

San Quentin News

THE PULSE OF SAN QUENTIN



VOL.2012 NO. 8

August 2012

SAN QUENTIN, CALIFORNIA 94964

www.sanquentinnews.com

POPULATION 3,716

NASA Partnership With S.Q. Creates Skilled Workers

By Richard Lindsey
Staff Writer

America needs skilled aerospace workers and one San Quentin program is designed to help fill the void, a NASA executive told a prisoners' audience.

Dr. Simon Pete Worden, a retired Air Force general and NASA's Ames Research Center director, addressed nearly 200 San Quentin prisoners to talk about NASA's future and the need for highly skilled workers in the aerospace industry.

In an unorthodox move, Worden has already enlisted men in the prison's vocational machine shop to produce prototype components for satellites.

The partnership began in 2007 when Worden first learned of the advanced machining abilities of the students from the spouse of a guard who worked at the prison.

He had representatives of the agency contact Rich Saenz,

the machine shop's instructor, to propose the idea of having his students fabricate parts for NASA. Saenz told them, "We have every confidence we can build it."

At times, it looked as though the project might fall apart. Bureaucratic roadblocks and strict budgetary constraints of working within the state's beleaguered prison system have caused several problems.

Despite those challenges, Saenz fought to see the project through. In June 2011 NASA and prison officials signed a two-year agreement to fabricate the parts. Since that time, 27 students have received valuable training from NASA.

The students have been fabricating components for a unique satellite deployment device, called a Poly Picosatellite Orbital Deployer (PPOD).

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S.Q. Baseball Season Opener

The San Quentin Athletics outlasted the San Quentin Giants in their much-anticipated season opener before several hundred cheering fans, defeating the Giants 10-7.

After Rueben Harper doubled down the first base line, Blake Carlyle smacked an RBI double to centerfield, breaking a 5-5 tie in the top of the sixth inning. The A's never gave up the lead from that point.

The Giants proceeded to make crucial errors and allowed the A's to steal bases at will. During the sixth inning, the A's stole three bases. The Giants com-

mitted two errors, allowing the A's to increase their lead to 8-5. Isaiah-Bonilla Thomson ripped an RBI double to centerfield to add another run. The top of the sixth ended at a score of 9-5.

The Giants attempted to make a dramatic comeback in the bottom of the eighth inning. Trailing 10-5, Chris Smith delivered a base hit up the middle and Staffont Smith doubled him home to decrease their deficit to 10-6. After two walks and a stolen base, the Giants scored another run off an A's error. They never

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Gov. Brown Appoints New Corrections Board

ADDS OVERSIGHT TO BOTH STATE AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

By San Quentin News Staff

A new board has been created to cope with the major changes in the future of California prisons.

Creation of the board is in response to last year's U.S. Supreme Court order forcing California to reduce its overcrowded prison population.

The board will "provide the leadership needed to guide California toward a long-term, strategic, and successful implementation of a cost-effective, evidence-based community corrections system," according to a report outlining the plan.

Gov. Jerry Brown created the Board of State and Community Corrections to replace the

former Corrections Standards Authority. The new board, however, doesn't look too different from the old board: five of the ten new appointments were members of the CSA, including Los Angeles Sheriff Leroy Baca, Lassen County Sheriff Dean Growdon, and Chief Probation Officer of Fresno County, Linda Penner.

Brown appointed Susan Mauriello, Santa Cruz County administrator and former member of the CSA, as director of the new board. Mauriello is known as an innovator in alternatives to incarceration, according to KPCC public radio. Santa Cruz is one of the counties that have

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Photo By Sgt. W. Baxter

Members of the Symposium held at the Garden Chapel

Kid CAT Hosts Symposium Focusing on Youth Problems

By Gary Scott
Sports Editor

Creating a collaboration to deal with youth problems inside and outside prison walls was the focus of a recent San Quentin symposium involving criminal

justice experts and youth advocates from across the state.

Hosting the event were members of Kid CAT (Creating Awareness Together) who were juveniles when they committed their crimes. Attendees of the symposium included State Sen.

Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, Elizabeth Calvin of Human Rights Watch, Sister Suzanne Jabro, founder of the Center for Restorative Justice Works, Hollywood movie producer Scott

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Photo by Lt. Sam Robinson

The San Quentin Athletics during opening ceremonies

Study Rebuts Theory Behind Longer Prison Sentences

By Richard Richardson
Graphics Editor

Locking up non-violent criminals for lengthy prison terms fails to improve public safety, a public-interest research report concludes.

"There is little or no evidence that keeping them [offenders] locked up longer prevents additional crime," according to The Pew Center on the States.

Between 1972 and 2011, the United States enacted numerous laws intended to take criminals off the streets through long-term incarceration. Advocates for that strategy say it would enhance public safety.

During this same period, the U.S. Congress influenced state sentencing policies by tying public safety funding to the Truth-in-Sentencing laws. States could only receive federal grants if prisoners served 80-85 percent of their terms. One result, during the last two decades, was the prison population in the United States rose 700 percent.

Free After 20 Years In Prison

By John C. Eagan
San Quentin News Adviser

After spending more than 20 years in prison for a crime he insists he didn't commit, Maurice A. Caldwell says, "I want to make sure it doesn't happen to anyone else."

Caldwell, 44, spoke to a group of about 40 residents of The Redwoods, a senior citizen residence in Mill Valley. He was accompanied by Paige Kaneb, an attorney for The Northern California Innocence Project at Santa Clara University School of Law, who helped him gain his freedom.

"If they had used common sense, I wouldn't have gone to prison," Caldwell said.

During his 20 years and six months of incarceration, he said he served time at various prisons, including San Quentin, New Folsom, Old Folsom, Mule Creek and Pleasant Valley.

"I used to be angry every day, but that's what made me fight more," he said. Among numerous letters pleading for help was one to the Innocence Project, which took on the challenge.

