriors then heaved up a desperation shot from half court just to watch the shot fall short as Imago Dei won 98-97.

Steve Diekman finished with 31 points for Imago Dei and Delvone "Chiccen" Winfrey finished with 34 points for the Warriors.

During half time a player of Imago Dei shared a Bible scripture, John 3:16, and talked about the love of God to both teams and the crowd.



File Photo

Coach John "yahya" Parratt leads insiders to victory

4th of July Softball Tournament Champs

By FERNANDO LEMUS
Journalism Guild Writer

After six years of defeats, the Insider team came through with a victory over the Outsider team in this year's Independence Day Softball Tournament at San Quentin.

The winners were coached by John "YahYa" Parratt and the Outsider team by Nghiep "Ke" Lam.

This match up was the most challenging by the Outsider team of all time since being crowned the champions. In the first game, the Insider team scored a whopping seven runs during the first inning. The Outsider team knew its defense and offense had to be much better than the Insider team. It was a catch-up game throughout the first game. The Outsider team almost pulled it off during the last couple of innings of the match, but the Insider team just would not let up with their hitting and defense. The Insider team won the first game by 22-17.

In the second game, the Outsider team pulled ahead for the first couple of innings but the Insider team took advantage of

the opponents errors and anemic hitting to win, 12-7.

Coach "Yah Ya" said, "We finally out-played them. They have an excellent team."

The S.Q. traditional softball tournaments between inmate teams are normally held during the three-day weekend holidays, Memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day.

THE INSIDERS: Jeffrey "Silk" Evans, assistant coach; Kevin "Bilal" Chapman, Mario Ellis, Marcus "Pre-school" Crumb, Jeff Brooks, Ronald "Dalton" Martin, Kevin Carr, Paul Oliver, Chris Deragon, Matt White, Dwight "Sleepy" Kennedy, Mike "Hawk Eye" Fleming, E. Post, Frankie Brady.

THE OUTSIDERS: Nghiep "Ke" Lam, general manager; "Red" Casey, captain; Fernando Lemus, Michael Tyler, Pete Steele, James "JB" Bautista, Alton "Coach" McSween, James "Mac" McCartney, John "John John" Taylor, Anthony Starks, Tony "Tone" Manning, Joseph "Junkyard" Broadway, Louis "Sharki" Light.

S.Q. RUNNERS CORNER

By COACH FRANK RUONA
Contributing Writer

It was a great day for running and 14 members of the San Quentin Thousand-Mile Club ran 15 laps around the baseball field for a fast three miles and showed that despite losing valuable training time while on quarantine they were still tough and fit.

Newcomer Chris Scull took off like a gazelle and led the initial lap while running at a very fast 5:00 per mile pace. Soon Chris realized that for a Three Mile Race he needed to conserve some energy and he backed off that pace.

At that time, Eddie Herena moved into first place. Eddie maintained the lead throughout the race, but Mike Villanueva made a valiant effort to catch him on the final lap. Eddie managed to hold on for an 18:55 finish with Mike just four seconds back.

Larry Ford had been running neck and neck with Mike for the first 14 laps, but could not handle Mike's kick on the final lap and finished 25 seconds back in 19:24, a 53-second improvement over his 2010 Three Mile Race performance.

Stephen Yair Liebب ran a steady race and finished in a

strong 19:50. Chris Scull slowed his pace after his speedy first lap and finished in just under a seven-minute per mile pace at 20:59. Louis Hunter was the next finisher in 21:20. His performance was 1:22 faster than he had ran in the 2010 Three Mile Race, the biggest improvement of any of the 1,000-Mile Club runners who had run in last year's race.

Bill Pillars, Dee Whitaker, Joey Mason and Andrew Gazzeny were the next four finishers. They all ran under an 8:00 per mile pace, which was the goal that Andrew had set for himself at the start of the race.

Another newcomer, John Vaden, ran a steady race and

finished in 24:26. John Neblett showed that he has been putting in consistent training miles as he held a steady pace and finished in 24:35.

Coach Alton McSween gutted out the three miles with an ugly-looking swollen big toe and ran 24:41, while Jonathan Wilson battled plantar fasciitis and sore feet, ran 25:50.

The race in April was supported by Laura Bowman, Coach Frank Ruona, community volunteers Jill Friedman and Diana Fitzpatrick, Thousand-Mile Club Chairman Steve Pascascio and Everett Spells.

| Name | Age | Pace /Mile | Total Time | *Age Graded Time |
|--------------------|-----|------------|------------|------------------|
| Eddie Herena | 28 | 6:18 | 18:55 | 64.32% |
| Michael Villanueva | 40 | 6:20 | 18:59 | 67.81% |
| Larry Ford | 55 | 6:28 | 19:24 | 74.70% |
| Stephen Yair Liebب | 55 | 6:37 | 19:50 | 73.07% |
| Chris Scull | 22 | 7:00 | 20:59 | 58.01% |
| Louis Hunter | 50 | 7:06 | 21:20 | 65.20% |
| Bill Pillars | 56 | 7:48 | 23:23 | 62.51% |
| Dee Whitaker | 52 | 7:55 | 23:46 | 59.48% |
| Joey Mason | 50 | 7:57 | 23:52 | 58.28% |
| Andrew Gazzeny | 43 | 7:58 | 23:53 | 55.13% |
| John Vaden | 24 | 8:09 | 24:26 | 49.80% |
| John Neblett | 48 | 8:12 | 24:35 | 55.68% |
| Alton McSween | 60 | 8:14 | 24:41 | 61.28% |
| Jonathan Wilson | 48 | 8:37 | 25:50 | 52.99% |

1000-Mile Club Run

On a cool and overcast spring day, 12 members of the San Quentin Thousand Mile Club ran 24 one quarter mile laps around the lower yard in an effort to show their fellow inmates, guards and San Quentin Volunteers how fast they could cover six miles.

Star of the day was Eddie Herena, who went to the front on the first lap and maintained a strong pace throughout the full six miles of the race. Eddie finished in a fine 39:12 and broke the Club record of 40:55 set last year by Ronnie Goodman by one minute and 43 seconds. A spirited contest for second place developed between Stephen Yair Liebب and Larry Ford. Stephen pulled away from Larry over the last mile and a half and took second place with 41:22, one minute and 28 seconds faster than he ran last year. Larry was able to hold on and finish in 42:02, a full two minutes and 48 seconds faster than his 2010 race.

A steady stream of seven finishers crossed the finish line over a span of 3 minutes and 47 seconds as Bill Pillars, Mike Villanueva, Joey Mason, Malcolm Jones, John Vaden, John Neblett and Andrew Gazzeny ran strong to the finish. Coach Alton McSween and Louis Hunter were the final finishers with times of 56:05 and 57:30. The run was supported by Staff Sponsor Laura Bowman, Com-

munity Volunteer Jill Friedman, Coach Frank Ruona and inmates Steve Pascascio, Dee Whitaker, Ralph Ligons, Phil Goodman and Everett Spells. Participants agreed it was a great day to get out and enjoy six miles of running and camaraderie with fellow San Quentin Thousand Mile Club members.



File Photo

Ron Goodman

| Name | Time | Age | Age Grade |
|--------------------|-------|-----|-----------|
| Eddie Herena | 39:12 | 28 | 66.01% |
| Stephen Yair Liebب | 41:22 | 55 | 74.51% |
| Larry Ford | 42:02 | 55 | 73.32% |
| Bill Pillars | 48:56 | 56 | 63.52% |
| Mike Villanueva | 49:14 | 40 | 55.61% |
| Joey Mason | 50:09 | 50 | 58.98% |
| Malcolm Jones | 50:55 | 53 | 59.53% |
| John Vaden | 51:43 | 24 | 50.03% |
| John Neblett | 51:52 | 48 | 56.13% |
| Andrew Gazzeny | 52:43 | 46 | 54.36% |
| Alton McSween | 56:05 | 60 | 57.36% |
| Louis Hunter | 57:30 | 50 | 51.44% |



File Photo

Painting of SQ yard

AGE GRADING

What is Age Grading? Age grading is grading run times based on a series of age factors or age standards, which can be used to compare performances at different ages.

The achievement levels are as follows:

- 100.0 = World - Record Level
- over 90.0 = World Class
- over 80.0 = National Class USA
- over 70.0 = Regional Class Northern California
- over 60.0 = Local Class San Francisco Bay Area

By JOHN WARREN
Contributing Writer



Movie rating definitions: PG = Parental Guidance is suggested for young adult viewing, PG13= Parental guidance for children viewing the movie that are under 13 and Ed-R = the "R" rated content of the movie has been edited out of the movie to be shown. Alts= indicates potential alternate movies. The projected schedules of these movies are subject to change.

| TITLE | Out of 4 | DESCRIPTION | GENRE | RUN TIME |
|-------------------------|--------------|--|------------------|-----------|
| 8/23 Morning Glory | PG-13 ★★ | Morning show producer Rachel McAdams is tasked with improving ratings, hires a charismatic newsman and news-woman. | Romantic Comedy | 1:47 2010 |
| How Do You Know | PG-13 ★ 1/2 | Aging pro softball player Reese Witherspoon meets federally indicted decent businessman; both are afraid of commitment. | Romantic Comedy | 1:56 2010 |
| 8/30 The Tree Of Life | PG-13 ★★★★★ | Brad Pitt and wife raise three sons. Eldest (Sean Penn) grows up torn between manliness of his father and grace of his mother. | Drama | 2:18 2011 |
| Babylon A.D. | PG-13 ● | Mercenary Vin Diesel is hired to escort girl from Europe to NYC. She's carrying either a deadly disease or the new messiah. | Sci-Fi Action | 1:30 2008 |
| Season Of The Witch | Ed-R 1/2 | Nicolas Cage is a returning crusader who finds his home racked by plague; is tasked with transporting a "witch" to her church trial. | Fantasy Action | 1:38 2011 |
| 9/6 Battle: Los Angeles | PG-13 ★★ 1/2 | Epic movie of Marines vs. aliens intent on invading Earth for nefarious purposes. Action-packed, actually shot in New Orleans. | Sci-Fi Action | 1:56 2011 |
| Rango | PG ★★★★★ | Johnny Depp voices a chameleon who comes into town as the new sheriff intent on solving the mystery of missing drinking water. | Animated Western | 1:47 2011 |
| 9/13 Mao's Last Dancer | PG ★★ 1/2 | Story of Chinese ballet dancer who defected to the U.S. in 1981. The Chinese embassy tried to kidnap him back to China. | True-Life Drama | 1:57 2010 |



Viral Hepatitis—What you need to know

| | Hepatitis A | Hepatitis B | Hepatitis C <i>Approximately 40% of men ENTERING the California prison system are infected with Hep C</i> |
|--|---|--|---|
| Acute or Chronic? | Acute (or short term) illness <i>(usually lasting 2 weeks to 6 months)</i> | For some people, it's an acute (or short term) illness. For others, it's a chronic (or long term) illness <i>(Most adults who are infected with Hep B will not develop a long-term or chronic infection; Most infants who are infected with Hep B will develop a long-term or chronic infection)</i> | For some people, it's an acute (or short term) illness. But, most people develop a chronic (or long term) illness |
| Where is the virus found? | Feces (doo doo, poo, poop) | Semen, Vaginal Fluid, Blood | Blood |
| How is the virus spread? | YOU CAN ONLY GET HEPATITIS A FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS IT THEMSELVES. Getting a microscopic amount of feces infected with Hepatitis A into your mouth-- usually through ingestion of food, water, or other objects contaminated with fecal matter (poop) from an infected person | YOU CAN ONLY GET HEPATITIS B FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS IT THEMSELVES. Sex Using tattoo equipment (ink, tattoo guns, tattoo needles, etc) that has been used by someone else Sharing injecting equipment (needles, rigs, cottons) Sharing piercing equipment Child-birth: from infected mother to child Razors, Clippers, Tooters, Toothbrushes | YOU CAN ONLY GET HEPATITIS C FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS IT THEMSELVES. Using tattoo equipment (ink, tattoo guns, tattoo needles, etc) that has been used by someone else Sharing injecting equipment (needles, rigs, cottons) Razors, Clippers, Tooters, Toothbrushes Sharing piercing equipment Rarely, from sex. More likely to be transmitted this way when one partner has HIV, or other STDs, and/or when blood is present during sex. |
| What happens to you? | Most people get over Hepatitis A on their own. | Some people infected with Hepatitis B clear the virus within approximately 6 months. For others, there can be very serious health consequences, including scarring of the liver (cirrhosis), liver cancer, and sometimes it can be fatal. | Most people are chronically infected and there can be very serious health consequences, including scarring of the liver (cirrhosis), liver cancer, and ultimately, it may be fatal. Some people infected with Hepatitis C clear the virus within approximately 6 months. |
| How is it treated? | No treatment is necessary | Not everyone needs or can be helped by treatment. Some people who are treated are helped by the treatment. | Not everyone needs or can be helped by treatment. Some people who are treated are able to clear the virus. |
| Is there a vaccine? | YES 2 shots over 6 months | YES 3 shots over 6 months | NO NO VACCINE AVAILABLE |
| How can I reduce my risk of getting it? | •Get the vaccine! •Don't share food, cigarettes, drinks, or other items with other people •Wash your hands often (particularly prior to touching your mouth or eating) | •Get the vaccine! •Avoid sex with an infected person •Use condoms when having sex •Don't use tattoo equipment (ink, tattoo guns, tattoo needles) that has been used by someone else •Don't share injecting equipment (needles, rigs, cottons) •Don't share razors, clippers, tooters etc. | •Don't use tattoo equipment (ink, tattoo guns, tattoo needles) that has been used by someone else •Don't share injecting equipment (needles, rigs, cottons) •Don't share razors, clippers, tooters etc. •Avoid sex with an infected person •Use condoms when having sex |

Artists Beautify H-Unit

By **ALY TAMBOURA**
Staff Writer

In the San Quentin Prison complex of drab gray concrete, unforgiving steel bars, and razor wire-topped fences, one building has a distinction: H-Unit's building four is undergoing a beautification process.

Inmates sponsored by Correctional Officer J. Lee have been painting murals inside of the building for the last 66 months. It has been an evolving process that has more than 60 percent of the upper walls of the 200-man dormitory adorned with majestic prehistoric images.

MORE PEACEFUL

"The murals bring tranquility, making it more peaceful in the dorm," says Officer Lee, who has been working in H-Unit for 14 years.

The dorm's restroom and shower area has a 400-square-foot mural from the Jurassic period. On one side of the restroom wall are fierce-looking land dwellers, including a life-size Tyrannosaurus Rex and raptors with rows of razor sharp teeth, which seemingly jumps out at viewers. The other side of the mural is a water



Photo: Lt. Sam Robinson

Artist Charlie O'Neal in front of murals

wonderland featuring giant sea creatures.

"A lot of people look at the murals over the restrooms and don't even know that there are 14 hidden things," says Lee.

The painters have hidden images that depict icons such as Jimmy Hendrix and Marilyn Monroe into the landscape.

DECORATING WALLS

The dorm's perimeter walls, decorated with works from Dali, Escher and Octavio Campo, are a work in progress. One prisoner-artist, Charles O'Neal, has painted more than 16 of the images thus far. Another artist, Ronnie Goodman, worked alongside O'Neal before his parole.