Asked about his life now, Caldwell said, "Every day is a struggle. I'm fighting for my humanity." As a free man, he said he's ineligible for the kind of assistance offered to parolees.



Official Photo

Maurice A. Caldwell getting out of prison after 20 years

Caldwell reported he's trying to get money from a state fund which pays wrongly convicted persons \$100 a day for every day in prison. That would total almost \$750,000.

He was convicted in 1991 of second-degree murder in the fatal shooting of a man near his apartment in the Alemany housing project in the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco during a botched drug deal. The key witness against him was a neighbor who initially said he wasn't involved but later identified him as the shooter. The sentence: 27 years to life.

The city honored the witness with a medal, a key to the city, \$1,000 and a trip to Disneyland. She died while Caldwell was imprisoned.

His sentence was tossed out due to incompetent representation (his attorney was subsequently disbarred because of similar problems with other cases), because of failure to question other witnesses who said Caldwell was innocent, because

evidence was destroyed and the key witness was deceased.

Another key element was the Innocence Project found that a man imprisoned in Nevada admitted he was the shooter.

Caldwell walked out of prison a free man on March 28, 2011, into the arms of his sister. His mother and grandmother died while he was locked up.

Kaneb has handled the case since 2008. "Maurice is not only innocent, but a wonderful client and an appreciative person who has kept his faith throughout this whole ordeal," she said in a 2010 interview.

He could have been freed weeks earlier if he had accepted a prosecution deal to plead guilty to reduced charges. "He turned it down right away," said Kaneb. "He made this great statement, on the record actually, that he's been fighting this case for 20 years, and if he were one percent involved he would have taken this deal and walked, but he was 100 percent innocent and wouldn't take the deal."

Death Penalty and Wrongful Executions

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

There is no credible evidence that an innocent person has been executed in California, a state commission report concludes.

However, the commission "cannot conclude with confidence that the administration of the death penalty in California eliminates the risk that innocent persons might be convicted and sentenced to death," says the report. It was prepared in 2008 by the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice.

Californians will vote in November on whether to abolish capital punishment.

14 IN CALIFORNIA

"Nationally, there were 205 exonerations of defendants convicted of murder from 1989 through 2003," the commission reported. "Seventy-four of them had been sentenced to death. Fourteen of these 205 murder cases took place in California, according to a separate study, 'Exonerations in the United States.'

"Since 1979, six defendants sentenced to death, whose convictions were reversed and remanded, were subsequently acquitted or had their murder charges dismissed for lack of evidence. While DNA testing was not available and these defendants were not officially exonerated, the reversal of their convictions freed them. A subsequent acquittal or dismissal of charges rendered them legally

not guilty, although there was no determination of 'factual innocence' pursuant to California law."

The biggest reason for wrongful convictions is erroneous eyewitness identifications, the report says. That accounted for 80 percent of exonerations, and false confessions were a factor in 15 percent.

23 WITH INFORMANTS

California State Public Defender Michael Hersek reported that of 117 death penalty appeals pending in his office, 17 featured testimony by in-custody informants, and another six included testimony by informants who were in constructive custody.

The report recommended steps to reduce the risks of wrongful convictions resulting from erroneous eye witness identifications, false confessions, and testimony by in-custody informants. Those were enacted by the Legislature, but were vetoed by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"A national study of all death penalty sentences imposed from 1973 to 1995 revealed that 82 percent (247 out of 301) of the capital judgments that were reversed and returned for a retrial or a new penalty hearing were replaced with a sentence less than death, or no sentence at all," the commission reported.

It notes that seven percent (22/301) of the reversals for serious error resulted in a determination on retrial that the defendant was not guilty of the capital offense.

Brazilian Prisoners Generate Electricity To Cut Sentences

READING ALSO TRIMS TIME

Kris Himmelberger
Journalism Guild Writer

A Brazilian prison is taking the idea of good-time credits to another level: prisoners can get days time off their sentences for reading books and for generating electricity for a local community.

After Brazilian Judge Jose Henrique Mallman learned about U.S. gyms using exercise bikes to generate electricity, he used the same concept to power 10 street lamps in Santa Rita do Sapucaí, a town close to a prison, reported The Associated Press.

The town's police department's lost and found donated bicycles to Mallman. The stationary bicycles charge car batteries used to power the lights. Inmates earn one day off their sentence for every 24 hours spent peddling, the AP reported.

"We used to spend all day locked up in our cells, only seeing the sun for two hours a day. Now we're out in the fresh air, generating electricity for the town and at the same time we're winning our freedom," said Ronaldo da Silva, a participant serving a 5 1/2-year sentence for robbing a bakery, according to the AP report. He reduced his sentence by 20 days and said in the process he lost nine pounds.

A once-abandoned, dark promenade of Santa Rita do Sapucaí is now beaming with activity, AP says. People are jogging, walking their dogs, taking strolls, and kids are riding bicycles.



Prisoners can also reduce their sentence by writing book reports, the AP reported.

The program called, "Redemption through Reading," allows inmates to earn four days off their sentence for every book they read. The program allows inmates to reduce their sentence a maximum of 48 days a year, if they read 12 books.

Brazilian officials say they've received some criticism from the public, saying the initiatives are soft on criminals; however, there's been little complaint in the country's press or in other public forums, the AP reports.

California instituted its own literacy program, in 2011, called the Milestone Credit Initiative. It allows inmates serving sentences for non-violent offenses to earn time off for completing certain educational or rehabilitative programs.

"An inmate can earn up to six weeks off their sentence by passing five GED section tests and earning a GED. Time off their sentence can also be earned for completing a college course," said San Quentin Literacy Coordinator Tom Bolema.

Jurors' Mixed Views About Capital Punishment Focus of High Court Ruling

Jurors cannot be excluded from death penalty trials because they have mixed views about capital punishment, the California Supreme Court has ruled.