"I am able to express what I am inside," says O'Neal. "It gives me a sense of peace and gives us (prisoners) a better environment."

For many of the perimeter wall paintings the artists have

been referencing the book "Masters of Illusion." These murals are comprised of small figures that together construct larger-than-life images that include Don Quixote, the Mona Lisa and many more reproductions of historical symbols.

In a place where racial tension usually flourishes, Officer Lee's beautification program transcends racial boundaries. Lee allows anyone who is a worthy artist to take part in the mural painting.

HONOR DORM

"All of the different races painting these murals bring togetherness," says Lee.

Officer Lee runs the dormitory as an honor dorm. To bunk in Dorm 4, prisoners have to be involved in education or one of the many self-help groups. The dorm is remarkably cleaner, quieter and with its murals aesthetically nicer than any of the other four dorms that make up H-Unit.

SAN JOSE

In 2010, the city opened the Seven Trees Community Center. Since then, aggravated assault dropped 83 percent in the neighborhood, drug crimes fell by 80 percent and auto theft plummeted by 70 percent.

Ramadan Fast Begins With the New Moon in August

By **KEVIN YARBER**
Journalism Guild Writer

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and the holy month of fasting, began August 1st at the sighting of the new moon.

Fasting during Ramadan is obligatory for all Muslims who are able; those who are sick, young, or traveling are exempted. The fast, in which Muslims refrain from eating and drinking from the break of dawn until sunset, lasts 30 days.

"Fasting is an action to prove our sincerity to Allah (God), it's not only about staying away from food and drink, but to guard ourselves from all things that are undesirable," says San Quentin Imam, Quazi Kawsar Hossain. "If we can stay away from the necessities of life, this proves that we can stay away from those things that Allah has forbidden."

Fasting during the Holy month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of the Islamic faith. In addition to refraining from food and drink during the sunlit hours of the day, Muslims are also forbidden from sex, smoking, uses of foul language or any other acts deemed impure under Islamic jurisprudence. Ramadan is a part of the year when Mus-

lims increasingly spend time in prayer, Quranic recitation and focus on God consciousness and righteousness behavior.

Author Sheik Tajuddin B. Shutib writes in the book Essentials of Ramadan: "the wisdom behind fasting is an annual institution containing all conceivable attributes from human excellence. It is the training for the body and soul, a reward of life, encouraging the spirit of sharing and giving."

The end of the Holy Month of Ramadan is celebrated by the feast, Eid al Fitr, where the entire world Muslim community feasts in celebration at the end of the fast.

Practitioners of the Islam faith believe that its precepts were revealed through Mohammed (peace and blessings be upon him), the last of a line of prophets, which include Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The Quran, Islam's Holy Scriptures, are said to be the word of God revealed to Mohammed over the course of 23 years. Islam is a monotheistic faith with 1.6 billion adherents (or one fifth of the global population), in about 200 countries. It is the second largest and fastest growing religion in the world, according to some estimates.

—Aly Tamboura
contributed to this story

3 Strikes Opponents Take Aim at Ballot

By **JUAN HAINES**
Journalism Guild Writer

A coalition led by a group of Stanford University attorneys wants to put an initiative on the November 2012 ballot to reform California's Three Strikes Law.

The group has the support of David W. Mills, a former investment banker and Stanford Law School professor. San Francisco-based political consultant Averell Smith will assist in campaigning for public support for the measure.

The group is courting key Republicans such as Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley.

Many Californians who supported the Three Strikes Law thought they were sending serious and violent child molesters, rapists, and murderers to prison for life. However, the toughest recidivist law in the country also included non-violent petty criminals, drug addicts, and mentally unsound people.

The state auditor has concluded that incarceration costs of those now in prison under Three Strikes will total \$19.2 billion. Second-strikers account for 79 percent, or about 32,400 of the 41,100 people in prison because of the law.

The Advocate newsletter said that a symposium on Three Strikes concluded the chances are poor for change through the Legislature, so reform must come by ballot initiative.

The symposium entitled, "The Future of California's Three Strike Law: Reform, Repeal or the Status Quo?" was a two-day event that included the history of the law, its impact on prison overcrowding, what the data

shows about its effect on public safety, and even why the law should be retained.

Speakers responded to public criticism about the law's economic impact, its intended purpose, and its actual impact on California. Speakers included George Gascon, San Francisco district attorney; Steve Cooley, Los Angeles district attorney; Erwin Chemerinsky, the attorney who argued the unconstitutionality of Three Strikes before the U.S. Supreme Court, Jeanne Woodford, former San Quentin warden and former chief of California prisons, and Matthew Cate, secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Since the law's passage, Families to Amend California's Three-Strikes (FACTS) has been trying to change it so that it only applies to violent felons. FACTS reports that nearly 75 percent of second-strikers and half of third-strikers are for non-violent offenses. FACTS specifically campaigns for the following changes in Three Strikes:

1. The law should not apply to crimes committed before its enactment in 1994.
2. The law should not count multiple counts during a single act as multiple strikes.
3. The law should include a "wash-out" period such that convictions older than 10 years do not count as strikes.
4. Burglary of unoccupied dwellings should not count as "serious or violent" strikes.
5. The law should not apply to offenses committed by juveniles.

Ex-S.Q. Prisoner Wins Immigration Case

By **STEPHEN YAIR LIEBB**
Journalism Guild Writer

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled that Xiao Fei "Eddy" Zheng's value to the community through his work with at-risk youth must be considered in immigration proceedings.

UNUSUAL FACTORS

The court described Mr. Zheng's case as "unusual in that (he) was convicted at the age of 16 of very serious crimes, served 19 years in prison followed by immigration detention, yet demonstrated, beyond his own rehabilitation, a genuine desire and commitment to prevent youth from following in his criminal footsteps."

In 1986, Zheng pled guilty to kidnapping, robbery and firearm violations. His "substantial service to the community" led to a grant of parole by the California Board of Prison Terms. Zheng continued to work with at-risk youth in the San Francisco Bay

Areas while fighting deportation to China, where he was born.

The 9th Circuit reviewed an order of the Board of Immigration Appeals that had denied Zheng's request for a waiver of deportation. The Bureau of Immigration Appeals had failed to consider Zheng's value and service to the community.

The 9th Circuit summarized Zheng's achievements during his 19 years of incarceration, which included several years at San Quentin State Prison. "[Zheng] learned English, obtained his GED, earned an Associate of Arts Degree in Liberal Arts, co-facilitated a course entitled 'Alternatives to violence,' and developed a curriculum targeting at-risk immigrant teenagers, currently being used by community service providers in Northern California, and developed a business plan for a non-profit agency."

Following his release on parole in 2005, Zheng continued to work in the immigrant and

youth community of Northern California.

The 9th Circuit held that the Bureau of Immigration Appeals had failed to consider Zheng's work with youth and his value to the community. Among the community leaders who wrote letters to the immigration court describing Zheng's work were the Rev. Norman Fong, program director of Chinatown Community Development Center, and Jane Kim, youth program director.

SETS PRECEDENT

The 9th Circuit's decision was published May 6, 2011 and can be applied to others who are fighting deportation. Zheng's case will now return to the Bureau of Immigration Appeals for a new decision. Zheng expects that the Bureau of Immigration Appeals will order a new hearing before the Immigration Court.

The case is Xiao Fei Zheng v. Eric H. Holder Jr., Attorney General [No. 06-75258]

OPINION

Making a Difference

By MICHEAL COOKE
Journalism Guild Writer

I recently visited the North Block Health Clinic, to seek medical service for a chronic health problem that has plagued me for years. I sat in the uncomfortable, but well-lit, 8'x8' holding cage, waiting my turn to be seen by the nurse.

As I waited, I began to contemplate what inspired some people to pursue their career as healthcare providers, especially those that work within the criminal justice system and prisons.

With the reported shortage of qualified nurses and physicians, finding employment anywhere else, besides a prison, would seem to be the least of their concern. So, what motivates them has to be something more than money. I decided to ask, if the opportunity presented itself.

When my turn came, my name was called and a short, stern-

“This is not the first prison I’ve worked at. But this is the best job I’ve ever had.”

expression and placed a piece of paper on her desk. She then drew three interconnecting circles on the paper. In literature it is a device, which name eludes me, that’s used to show overlapping events that relate to each other.

In the first circle, she wrote the word “nurse”, in the last she wrote “community”, and in the center circle, she wrote the word “patient”. Using her pencil, in the same way a professor would a pointer, she said in her soft, Caribbean accent, “This is the model I live by,” she began. “The nurse and the community come together to heal the patient. It doesn’t matter what the status of the patient is. What is important is the process of healing. It does not matter to me who I am treating, whether someone is the highest of the high or the lowest of the low; I give them the same level of care I would give someone in my own family.”

It is easy to witness that Nurse Bev is a very spiritual person with a deep sense and abiding love for the Lord, Jesus Christ. As she asks her patient to detail their medical complaints, her speech is laced with gospel references and hosannas of praise. “I ask God to protect me from the bad people,” she said. “And not all the bad people are behind walls.” After a brief pause, she continued. “I also ask the Lord to protect me from you, and I ask Him to protect you from me,” she says with a laugh. Sobering quickly, she solemnly finishes, “But most importantly, I ask Him to protect me from me.” Anyone speaking to Nurse Bev knows she isn’t making any malevolent inferences. It is a prayer.

“This is not the first prison I’ve worked at. But this is the best job I’ve ever had.” Then she quickly finished taking my vitals and getting the pertinent information she needed to recommend the treatment to follow. She dropped one more bomb just before I walked out the door.

“I’m also involved in prison ministry work,” she revealed. “But, I do this job because I love it. I do it because I care.” Amen, Sister Bev, we’re fortunate and blessed to have someone here that does...

When you enter Nurse Bev’s office, the soft strains of gospel music play just above the realm of conscious awareness. The first thing you notice about her is her soothing West Indian accent that reminds you of your grandmother or a wise aunt. She is no nonsense -- take care of business straight shooter. But, like the soothing atmosphere of her office, Nurse Bev exudes an under-current of compassion that quickly bubbles up to the surface, as she interviews you to ascertain your medical issues.

I took a deep breath and braved the deep waters to sincerely ask Nurse Bev why she chose to work for the CDCR, especially with all the other employment opportunities available to her. She looked at me with a serious

Court Decision Views Vary

By ANGEL ALVAREZ
Journalism Guild Writer

Opinion is divided within the San Quentin community over the Supreme Court’s ruling about overcrowding in California prisons.

Random interviews with 20 members of the community were conducted: 10 men in blue (5 from North Block, 5 from H-Unit) and 10 members of the teaching staff of the Prison University Project (PUP).

Men in blue were asked, “Do you think you will be affected by this ruling?” PUP teachers were asked, “What do you think will happen because of the Supreme Court ruling to reduce overcrowding?” Both groups were asked: “How soon do you think something will happen?”

The H-Unit response: All 5 of the men asked (100%) believe the ruling will *not* affect them. Jason, Frank, and Tim opined it will take a few years before anything happens. Adam believes the state will “draw it out as long as they can...it’s a money thing.”

San Quentin Inmates Speak Out

Tim added, “I’ve been hearing this for so long. The federal government has been telling the state to do something about this and the state just ignores them.”

The North Block response: Two of the men asked (40%) said it *will* affect them. “It might influence the Parole Board to release programming lifers who have served their minimum terms,” said Jesus. The other three (60%) believe the ruling will not affect them.

John said, “The only thing that will affect my sentence is if Three Strikes is overturned.” When will something happen? Quentin believes, “in about six months” while Terry maintained, “at least two years.”

PUP teachers each had their own take. Edward said, “I’m not sure how it is going to be implemented; Brown thinks it

can be accomplished by sending inmates to county jails...it’s not going to be an easy process.” Ivy did not agree with Justice Scalia’s scare tactics and Vlad hopes that at least non-violent offenders and non-violent third strikers will be released. Karen said, “Things are starting to happen now – for the wrong reasons, largely economic reasons – and we should be reforming the system for moral reasons.”

Maureen believes something might happen in the fall; Vlad thinks it will take about six months. Diarmuid, an attorney from Ireland, said, “It will be difficult to come up with an operational plan that is certain or manageable in a short period.”

Finally, Camille, a math tutor, expressed hope for the future of those incarcerated: “I think that some will have more options, just by the nature of being able to interact with those from the outside... let’s give people more options to open them up to the world.”

Centering Prayer in the Catholic Chapel

By MICHAEL ERWIN
Journalism Guild Writer

Every Monday night in the Catholic Chapel, men of all faiths come together to practice the art of centering prayer. The guidelines are as follows:

1. Light a candle to represent God’s presence.
2. Sit in a comfortable position; close your eyes and relax.
3. Choose a word as a connection to the divine. Focus the mind on your word. Let go of thoughts, worries or cares. If the mind wanders, gently return the focus to the sacred word and your attention to connect with God.
4. At the end of a 20-minute prayer period, the Lord’s Prayer is recited. Do a slow meditative walk around the chapel. Sit for another 20 minutes, followed

by a discussion on the practice.

The aim of centering prayer is to sit in quiet contemplation with open hearts listening to God’s still, small voice.

“Centering prayer is a birth of good works; insight into spiritual things and a path to resting in God as we cease to toil and struggle,” said Mike Erwin, a member of the group. “I also do centering prayer twice a day in my cell. I find that the more I empty myself, the more I gain a Christ-like mind; which is the desire of my heart. Centering prayer strengthens my concentration, my focus and my ability to let go. These skills translate into being able to induce stillness by will; and in stillness, I am in close union with God.”

“This in turn enables me to relate to ‘things’ and people in

my world in a Godly way. My actions and service of love for others will be as God desires,” Erwin said.

“Prison can be a very violent, chaotic and stressful place. The extreme overcrowding compounds this. Fortunately, San Quentin offers some solutions, which lay at the root of the problem (the hearts and minds of men). We have educational, self-help and spiritual programs that facilitate change and growth in our lives.

“I came here from old Folsom where programs/opportunities like this are virtually non-existent. The result is a violent prison with riots and long lockdowns that constitute untold costs to the taxpayers, not to mention unnecessary suffering of the prisoners.”

Violence on Lower Yard Ends in Fatality

By ALY TAMBOURA
Design Editor

Violence erupted at the bottom of the stairs leading to the lower yard when the resident pack of rats living under the old modular building faced an uninvited intruder. The intruder, Big Fatty, a vicious looking grey rat usually seen in the area of old Receiving and Release complex, invaded the territory of the pack resulting in an epic territorial battle, say witnesses.

“I saw two rats fighting; it was worse than seeing humans fight. One of the rats was tearing into the underbelly of the other,” said one prisoner who joined in the crowd of spectators.

According to witnesses, the fight turned deadly when another member of the resident rats joined in the fray, assisting

a fellow member of the pack in attacking the intruder.

“It was a two on one,” said one inmate. “The fat one didn’t stand a chance.”

In the normally quiet prison yard, the rats violent squeaking and squawking was heard as the mêlée continued to shock the prisoners who gathered to watch. Big Fatty, outnumbered and outmaneuvered, received a crippling bite to his left arm causing him to list over, leaving his underbelly vulnerable. Seconds later the attacking rats took advantage of the opportunity and finished Big Fatty off.