The court voted unanimously that a prospective juror was improperly dismissed because of her conflicting views in a written questionnaire on the death penalty.

In its ruling July 16, the high court upheld John Riccardi's murder conviction. It will be up to the California attorney general to decide whether to hold another penalty trial, or whether he will be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

A similar juror issue is raised in several other Death Row inmates' appeals, including Scott Peterson.

In 1984, a narrowly divided U.S. Supreme Court ruled that reversal of the death penalty is automatic when potential jurors are dismissed because of

their written answers to questions about their views on capital punishment.

"I'm afraid I could not feel right in imposing the death penalty on someone even though I feel it is necessary under some circumstances," the prospective juror wrote.

Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye wrote that the trial court judge should have questioned her more instead of dismissing her. The ruling "compels the reversal of the penalty phase without any inquiry as to whether the error actually" led to an unfair trial. She wrote a separate opinion to urge the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider the automatic reversal in such cases.

Cliff Garner, Peterson's attorney, argued in his appeal that the mistake occurred in his trial and can be the basis of appeals of a few other Death Row inmates.

—Charles David Henry

After Serving Over 24 Years Behind Bars Henry 'MC' Montgomery Makes it Home

By Gary Scott, Sports Writer

Self-help groups have been important instruments for helping Henry "MC" Montgomery become a better human being, he said, as he rejoins society after 24 years in prison. They helped him overcome his life's hardships.

Looking forward to freedom, he said to those he left behind, "I will be representing you guys in prison, and I will be letting the world know that there are many more guys that have been doing the work that will be behind me. And I am sure that they will be doing bigger things than I am doing."

After serving all those years in prison for second-degree murder and assault, he is paroling to Options transitional facility. He said he has an immediate job offer to work with at-risk youth. He also said that his first music venture will be making a pop album.

"The first 10 years were extremely rough, stressful, lonely, and hopeless," Montgomery said. "I watched a lot of violence and suffering, went through a lot of violence and suffering. As time went on, I developed more anger than what I had before I came in. The horrible experiences were making me better. But I didn't know that at the time. Now that I reflect back, I can see it clearly; those experiences were needed to make me into who I am today."

"It took a particular incident where I over-reacted that showed me that I had an anger problem I needed to work on. This led me down the path of reading books on spirituality, meditation, and self-help," he said.



Photo by Michael Nelson

Henry "MC" Montgomery at Avon Breast Cancer Walk

Montgomery pointed to numerous self-help groups for enlightenment and change. "I started involving myself in groups such as anger management, Non-Violent Communication, Conflict Resolution, Community Impact, etc. After years of study, I finally started to internalize the tools and eventually learned to use them in potential troublesome situations," he explained.

He described his troublesome childhood: "I wasn't really a bad person growing up, I grew up watching my mom being abused..."

My mother got beat with a billy club by an L.A. policeman; I remember that like it was yesterday. As a teenager, I began being attacked by Crips and Bloods."

He also mentioned the good times of his life, expressing how he and his uncle formed dance groups and rode motorcycles together. He said before his incarceration he was enrolled in a class called California Impact, training to retake a test to join the military. "The real reason I wanted to join the service was not to make myself a better life; it was actually to escape my life in Los Angeles because I feared that I would be killed," he said.

Montgomery described his early introduction to hip-hop: "In elementary school I used to be in the back of class making beats. I would dance in my room for hours trying to mimic the guys I saw at dance parties. I started a group in 1983 called Erotic Freak Daddy's at World on Wheels in L.A. I was with my uncle when he danced for Ice-T."

He said that he started rapping in the Los Angeles County Jail, where he got into a rap battle with a gang member and came out victorious. "That victory made me think that I was pretty good at rapping. I used my rapping skills to keep the gangs off of me, which eventually led them to embrace me," he added.

As for the men he's leaving behind, Montgomery has this advice: "Keep yourself clean, because the biggest prize is freedom. Join groups, internalize what you learn in the groups, and put what you learn to practice."

-Julian Glenn Padgett contributed to this story

Releasing Older Prisoners Would Save Money

By A. Kevin Valvardi
Journalism Guild Writer

With an increasingly aging prison population in the United States, a new report says it would be less costly to release elderly prisoners who are no longer a danger to public safety.

There has been overwhelming evidence showing that prisoners age 50 and older are far less likely to commit new crimes, according to the report released by the American Civil Liberties Union.

RESEARCH SHOWS

The report also states that research conclusively shows that arrest rates drop to just over two percent at age 50 and almost zero percent by age 65.

The aging epidemic is the result of various federal and

state "tough on crime" laws and provisions from the mid-1970s through the 1990s, such as "mandatory minimum" sentences, the "war on drugs," and "three-strikes-and-you're-out," as well as restrictions on parole that were enacted during those years.

20 YEARS OR MORE

Many of those affected would have been sentenced to much shorter periods for their crimes prior to 1979, the report concludes. Instead, they received sentences of 20 years or more.

State corrections spending grew by more than 674 percent over the last 25 years, becoming the fourth largest category of state spending, the report says. The costs are mainly spent on incarceration, including incarceration of aging prisoners.

Nationally, the report says it costs approximately \$68,270 per year per aging prisoner. That cost is double the \$34,135 per year for the average prisoner in all states and about \$30,000 more than the average American household income. The California average is about \$50,000 for most prisoners.

The report estimates there are approximately 246,600 aging and elderly prisoners in the United States, making up 16 percent of the prison population nationwide. That number is expected to increase by 4,400 percent from 1981 to 2030 for prisoners age 55 and older.

HIGHER PERCENTAGE

The largest segment of aging prisoners is white, at 42 percent. However, African-

American and Hispanic prisoners make up a much higher percentage of aging prisoners than they do the general population, at 33 percent for blacks and 15 percent for Hispanics.