“The big rat limped, dragging his right side for a few feet and then collapsed,” said witnesses.

News of the fight spread throughout the facility and many prisoners walked over to

look at Big Fatty’s body, which lay lifeless next to the modular building for all to see.

Mr. Crawford of San Quentin vector control, after hearing rumors about the lethal brawl, responded two days later to remove Big Fatty’s carcass. When Crawford saw the body, he was amazed at its size.

“Usually rats live to be about three years old,” said Crawford. “I wouldn’t be surprised if the rats here at San Quentin live to be six; the prison is very accommodating to them.”

On the same day and unrelated to the rat debacle, vector control answered a call from the Media Center to retrieve two mice trapped in a plastic garbage can.

Corrections

In the June issue of the San Quentin News we mistakenly reported that NFL player DeSean Jackson is a running back for the Philadelphia Eagles, he is actually a highly acclaimed wide receiver.

Also in the June issue we published an article by Jeffrey Little that reported outdated information about staff shortages and program closures here at San Quentin which did not materialize.

We regret these errors and will continue to strive to bring accurate news and information to our readers

Woodford: I Always Opposed the Death Penalty

Continued from Page 1

What type of organization is the Death Penalty Focus and how is it supported?

Death Penalty Focus has been around for about 20 years. It has around 50,000 members who have decided that they want to abolish the death penalty in the state. We don't ask people's party when they support this issue. People support it for many reasons. Some support it on moral grounds. Some support it because it's too costly. Some support it because it's ineffective.

There're all kinds of reasons for supporting it, so I can say that we have a bi-partisan membership, although I don't know that for sure.

We are a non-profit. We get some grants, but the majority of our support comes from a grassroots effort – people donating to Death Penalty Focus.

What was that process of becoming the executive director of the Death Penalty Focus like for you? Did you experience much opposition to your appointment? And if so, who?

I've been volunteering my time to speak out against the death penalty since I retired. So, when the executive director of Death Penalty Focus retired, after being here for many years, I was asked if I wanted to be the executive director. I think getting rid of the death penalty is critical to California for lots of reasons. It's a very complicated issue. Those reasons include the money that I've talked about – the savings.

I think it's a very horrible process for victims, going through years of litigation, having to re-live these cases over and over again. It's also, for me, how we think about punishment in our criminal justice system – believing that retribution serves anyone is really against my philosophy.

Certainly many of the crimes committed are very horrific, and we have to have a system to protect the public. But, it should be about protecting the public, not about retribution.

You were once quoted as saying that "putting people to death is not right." When did you come to that opinion?

I've always been opposed to the death penalty, just from my own Catholic upbringing. As many wardens who have carried out executions – I say this to people, "When you're in corrections, you're not there to judge. You don't judge whether the laws are right or wrong. You don't judge individuals who are sentenced. Your job is to treat people as professionally as you possibly can, and to work on returning people home better people than they were when they came in." I really try to live that philosophy.

So, from a moral perspective, I've always been against the

death penalty. But, having been in the system and seen this from all points of view, I absolutely know it's just wrong, when you start to look at DNA as an example. So when I sat at San Quentin in 1978 people told me that every inmate would tell you that they are innocent.

In fact, they don't do that, as you know. People don't run around saying, "We're innocent." I think we all lived with this thought that we had just this perfect system, and then here comes DNA, which is only available in about 20 percent of the cases. And, through DNA, we've discovered hundreds of innocent people across the nation.

'I would encourage England to really look at the facts and implement a policy that really brings down violence because the death penalty will not help.'

And, there are many cases where people actually believed they were innocent. We are a society that just cannot have a penalty that is so final that we can't allow for the possibility that people might be innocent. Or a system that we now know cannot be perfect.

We have probably one of the best criminal justice systems in the world, but it is not perfect. So, if you're looking at what the end result of what the criminal justice system should be, which is to protect the public, life without the possibility of parole does that.

We have very safe, secure prisons. People don't escape, can't escape because of the kind of prisons we have now in the United States. So, we do not need the death penalty. It does not serve us well. It doesn't provide for a greater protection. It is costly. And, it hurts so many people in so many ways.

How did you prepare yourself for those executions? Where did you have to go mentally?

My approach to it was to practice what I called, "servant leadership," which was really not to think about me, but to think about everybody in the process. Try to be sure that staff were okay. Many of you might have seen me just walking around the prison, walking in housing units and making sure that everybody was okay.

You get so busy worrying about everybody else that you don't think about yourself. And, that's really how I came through those executions.

It probably wasn't until I left the Department of Corrections that I really thought about the impact on me personally. In talking to wardens around the

country, they're many now who oppose the death penalty. They make the same statement. On YouTube, there's a very well-known warden, who's now a professor at the University of Kentucky, Allen Ault. He talks about this so eloquently, about the impact of executions on him, personally.

And, there's a video that we have here called, "A view from an executioner." This is a Southern warden that believes he's executed an innocent man and he talks about it. It's just unbelievable how he talks about the impact of executions on him personally. And, he wonders out loud what his family really thinks of him – what his children think of him. These are people who are very passionate about fulfilling the laws of their state, of their country, who now look back and say, "It's too much to ask of people, to be involved in a process like this."

How were you able to reconcile your duty to the state with your religious belief during those times?

There are very few prisons where you can work on rehabilitation. I mean, San Quentin is like the star of the Department of Corrections. That's because of lots of great people, like Larry Schneider that's right there in front of you.

There's just lots of people who worked hard to make it that way. So, it's always been a dilemma for me - if I leave San Quentin and go somewhere else, I wouldn't have been happy as a warden, because I really loved trying to expand programs at San Quentin and giving staff the freedom to do that. I always say, "The great thing I did was say, 'Yes' when people asked me if they could come to San Quentin," and that probably was the greatest thing I did, was say, "Yes."

Now that you are fighting for changes in the system that you once worked for, what type of feedback are you receiving from people within CDCR?

I think that it's amazing to me, how many people are supportive. I think that people always assume that everybody that works in the Department of Corrections are pro death penalty, or pro this or pro that, but that just isn't the case.

When you work in corrections, you learn that it isn't your job to question sentences. And, I think lots of people believe that non-serious, non-violent people should not come to state prison – period, as an example.

But, you have to leave those opinions at the gate and come in and perform your duties without judgment and that is important for two reasons: If people went to work there and judge people for the acts they committed, it would be a pretty horrible place as well. So, you have to remember that you are not the judge.

In fact that would be my joke to the judges' college when they came in for their tour: "I get to say something that you can't: 'I am not here to judge.'"

With that in mind, staff should not share their point of view. I've gotten e-mails from people congratulating me. When they see me, they say, "Hope you'll be successful." So, I've gotten a lot of support.

Everybody? No, not everybody. I think that there are people who misread what I do. Like in the three-judge panel, I testified against the department on behalf of the inmates, and with reason I did that. It's because I believe it will improve public policy. When I'm passionate about something, I'm going to step up and say what's on my mind.

Following the recent riots in England there have been proposals to bring back the death penalty. What would you say to that?

'It wasn't until I left the Department of Corrections that I really thought about the impact on me personally.'

So, if their purpose is to deter crime – the death penalty – that's just a myth; it just doesn't work that way. I've learned from many of you, who tell me that committing a crime is not a decision; it's a lack of decision.

So, that's what deters crime. It's about how do we help prevent crime. And, we know lots of things about what prevents crime. More police on the streets prevents crime. More teachers in the classroom prevents crime. Solving crime prevents crime.

I would encourage England, any country who thinks about this, to really look at the facts and implement a policy that brings down violence because having the death penalty will not help.