California leads the nation with about 27,680 prisoners 50 or older, the report says, with the majority in prison for low-level, nonviolent crimes.

SHORT-TERM CHANGES

The ACLU report also recommends a number of short-term changes to begin addressing the problem, including:

- Granting conditional release to aging prisoners who pose little safety risk.
- Utilizing and expanding existing medical parole laws and provisions.
- Increasing accountability and transparency of parole boards and encouraging

the boards to utilize existing age-based and medical-based release programs.

The report also proposes doing away with the "lock 'em up and throw away the key" policies and recommends such long-term systemic reforms as:

- Repeal laws mandating a minimum sentence, which prevent judges from tailoring punishments to individual cases.
- Give crime-appropriate sentences, rather than life sentences, to repeat offenders who commit multiple low-level, non-violent crimes.
- Repeal laws that eliminate good-time credits, which result in inmates serving longer sentences. Good-time credits are awarded for good behavior and completing positive programs.

Seven Ways State Prison System Can Save Money

By Thomas Winfrey
Journalism Guild Writer

California has tremendous potential to save money by revamping its prison system, says a college professor in a Los Angeles Times column.

"We need the political will to pursue proven measures and to counter fear-based rhetoric," wrote Barry Krisberg, research and policy director at UC Berkeley's law school.

With budget woes a huge concern for many Californians, Krisberg says there are several policy choices that would ease spending without jeopardizing public safety.

- releasing low-risk inmates
- allowing low-level offenders to do their sentences in local jails instead of state prison
- revising the way low-level offenders are assessed so that they would qualify for county

jail time instead of state prison

- give low-risk offenders with dependent children the opportunity to serve their sentence in a halfway house
 - commuting "holds" on illegal immigrants
 - modest reform of the three-strikes law
 - investment in evidence-based rehabilitation programs
- California's policy makers have already begun to have

some success in reforming its prison system, says Krisberg. The state has reduced the prison population by 20,000 so far through prison realignment, "without a detectable decrease in public safety."

"Legislative leaders have pledged to examine all options to avert further crippling reductions in state funding for higher education, the court system and social support for poor and vulnerable families. They should

be looking at the state criminal justice system; there are savings that could help us avoid harsher cuts," Krisberg wrote.

"Plans for prison expansion have been halted, and plans for prison closures have begun. The governor has proposed ending the practice of sending California prisoners to private prisons in other states, and he has explored new rules to reduce corrections department staffing," he added.

California Schools Struggling to Help Students

LAYOFFS, LARGER CLASS SIZES AND FEWER INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS ADDING STRESS

By San Quentin News Staff

A new report says 6.2 million K-12 students in California's 30 largest school districts may not reach their full academic potential. Contributing factors to the problem are teacher layoffs, larger class sizes, fewer instructional days, fewer counselors, cutbacks in summer school, declining enrollments, increasing childhood poverty, and high unemployment.

"The number and intensity of internal and external stress factors on California schools and school districts are on the rise as a result of state budget defi-

cits and the nation's struggling economy," says the research organization Edsource in a report titled *Schools Under Stress: Pressures Mount on California's Largest School Districts*.

Even before the Great Recession, California was spending less per student than the national average, according to the California Budget Project. In 2001-02, California spent \$691 less per student than the national average. By 2010-11, the gap had grown to \$2,856.

Making matters worse is the dysfunctional school finance system, shaped partly by Proposition 13, passed in 1978. One

result of Proposition 13 was shifting public schools financing from local communities to the state. It also made it tougher for local school districts to raise revenues, according to Edsource.

Gov. Jerry Brown's solution is to ask voters to increase the sales tax by a quarter-cent on the dollar and to raise income taxes on individuals making more than \$250,000 a year, according to the Sacramento Bee. The ballot measure, Proposition 30, will be decided this November.

A different plan on the ballot, Proposition 38, "would provide seven times more to the schools than Gov. Brown's plan," ac-

ording to the measure's author, Molly Munger.

"Sacramento will be kept out of the loop by putting the money in a trust fund that automatically goes to the school districts on a per-child basis," Munger said on the NBC television show *Class Action*.

She said it is not necessary to choose between the two plans. Voting yes on both propositions would require the one gathering the most votes to be employed.

Munger said her plan has the support of the 900,000-member PTA.

"California must move to relieve its schools of some of the

stresses that threaten to smother their attempts to help children succeed. If it is unable to do so, the academic gains California schools and students have been striving for the past two decades will become an even more elusive target. In addition, major new reforms, such as the Common Core State Standards, new accountability measures, and linking school-work more closely to student careers, will be far more difficult to implement," concludes Edsource.

Proposition 38's details can be found at ourchildrenourfuture2012.com.

NASA Partnership Trains S.Q. Inmates

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Although the parts fabricated by the prisoners are only prototypes, and not yet slated for use, Worden hopes to one day see them used in space.

Worden and Saenz share a philosophy of preparing incarcerated men to find meaningful jobs after they parole.

"Our primary purpose is to prepare people to work in the industry," said Worden. "My commitment is to help people find jobs"

Worden envisions connecting inmates with private companies which would hire them after parole. He even said that some industry leaders have shown an interest in hiring ex-offenders.

Saenz said he works closely with Bay Area colleges and

businesses to find placement on the outside for his students, many of whom report to him with stories of their successes.

Noting the antiquity of many of the shop's machines and a dire need for newer technology, Saenz said, "If we had updated equipment and material, we could do a lot more."

Saenz's students have fabricated items for such diverse projects as the State Fair, Marine Mammal Center, the National Parks Service and San Francisco's Exploratorium.

"This shop continues to grow and deliver top-quality projects," said leadman Duane Butler. He commented that his fellow students are men who are committed to becoming productive citizens.

Ten Board Members Appointed by Brown

MANY MEMBERS SERVED ON THE OLD BOARD

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most fully embraced prison realignment, KPCC reports.