Both Gov. Jerry Brown and Attorney General Kamala Harris have throughout their careers said they oppose the death penalty but as state officials they will enforce the law as it stands. Your view on that?

They both have been committed to carrying out the law as it is. I think what has been helpful about both of them being elected is that they were so public and so courageous about their position, and still got elected. I hope that it will encourage others who really do believe the death penalty needs to be abolished, but are afraid to say so, will step up and say that.

I do think that the voters look to leadership, like Kamala Harris and like Gov. Brown when they think through these issues. I've not had the chance to speak

to either one of them about this issue. I haven't had the opportunity to speak to the governor about any issue. I have seen Kamala at different events. While I don't know what they will do, their very presence, and their very open opinion, personal opinion about this issue, I believe will sway voters.

Because Kamala is the top cop in California and when you have the top cop saying, "The death penalty doesn't make sense," and she has said that in her entire career, I think that's who voters look to for advice when thinking about these issues. Voters have voted in the death penalty – they have to vote it out. So, we hope that Senate Bill 490 will get the issue on the ballot – in front of the voters.

Our job is to educate the voters so that they will understand these issues, and that by getting rid of the death penalty, we can actually make our communities safer, our families safer because we will have the money to spend in a much more effective and appropriate way.

In the terms of costs, I think it's important for the public to understand that we've spent \$4 billion on the death penalty since it's re-enacted. Thirteen people have been executed. That means that each execution cost over \$300 million.

I think the voters need to understand that the Death Row at San Quentin – even if the governor stops the building of a new Death Row – so that's an issue that still needs to be addressed – and if we continue with the death penalty, at some point, they'll have to build a new Death Row, staff a new Death Row, and that will cost the state millions.

I think it's important for the public to understand that public safety is met with a sentence like life without the possibility of parole, because individuals do not have the opportunity to be paroled.

They get one appeal at taxpayer expense and if they're unsuccessful, they spend the rest of their life in prison. The public gets confused between 15 to life, 25 to life, and the sentence called life without the possibility of parole.

For an inmate on Death Row, while it takes years for them to get their appellate attorney, they do have an attorney for life, and can continue to appeal until they exhaust all the resources that are available to them, or all the issues that are available to them. Paid for by the taxpayers.

That is why we spent \$4 billion, and then these cases cost millions of dollars each. We spend \$4 million per year by the Supreme Court handling these cases; \$12 million per year in the attorney general's office; \$30 million per year in individual counties on the death penalty; \$38 million a year in defense

Continued on Page 10

Death Penalty's High Costs

Continued from Page 9

agencies; \$72 million per year in the corrections department; and \$400 million for a new Death Row, if we were to. I mean, that's a very low figure 'cause that figure actually went up, because of the cost of construction – so if we needed a new Death Row, we would need to spend 400 million or more.

That is why, if we ended capital punishment in California, we would save \$1 billion in five years – \$1 billion. It is also important for people to know, for the voter to know, 46 percent of homicides go unsolved in this state. And so if you're thinking about victims, there're many victims waiting to know or waiting to hear, waiting for resolution of their cases.

Those cases aren't being solved, because of a lack of resources. If some of the savings from the death penalty could be put forward to bring those cases to resolution, we would be helping victims a great deal – far more victims than are associated with capital punishment.

I think that we all should be concerned if there's an innocent person in our prison system, no matter what their sentence is, including life without the possibility of parole. And, it is true that if you have life without possibility of parole, you only get one appeal at taxpayers expense.

But, I do think that's why there so many projects around the state, such as the Innocence Project, and others that are there to help individuals who are able to put forward an argument that they were wrongly convicted of a crime. I know that those organizations work very hard to help individuals who may be innocent sitting inside our prison system.

I think those groups will continue to exist and probably grow as we find more and more innocent people in our prisons across the country. We're part of a coalition. There are many groups around the state that look at different aspects of this.

While we're involved in discussions about how different counties handle the issue of capital punishment, our primary focus is to abolish the death penalty, and to educate the public about the death penalty. By the way, a death penalty trial costs 20 times more than a life without the possibility of parole trial.

I think it's important for the voters to understand that. Because you have two trials, one for the capital case, and then a trial to decide whether the sentence should be life without or the death penalty. And, in order to be on a jury for a capital offense, you cannot be opposed to the death penalty, so jury selection goes on far longer. Trials go

on far longer, because of death penalty being on the table. Individuals facing the death penalty will have at least two attorneys. Lots of experts. There's just lots of money spent on this issue.

What is the social benefit of trying to interact with people who have committed horrendous crimes? Is it so we understand where these compulsions come from?

I do think that people in the academic world do look at these issues, and it is something that we do need to learn a lot more about. But, because they're on Death Row, and they're appealing their cases, Death Row inmates are told by their attorneys, not to talk to people about many things.

So, I think that it would be hard to interview Death Row inmates and find out more about them, because that is what their attorney would be doing to attempt to mitigate the crime and be trying to save their client from being executed.

We need to learn a lot more about why, if we're ever able to solve this issue, so I hope that our focus will be more in the prevention as we move forward as a society.

Have you received any correspondence from men and women on Death Row either supporting or condemning

your appointment as the top advocate against the death penalty?

I've received both. When I receive a letter – because I still come into the prison – I take people on tours, so I can't correspond with inmates, so we have to send back a form letter, letting them know that we can't get into individual issues.

What drew you to this point in your life – being passionate about the death penalty?

I just believe that we can be better than this. And, I believe that our prison system really needs to be about rehabilitation. Certainly, there needs to be a punishment component, but I really want to be a part of changing criminal justice in the State of California, and I absolutely believe that it's just time to end the death penalty. And, I would be honored if I could be a part of the movement that accomplishes that.

Explain to us where the disbanding of California's executions stand as of right now?

Well Senator Loni Hancock, has introduced Senate Bill 490, if it's passed by the Senate and Assembly would place the initiative on the 2012 ballot. The initiative would seek to abolish the death penalty in California. It would also change the people on Death Row's sentence to life without the possibility of parole

as the harshest sentence in California.

Explain the process that you are taking, you and your organization, to make sure the death penalty is no longer a part of California's landscape?

Our efforts (at Death Penalty Focus) are to educate the public about what we call "The myth about the death penalty." Many people believe that it's cheaper to execute people than to have them imprisoned with life without possibility of parole. So, we really talk about those kinds of myths, including the fact that many people believe that victims deserve to have the death penalty, but in fact we have a very broken death penalty system in this state and very few people are actually are executed. Of the many homicides that occur in California and around the country, very few people are prosecuted as a capital case. So, it is as people talk about, like being stuck by lightning. Very few people are prosecuted, and of those, very few are ever executed. So, it's really a false promise to victims. So, we really do a lot to try to educate the public about how costly the death penalty is, and that there could be better use of that money. There could be more teachers in classrooms, more police on the streets, and it would be better for public safety to have those dollars going to a much more pro-active approach to criminal justice.

Hancock's Bill Proposes Voter Decision

The bill to allow voters to abolish the death penalty was authored by Sen. Loni Hancock, D-Berkeley.

The legislation, SB490, was approved in July by the Assembly Public Safety Committee and moved to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

If ultimately approved by the Senate and Assembly, the proposal would go on the November 2012 statewide ballot. If the voters approve, it would abolish capital punishment in California and convert all death penalty sentences to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Prior to her election to the State Senate in 2008, Hancock served three terms in the State Assembly. She also was the first woman elected mayor of the City of Berkeley (1986-1994), the executive director of the Shalan Foundation, and served in both the Carter and Clinton Administrations.

Hancock currently represents the 9th Senatorial District, which includes the cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Castro Valley, Dublin, El Sobrante, Emeryville, Livermore, Oakland, Piedmont, Richmond and San Pablo.

Born and raised in New York, she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Ithaca College in 1963 and her master's degree from the Wright Institute in 1978.

She moved to Berkeley in 1964, where she lives today with her husband, Mayor Tom Bates. Sen. Hancock has four children and seven grandchildren.

Hancock has been a leading advocate for investing state resources in rehabilitation programs, job training, and employment because she understands that these and similar programs reduce inmate recidivism. As chair of the Senate Public Safety Committee and the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #5 on Corrections and Public Safety, Hancock said she seeks to examine programs at all levels of the criminal justice system and implement sound policies that reduce prison overcrowding while protecting public safety.

She said she believes that California's corrections system is an expensive failure and requires a fundamental restructuring. As a start, Hancock is working to bring government closer to the people by allowing local governments to carry out vital law enforcement services in a more effective and efficient manner.

Hancock has introduced legislation to provide case management and evidence-based programming to inmates in their last year of incarceration, and bring transparency and accountability to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the Office of the Inspector General. Previously, she has introduced legislation to improve education programs in state prison and require the CDCR to provide inmates with a California identification card upon release of incarceration.

Since entering the state Legislature, Hancock tells supporters she has vigorously championed government reform. In 2009-10, she chaired the Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments Committee. She introduced two major Senate Constitutional Amendments aimed at reducing gridlock and increasing the effectiveness of the Legislature.

SCA5 would have replaced the two-thirds vote formerly required to pass a budget with a simple majority vote and SCA24, which would change California's term limits requirement so experienced legislators are available to solve the problems facing California.

As an Assembly member, Hancock authored AB583, the California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act. It sought to reform campaign financing by providing full public financing for statewide elections. AB583 establishes a pilot project to make public financing available to candidates for Secretary of State so they can wage competitive campaigns without soliciting money from special interests.



Official Photo

Sen. Hancock

EDUCATION CORNER

By TOM BOLEMA
Contributing Writer

Death Row student Craigen Armstrong wants kids to hear his voice and avoid his fate. He envies the access general population outreach groups have to at-risk youth. He has had an epiphany, and wants to share. He thinks that kids would listen to him, trust his judgment, and maybe morph into responsible citizens.

He has accumulated credits toward an Associate Degree through the Coastline College Distance Learning Program. This interview was conducted during proctoring of Spring Semester final exams.

Why are you on Death Row?

I was convicted of first degree murder, which resulted in a sentence of death. I'm in my 10th year of incarceration.

How old are you?

I'm 30 years old.

What were your social and economic circumstances growing up?

It was very negative for me, being poor. Unhealthy influences combined with a financial situation that was far below optimum, made poor decisions seem reasonable, which ulti-

mately led to my present circumstances.

What level of education did you get on the streets and, in regard to criminal activity, how did that affect you?

I entered the California prison system with a ninth-grade level education. This affected me strongly in relation to my criminal activity. My focus and life perspective were affected because of my lack of desire for education. The lack of focus results in the loss of importance in regards to education, leaving one to engage and accept criminal activity as an alternative.

What would you have done differently to stay free and what do you miss the most?

I would have listened to those who love and cared for me. What I miss is being around my friends and family; I most definitely miss my son!

What advice would you give to a teenager today?

Education, education, and education! And to listen to those you know who truly care about you. I think that lays the foundation for a healthy life.

Tom Bolema is a Teacher in the San Quentin Education Department

POETRY

CHOICES

By MICHAEL ERWIN

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who is always fighting? Who is always complaining? Who has unnecessary bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger long at the wine. Those who go in search of mixed wine. Don't let the sparkle and smooth taste for wine deceive you. For in the end it bites like a poisonous serpent; it stings like a viper. You will see hallucinations, and you will say crazy things. You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. And, you will say, "They

hit me, but I didn't feel it. I didn't even know it when they beat me up. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"

The preceding poetic words of wisdom were written almost 3,000 years ago. Proverbs 3:29-35.

Alcoholics and those addicted to drugs seem to be some of the most tortured people on the planet. But there is a way out.

Countless people have found freedom from their addictions and a new way of life in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. You can too. Meetings are held six nights a week at San Quentin. Times and locations are posted in the housing units.

THIS LOVE

By KEVIN YARBER

THIS LOVE
I have for you is truly hardcore
I long for your letters, love, and presence
You are the woman I adore
THIS LOVE
I have for you makes me weak
I long to see you, Understand you and watch you peak
THIS LOVE
I have for you will never fade away
I dreamt of marrying you on a Juma'wa Friday
THIS LOVE
I have for you brings tears to my eyes
I wanna Follow The Sunna of the Prophet "for the rest of out lives."

THIS LOVE

I have for you Consist of 3 important things

1. A Traditional Introduction of our Family
2. La ILLAHA ILLALAH
3. And a wedding ring

THIS LOVE

I have for you will last for Eternity

I will fulfill my obligation as a Muslim Al-Hamdu Lilahi
THIS LOVE

I have for you is out of my Hands

Let's do like the Angels do and follow Allah's Command
THIS LOVE

IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

By RAYMOND HAZEN JR.

If these walls could talk I wonder what they would say
They wouldn't sing of happy times
Just long lethargic days
They'd tell a story of dark despair
Of spilling blood and guts
Of long and lonesome isolation
The kind that makes you nuts
They'd talk about razor wire
Of rifles and a yard
And you'd hang onto every word
Even though listening would be hard
Death, destruction, mayhem, and kill
Violence is what these walls know best
And if you give these walls a chance
They'll put you to the test
And if you ever hear the tale
About the slamming of a gate
Then my friend I feel for you
Cause by then it's far too late
Survival is all you got
Cause these walls walk the walk
Yeah I bet that's what they'd say
If these prison walls could talk!

Last Issue's Sudoku Solution

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

Book Review

By RANDY MALUENDA



PUPPET (By Joy Fielding) – Tab girl/ attorney Amanda Travis' comfortable world is rocked and ugly memories resurface when her estranged mother murders a stranger.



SILENT WITNESS (By Richard North Patterson) – Criminal lawyer Tony Lord reluctantly returns to his estranged home town to defend an old friend of murder charges.



NAKED TRUTH (By Amy J. Fetzer) – CIA Operative Alexa Gavilan is in a fix when she is left in a South American jungle, with the last 30 days gone.



PLAY DEAD (By Harlan Coben) – Life gets more complicated when ex-model investigates the death of her basketball star husband.



WICKED (By Gregory Macguire) – Imaginative account of the origins of Oz's "Wicked Witch of the West."

RATINGS:

Top responses are four ribbons progressing downward to one:

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



Featured artwork of Chad Tobias

Sudoku

By ANTHONY LYONS

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

Snippets

Paint used on reflective road signs contains concave chips reminiscent of moon dust.

Roughly 2,400 years old, and stretching 3.5 miles across, the Oregon "honey" mushroom (*Armillaria ostoyae*) is the single largest known organism on earth.

Investor, and legendary self-made multi-billionaire Warren Buffet, filed his first income tax return at the age of 13.

Sargasso Sea in the North Atlantic is the saltiest part of all the world's oceans.

Objects fall slower at the equator than they do at the North and South Poles.

Not all singing groups are doomed to fail after losing their lead singer. After Temptation front man David Ruffin left the group, Dennis Edwards became the lead singer for the group's biggest selling hits.

In Indian Country



By DANIEL TREVINO
Journalism Guild Writer

The Good Red Road is the cultural, spiritual, religious way of the American Indian. It is taught to us by our elders through stories, religious dances and ceremonies.

For centuries, American Indians have learned of the Red Road from elders of the tribe. Adherents have been taught through acts of spiritualism, which practitioners have mastered over their entire lifetime.