The CSA made the following recommendations to the BSCC in a report titled *Implementation Recommendations: Report to the Board of State and Community Corrections*:

Create quality community-based services and strategies for juveniles and adults to achieve public safety by reducing the number of people that are incarcerated, reducing recidivism and reducing the overall long-term costs of the justice system.

Create a statewide repository for standardized outcome-based community corrections program data collection and reporting, including program descriptions, outcomes, evaluations, costs and cost effectiveness.

Encourage and support funding mechanisms and guidelines that create successful perfor-

mance-based programs with accountability.

Develop a uniform risk and needs assessment approach for all communities.

Design and implement a sustainable financial and organizational structure, appropriate staffing and budget for the BSCC to assure the agency can meet its goals.

The report concludes: "The current effort represents the beginning of the sea (of) change that will reform California's juvenile and adult correctional systems. It is not the end. There are still many interrelated and complex problems to be addressed. The newly created Board of State and Community Corrections is in a key position to implement the necessary changes to achieve the highest standards of public safety using cost effective, evidence-based methods at the community corrections level."



Photo By Sgt. W. Baxter

Senator Leland Yee sitting with Kid Cat members

Focusing on Juvenile Violence

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Budnick, and other concerned citizens.

The Kid CAT men shared their crime impact statements — a collaborative interweaving of each of their stories retailing the day of their crimes — focusing on the day of the offense, the crime itself, and the events that led up to it.

"It is apparent that the men in Kid CAT have done their personal work," said Sister Jabro, who organized the symposium. "The respect given to their victims truly is restorative justice in action."

Gathering into breakout groups, Kid CAT members described the origin of the group,

the projects they completed, the projects they're working on, and Individual turning points.

"It's apparent that men in Kid Cat have done their personal work."

"We believe Kid CAT is capable of starting the movement and carrying it forward on behalf of all youth receiving life sentences," said Sister Jabro.

Calvin, a supporter of juvenile justice reform, said the mission statement of Kid CAT impressed her: *To inspire humanity through*

education, mentorship, and restorative practices.

Sen. Yee spoke about legislation he introduced that would end California juveniles being sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

"You can contribute by asking your family to call their local representatives and express their opposition towards sentencing juveniles to life without the possibility of parole," Yee told the audience, referring to Senate Bill 9.

"I was moved by the way the group moved from I to We," said Sister Jabro. "The closing comments of each person, inside and outside, including obvious emotion, was profound. We are one!"

Longer Prison Sentences Questioned

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The "lock 'em up and throw away the key" approach has reached its tipping point and policy-makers can help by adjusting the amount of time offenders serve behind bars, according to the report titled, *Time Served - The High Cost, Low Return of Long Prison Terms*.

The report quotes California Senate President, Pro tempore,

Darrell Steinberg as saying, "We need to do a better job of distinguishing between violent offenders who should be in state prison for a long time to protect the public, and those who can serve their sentences in ways that are frankly less expensive to the taxpayer and consistent with public safety."

Nearly 90 percent of likely voters in a 2012 poll support shortening prison terms by up to

a year for low-risk, non-violent offenders if they have behaved well in prison or completed programming, according to the report. The poll also showed support for using prison savings for alternatives to incarceration.

To read the study, *TIME SERVED, The High Cost, Low Return of Longer Prison Terms*, go to www.pewstates.org

'Forgiving the Unforgivable'

WORKSHOP EXPLORES HEALING AFTER MURDERS

By Paul Liberatore
Marin Independent Journal

Kia Scherr recently led a workshop in Marin called "Forgiving the Unforgivable." The title is a paradox, and in Scherr's case a misnomer as well, because, as incredible as it may seem, she has forgiven the terrorists who murdered her husband and 13-year-old daughter.

"When we're feeling angry and vengeful and wanting retaliation, what happens is that our hearts are contracted," she says, quoting St. Augustine: "It's like taking poison and hoping your enemy dies."

Scherr's husband, Alan, 56, and daughter, Naomi, were among the 168 people killed in the Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008.

At the time, she was visiting her family in Florida for Thanksgiving while her husband and daughter were in Mumbai on a meditation retreat.

A year after the deaths, Scherr, 56, who lives in Virginia, formed One Life Alliance, a Virginia-based organization dedicated to teaching people to honor the sacredness of life as a counter-balance to terrorism.

She is in Marin this weekend to participate in the 16th International Forgiveness Day events at Dominican University in San Rafael organized by the World-

wide Forgiveness Alliance, a nonprofit headed by Mill Valley lawyer Robert Plath. Information on Marin events is available online at www.forgivenessday.org or by calling 381-3372.

"She has been enlightened enough in life that she knows that it doesn't pay to dwell on revenge and hatred," Plath says.

"It wouldn't allow her to do the work she's doing."

"It was beyond comprehension... There was so much shock and grief and sadness that I didn't have room for anger."

Part of the work she's doing with the One Life Alliance is to provide education, meals and medical check-ups for 1,000 children in the largest slum in Mumbai, the teeming Indian city where her husband and daughter were shot to death by Pakistani-trained gunmen as they sat down for a meal in a restaurant.

"It was beyond comprehension," she says, recalling the phone call from the U.S. State Department that delivered the

tragic news. "There was so much shock and grief and sadness that I didn't have room for anger."

Within a few hours, it occurred to her that the terrorists were ignorant of the interconnectedness of all people, what she calls "the life force that empowers each and every one of us."

Through her organization, she has been on a mission to spread that message, but she couldn't have done that without first forgiving her family's killers.

"Forgiveness," she says, "was the bridge to bring me to that point."

Ajmal Kasab, the only attacker who was captured alive, has been sentenced to death and is in prison awaiting execution.

While she has compassion for the terrorists and harbors no hatred of Kasab, she also believes he must pay for what he's done.