First, you learn the language of the tribe, by learning the names of various articles that are used in ceremonies. Then you learn to pray to the Great Spirit by singing in the language of the tribe. The elders say the most powerful prayer is spoken in the Native tongue of the land where you are.

Then you learn indigenous dances, also a powerful form of prayer.

Elders teach that the world will end when there is no longer a Native American to pray to the Great Spirit in his Native tongue or to dance the sacred dances on this continent.

News Briefs

SACRAMENTO – More than 10,000 offenders are serving their sentences in private prisons outside of California, in four states. That number could grow to 15,000 by 2013. The transfers were ordered in an October 2006 state of emergency proclamation signed by then Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who said the action was necessary “to prevent death and harm caused by California’s severe prison overcrowding.” The proclamation allowed officials to override a law that prohibits sending prisoners out of state without their consent. In 2007, the Legislature also approved some out of state transfers as part of a prison construction bill. The Legislature’s authority for those transfers expired in July. “Our position is that the emergency proclamation is

in place and we’re operating under that authority,” said CDCR spokesman, Paul Verke.

SACRAMENTO – Doctors, dentists and psychiatrists with the federal receiver’s office overseeing prisoners mental and medical care are the highest paid state employees in California, according to government salary data the state controller’s office reported. Two prison doctors make more than \$700,000 annually. Dozens of other prison medical personnel, some with the Department of Mental Health, make more than \$300,000 a year. A top official with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection makes \$309,000 annually.

STOCKTON – A contract worth about \$512 million will go to a joint venture of Clark Con-

struction Group of Bethesda, Md., and McCarthy Building Co. of St Louis. The California Health Care Facility, Stockton, estimated to cost more than \$900 million, will provide long-term care to 1,722 mentally and physically ill state prisoners when operational in 2013.

MENDOCINO – The Parlin Fork and Chamberlain Creek Conservation Camps, located between Fort Bragg and Willits in the Jackson State Demonstration Forest is operated by CDCR. The camp, in conjunction with CAL FIRE has a primary goal of suppression and prevention of local fires by prisoners who have received fire training at the Suanville Correction Center. When not fighting fires, these crews of low-risk male felons also serve the community by clearing forest brush and completing labor tasks for government and certain non-profit organizations.

Hunger Strike Ends

By **JUAN HAINES**
Journalism Guild Writer

A hunger strike that began at Pelican Bay and peaked to about 6,600 prisoners in at least 13 of California prison facilities ended after prisoners “better understood” plans to review and change some policies, state officials said.

The hunger strikers’ number one demand was to abolish “debriefings.” Debriefing is an interrogation process used by prison officials to determine a prisoner’s gang affiliation, and to identify other prisoners who may be gang members.

The changes that took place, to date, include providing cold-weather caps, wall calendars and some educational opportunities for prisoners in isolations units, officials reported.

In a statement released to the San Francisco Chronicle, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Secretary Matthew Cate said, “Hunger strikes are a dangerous and ineffective way for prisoners to attempt to negotiate. This strike was ordered by prison gang leaders, individuals responsible for terrible crimes against Californians, and so it was with significant and appropriate caution that CDCR worked to end the strike.”

When the hunger strike was in effect, supporter Molly Prozig said, “They are protesting conditions that they say are torturous and inhumane. They feel the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation will not make any meaningful or long-term change until they start dying, and they’re willing to take it there.”

New Group to Focus on 3 Strikes

By **FORREST LEE JONES**
Journalism Guild Writer

One of the ways to help reduce prison overcrowding would be to modify the Three Strikes Law.

A Field Poll in June found 74 percent of voters would support giving judges more discretion in sentencing persons convicted of a third felony.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported in July the public’s willingness to exclude non-violent and non-serious offenses, and property crimes as a third strike. There’s also an initiative being planned for the November 2012 ballot by Stanford Law School-Three Strikes Project.

As the debate continues for changing the law, those who will be beneficiaries of the proposed

changes include a new group formed to aid inmates working for reduced imprisonment. It is called the San Quentin Hope for Strikers Activity Group.

The group’s executive board members are Chairman Eddie Griffin, Vice Chairman Forrest Lee Jones and Sajad Shakoor, operations manager. They aim to attack recidivism, the issue of repeat offender conduct.

“Our mission and purpose is to not only provide coping methods similar to other therapeutic community groups, but also equip our members by way of our extensive curriculums with the requisite tools necessary for a meaningful rehabilitation and transition to society,” the group’s mission statement says.

The group “was created for the disenfranchised Three Strikers, but it excludes no one from participation because it is designed to provide support, education, and reform of the criminal mindset,” the group reports.

“We are unique in our approach; no group is similarly situated to tackle the problem that’s facing us and we intend to be a positive influence on the general population, serving as a force multiplier in our performance of our functions. We also endeavor to bring about a more harmonious inmate/staff relationship and work towards establishing an environment conducive to spiritual and psychological growth.”

Back in the Day

Selected Stories From Past Issues of The San Quentin News

JUNE 1981 – The prison bake shop has immediate openings for experienced bakers. Pay ranges from \$14 to \$21.

JUNE 1981 – At Deuel Vocational Institute a race riot between black and white inmates broke out at lunch in the chow hall, injuring six convicts and one guard. Meanwhile a fight broke out in a second chow hall between white, black and Chicano inmates and took an hour and nine tear gas shells to quell. Guards found seven prison-made weapons and a number of sharpened utensils. The prison is known as “the Gladiator School” for its young, violent inmates and heavy gang influence.

JUNE 1981 – A West Block prisoner was attacked and killed in his cell resulting in the prison being put on total lockdown status. Scott Spaulding, 34, was beaten with a claw hammer and stabbed numerous times. Two suspects have been placed in Ad. Seg. pending investigation. A seven-inch prison made knife

and a claw hammer were found at the scene.

JUNE 1981 – A freak cell fire May 30 in the Badger Section housing unit claimed the lives of two Mexican-American inmates. The fire had been started as a protest by the convicts themselves and had gotten out of control. The intense heat swelled the door to their cell, causing it to become stuck.

JULY 1981 – A former San Quentin Prison guard is suing the prison for breach of contract. Gibbs resigned from the prison voluntarily in March 1980 after being accused of smuggling drugs to inmates. Gibbs claims that he had an agreement with Warden George Sumner that no negative information would be given out. The suit claims that Sumner then released information to Gibbs’ new employers at the Federal Correctional Institution that resulted in his firing.

JULY 1981 – Several Bay Area bands combined with some San Quentin “house” bands to provide rocking entertainment

for the annual July 4th holiday show held in the north dining hall. A good time was certainly had by all!

JULY 1981 – For the week of June 27 to July 3, the Phantom Diner says “the hamburgers look a little scary, being burned black on one side... half our issue is sticking to the trays when we get ‘em... Friday’s lasagna was ‘screaming’... only one spoonful of sugar, no use sniveling.”

JULY 1981 – A proposal to sell San Quentin drew strong opposition from Bay Area legislator’s (imagine that!). Officials say a shortage of maximum security cells throughout the state prison system insures that San Quentin will have to stay for now.

JULY 1981 – A check of the canteen price list shows a 7 oz. can of Bugler selling at \$2.35, cigarettes are \$6 a carton, 12 oz. sodas are 30 cents, and a bar of Irish Spring soap is still a bargain at 40 cents.

We Want To Hear From You!

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

All submissions become property of the San Quentin News.

Please use the following criteria when submitting:

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

Poems and art work (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.

- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

Send Submissions to:
CSP - San Quentin
Education Dept. / SQ News
San Quentin, CA 94964
(No street address required)

San Quentin News

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