"There is a misunderstanding about forgiveness," she explains. "It does not mean condonement. It does not in any way mean that this young man should not be exactly where he is right now, which is awaiting execution. Forgiveness does not mean to let him go. Actions have consequences and he needs to be accountable to the full extent of the law for the lives he took."

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EDUCATION CORNER

Education Department Scheduled to Expand

By Richard Lindsey
Staff Writer

Plans to begin San Quentin's newest vocational programs are now underway, said the prison's educational principal.

Sacramento has approved the hiring of instructors for building maintenance and computer literacy, the first new vocational programs, said Acting Principal Tony Beebe.

"Sacramento and the prison's administration are fully behind this expansion," Beebe said.

Programs expected to be operational by July 2013 are carpentry, heating ventilation and air conditioning, masonry, plumbing, small engine

repair and green technology. The Education Department will add three teachers to its Volunteer Education Program, three teachers to its GED program and four instructors to its Adult Basic Education, Beebe said.

Teachers and instructors who were previously laid off would be given priority to the new positions, Beebe said.

San Quentin has "surpassed the goals set by the Office of Correctional Education" in Sacramento, Beebe said. "I'm very proud of the teachers and staff; they're dedicated and self-motivated . . . They focus on what they need to do to make it better."

S.Q. Veteran's Group Awards Scholarships

TO CHILDREN OF ARMED SERVICE MEMBERS

By Paul Stauffer
Journalism Guild Writer

Two children of U.S. armed service members wrote compelling essays and won scholarships of \$1,250 dollars each from San Quentin's military veterans group.

RECIPIENTS

Winners were Olivia Piazza of Tomales High School and Saskia Tingley of Healdsburg High School.

The scholarships were presented to the high school graduates at the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin at its 26th Annual Awards Banquet.

"I'm a single mother. I really appreciate and am honored by the financial assistance," said Piazza.

"I wore my dress blues (military uniform) on the plane when I returned to the U.S. from overseas" during the Vietnam War, said Eugene Piazza, Olivia's father. "When I arrived, I was spit on. This night makes up for a lot of what I felt at that moment."

Tingley was unable to attend the event. Veterans from past and recent military conflicts attended the banquet in the Protestant Chapel.

MENSA MEMBER

Piazza is a member of MENSA, an organization for persons with high IQs, and attends Santa Rosa Junior College, where she maintains a 4.5 (A-plus) grade-point average. She plans to get her degree in biochemistry at the University of California at Berkeley.

VVGSQ members Garvin Robinson, Ernest Vick, James

Snider and Darryl Farris chose Piazza and Tingley's essays out of 200 candidates.

SELECTION

They selected winners based on essay content, GPA, plans for further education, and their volunteer work.

Piazza's mother and sisters attended the banquet along with her father.

Her dad served in the 7th Artillery from 1966 to 1968. "As I accept this scholarship, I think of how proud I am that my father served his country," said Olivia.

The June 17 banquet featured Presentation of the Colors by San Quentin's Color Guard, including the American and Prisoner of War flags.

"One of the best things the VVGSQ does, they do for the community by giving out scholarships to kids who are in need," said Gloria Godchaux of Operation Mom.

SPONSORS

Also attending were correctional Lt. Ken Evans, the group's chief sponsor, co-sponsor correctional Lt. Rudy Luna, Outside Veteran Coordinator the Rev. Terry Wolf and Veteran Service Officer Sean Stephens.

"I did four tours in Afghanistan for the U.S. Army 29th Infantry Battalion," said Stephens. "Coming in here and working with Ron Self and these guys helps me more than I help them."

The VVGSQ has awarded scholarships to the children of American veterans since 1990.

— Julian Glenn Padgett contributed to this story.

Technology Used for Blocking Prison Cell Phones Problematic

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Journalism Guild Writer

A plan to block inmate use of contraband cell phones with new technology is plagued with problems, according to a new study by the California Council on Science and Technology.

The nonpartisan study raised serious concerns about California prison officials' plan to allow Global Tel Link to install Managed Access System technology in its 33 state prisons to block illegal cell phone use by inmates.

The study reports that capturing cell phone signals is a technology that is still evolving.

TECHNOLOGY

The 71-page study concludes MAS technology is not mature enough for immediate large-scale deployments, such as the deal between GTL and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

"Managed access as proposed will not do the job that the CDCR wants done," said Susan Hackwood, executive director of the study.

The study focuses on a litany of problems, which include the

technological inability to triangulate radio signals and stop frequency leakage that may disrupt cell phone use by people outside the prison. Nor does the technology prevent 4G, wireless internet, MiFi, text messages, or satellite transmissions, according to the study.

Test of the system was "rudimentary and would, at best, constitute a proof of concept, not an acceptable operational pilot test," the study finds.

SECURITY ISSUES

"Cell phones in prisons are a growing state and national security issue," and inconsistent screening at state prisons is "less rigorous than screening found at a normal airport," according to key findings in the report.

The study noted, "There is no evidence that CDCR has fully or reliably identified the size of the contraband cell phone problem," adding that prison officials should find out the amount of contraband cell phone usage prior to implementing the technology.

The study recommends CDCR conduct thorough searches of all items, vehicles,

and personnel, and test the use of other technologies within confined prison locations.

Dana Simas, a CDCR spokesperson, said staff screenings would be "shortsighted" because it does not bear down on the problem.

Simas also said the study's concerns are unfounded and that the Federal Communications Commission backs the technology.

In 2011, officials reported 15,000 contraband cell phones were confiscated inside state prisons and conservation camps.

INCREASED PENALTIES

In October, Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law Senate Bill 26, authored by Sen. Alex Padilla, which makes it a misdemeanor to smuggle wireless communication devices to inmates. It is punishable by six months in jail and a fine of up to \$5,000 per device. The increased penalty for inmates found guilty of possessing a cell phone is a loss of up to 90 days good-time credit.

The study was prepared at the request of state Senators Elanin Alquist, Loni Hancock, Christine Kehoe, and Alex Padilla.

Stanford Law Professors Answer Questions About Their Three-Strikes Ballot Measure

By Forrest Jones
Journalism Guild Writer

Three law professors explained legal details of the Three Strikes initiative on the November ballot for about 200 San Quentin prisoners, volunteers and staff members.

An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 California prisoners could be affected if voters approve the measure, Proposition 36, reported Stanford University law professors Michael Romano and David W. Mills, who led the successful initiative petition campaign that requires the election, and Anne Deveraux.

Before the July 27 forum, the lawyers met with the executive body of the San Quentin three strikes self-help group, Hope for Strikers. It includes prisoners who has been sentenced under the Three Strikes Law for at least the last 16 years. The inmates discussed their problems while in society which led them to crime, how they have rehabilitated themselves while incarcerated, and articulated their plans and aspirations for the future.



Photo By Lt. Sam Robinson

Hope for Strikers executive body meeting with Stanford professors

Patten College instructors and others asked questions and received information pertinent to Proposition 36.

Here are answers to questions posed to the professors:

According to *Brown v. Poole*, if the government agrees to give a defendant a specific sentence on a prior plea agreement, is the government obligated to honor the agreement?

Yes. If it's on the record, the government must honor the agreement.

Why won't this initiative cover all three strikers?

Public opinion dictates the scope of the initiative in tandem with the law itself.

Will this affect those falling under the Cunningham law?

Yes, and hopefully it will give people relief.

What can we do to help the initiative pass?

Let your people on the street, your family, your loved ones, know about the initiative and where to go on the Internet

to receive information: www.Prop_36.org.

How can those released by the initiative help the others still inside?

By staying clean and staying out of trouble. The last thing we need is people coming home, then getting into trouble. Those opposed will use you as an example.

There is a provision in the initiative that states the petitioner has up to two years to submit a petition for resentencing to the court. Does this also mean that the court

has up to two years to answer the petition?

No. Generally the court will have 30 to 45 days to answer the petition. The D.A. in most cases will ask for an extension.

In the provision of the initiative, the judge can deny the petitioner resentencing in spite of him meeting the criteria. Does this mean that the judge can arbitrarily deny the petition without substantial proof that petitioner is an unreasonable risk to society?

No. The petitioner is deemed by the initiative not to pose a risk to society, merely due to his/her meeting the criteria. Hence, the D.A. in this case has the burden to prove that the petitioner is a threat to society, not based on past conduct rather current behavior. A similar measure was passed regarding the resentencing of a defendant sentenced for possession of crack cocaine and 88 percent of the criminal defendant convicted for crack as oppose to powder cocaine were resentenced. We expect a similar turnout in this case.

Rupa and The April Fishes

POPULAR LATIN BAND PERFORMS DURING DAY OF PEACE EVENT

By Christopher Christensen
Journalism Guild Writer

Wow! Who are those guys?

That was the buzz around San Quentin when the April 28 Day of Peace featured the captivating music of Rupa and The April Fishes.

The April Fishes' Latin sound had prisoners' head bopping and dancing around the yard. The sound was different from the usual prison bands, said one prisoner.

The music they make defies simple labeling. They flow effortlessly between international styles and languages. Their socially conscious messages and fiery spirits are a true reflection of the global struggles of the times. From the U.S. Occupy movements to the civil war in Syria, they represent the soul of a new generation.

The group began when Rupa Marya and cellist Ed Baskerville were playing on the streets of San Francisco, in streetcars and art galleries. From there the musicians formed a band that produced three albums, *La Pêcheuse* (2006), *eXtraOrdinary rendition* (2008), and *Este Mundo* (2009). A fourth album,



Official Photo

Rupa and The April Fishes

Bills, is scheduled for release in October.

Their band grew and they got their first big performance at the Red Poppy Art House. They have toured the U.S., Canada, along the U.S.-Mexico border, and even as far as Budapest.

Their name is from an April Fools tradition in France to stick paper fishes on unsuspecting peoples' backs. According to legend, a French king decided to switch from the pagan calendar, when the New Year fell in April, to the Roman calendar. Those who resisted the change would continue to celebrate the New Year in April by giving out the fish.

"During the Bush Administration, we were feeling like April Fishes," said Marya. "People who don't believe the reality that's handed to them by some higher order, but instead insist on the reality they perceive in front of them. It's a political and social commentary."

The band's current world tour, the "April Fools Tour," includes band members Safa Shokri (upright bass), Misha Khalikulov (cello), Mario Silva (trumpet), Aaron Kierbel (drums), and Rupa Marya (songstress, voice, guitar).

The band's web site is www.theaprilfishes.com and www.facebook.com/aprilfishes.

Poll Shows Strong Support For Three Strikes Initiative

A large majority of Californians say they want to change the state's Three Strikes Law so it only applies to violent and serious repeat offenders, according to two recent polls.

In the polls, CBRT Peppardine found that 71 percent and 78 percent of likely voters would change the law.

The polls were conducted July 16-17 and July 30-Aug 1 with 812 and 873 participants, respectively.

Voters will decide in November whether to approve Proposition 36, which would revise the Three Strikes Law.

If approved, between three and four thousand offenders whose third strike was non-violent would be eligible for resentencing by the original trial judge or his or her replacement. The determining factor would be whether the person poses a danger to public safety.

If the person has a prior conviction for rape, murder, or child molestation, they are automatically ineligible for re-sentencing under the measure.

—Forrest Jones.

Classification Changes

By Richard Lindsey
Staff Writer

Changes are under way for determining where inmates are housed in California prisons, officials say.

Under the new classification score system, an inmates' institutional behavior would be a greater determinate of where that inmate is housed. Previously the classification emphasized the amount of time served on a sentence and type of crime the inmate committed.

Inmates who have serious in-custody rule violations or a history of escape would remain in high security prisons under the new system, officials say.

The changes come in a time when California's prison system is under great scrutiny.

Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that housing prisoners in overcrowded prisons violated their constitutional rights and ordered the state to reduce its prison population.

The state's response to the court order, called realignment, keeps low-level offenders and minor parole violators in county jails. Previously many were sent to state prisons to serve their sentences.

Officials say realignment will reduce the state prison population. It is also aimed at reducing recidivism by expanding vocational, education and rehabilitation programs.

Breast Cancer Walk

SUPPORTERS RAISED OVER TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS



Supporters decorating the donation check



A. Warden Kevin R. Chappell and men of San Quentin pose with donation check



Men displaying cards given to all participants



Supporter displaying T-shirt listing donors



One rolled in support



CMO Dr. Tootell



SAN QUENTIN SPONSORS AVON'S

WALK FOR A CURE



Men walking San Quentin's Lower Yard



Supporters showing off their wristbands

For more photos, visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sanquentinnews

Photos by Michael Nelson and Vinh Nguyen

SPORTS

Sports Ministry Mangles S.Q. Warriors, 111-87

By Gary Scott
Sports Editor

The visiting Sports Ministry basketball team charged ahead and never looked back as they defeated the San Quentin Warriors 111-87. The knockout blow was 18 three-pointers.

Sports Ministry led 67-55 entering the fourth quarter when Warrior Leon Powell made a driving floater. Matt Richardson of the Sports Ministry answered with a foul shot after making a driving layup. Richardson followed by draining a deep three-pointer from the right corner, increasing their lead to 73-57.

The Warriors struck back as Richard "Mujahid" Munns buried a three-pointer. Next came a three-pointer by Charles Lowery of the Sports Ministry, and another Munns three-pointer. The Warriors trimmed their deficit to 76-67 on a put back by Kittrell Blade and a steal and layup by D. Winfrey.

Both teams proceeded to trade baskets.

Tyson Amir of the Sports Ministry knocked down two free throws, Aaron Flowers and Winfrey of the Warriors followed with strong put backs.

Leading 82-72, the Sports ministry scored on a free throw by Rich Branning and a layup by Richardson. After the Warriors scored on a Munns jumper, Richardson of the Sports ministry drained a three-pointer.

Leading 106-87, the Sports Ministry finished the game on two free throws by Richardson and a three-pointer by Dominic Greulich.

The Sports Ministry started the third quarter leading 51-44. After Amir made a free throw, Mark Ivy scored on a strong layup, giving them a 10-point lead. After James Burton of the Warriors scored on a coast-to-coast layup, Ivy returned to answer with a strong but back.

The Warriors followed with an Aaron Flowers layup. After Ivy threw an assist to Kevin Kelly of the sports ministry, Burton of the Warriors scored on a driving layup.

Leading 60-50, the play of the game came from Greulich of the Sports Ministry, who faked a pass to the left that drew the Warriors defense and then slipped an assist pass to Bobby Williams right under the basket.

"I love playing here," Lowery said after the game July 14. "It's an eye-opening experience playing basketball here. Coming into the game, we were focused on defense and rebounds. We hit our shots and pulled the win out."

Lowery sank six three-pointers and scored a team high 20 points. He also played a couple years of college basketball at Arizona University.

Richardson also commented after the game. "I've been here three times and I love the fellowship. My goal was to try to get other people involved." Richardson scored 19 points and played college basketball at Claremont-Mckenna College.

Munns of the Warriors finished with a game high 28 points, including six three-pointers.

One Athlete Gives His Take On Education and Sports

Sports and education are important elements in building character, says Sean Simms, one of San Quentin's outstanding athletes.

He is starting center of the San Quentin Kings basketball team and middle linebacker for the All Madden flag football team.

"I am a student-athlete," Simms said in an interview. "I take pride in my education. I see the importance of it. I underestimated it as a youth. I didn't take heed of the warning of my parents. I now have an appreciation of an education."

Simms also wishes he had played organized sports growing up in south-central Los Angeles. "If I had a chance to go back, I would try to play organized football. I see the benefit of it socially and physically. I see the potential of an education and a chance of going to a Division II or III college."

Simms hopes to pass this appreciation of educational excellence to his son. "My son, Evan, has always been my motivation to do well in school," he said. "Fortunately, Patten College has given me the opportunity to receive a great education and broaden my social skills. I want to show my son, and not just tell him, that through a good education anything is possible, including change."

The skills Simms has acquired through Patten have improved his athletic performance, as well. "Studying and preparing for school creates a balance that allows me the responsibility to attend practice and perform in games," he said.



Photo By Lt. Sam Robinson

Kings starter, Sean Simms, on the basketball court

Last year, Simms officiated for the Kings. This is Simms's first year playing for the team, and he says he likes the camaraderie. "I enjoy the social interaction and learning from Coach Orlando Harris," he says. "I enjoy being a part of a team with winning results."

Simms also strives to pass on his appreciation for both

education and sports to young men at San Quentin, encouraging them "to first check in and attend school, whether it's to attain their G.E.D. or attend college, and with their remaining time I try to direct them to the basketball court of the football field," he said.

— Gary Scott

Opening Day in SQ

Continued from Page 1

scored again, losing in a heart-breaker.

Early in the game, the Giants struck first as Stafont Smith smashed a two-run single to center field in the bottom of the first inning.

"I went to the game to have fun."

The A's tied the score on RBI hits by Asad Perez and Chris Marshall in the top of the second inning.

In the top of the fifth inning, the A's broke the tie as Isaiah Thompson-Bonilla smashed a RBI single up the middle. After scoring on a wild pitch, Perez hit a RBI double to right-centerfield, increasing their lead to 5-2. Michael Tyler started a Giants rally in the bottom

of the fifth, as he drove a base hit to right field, stole second and scored on a A's error. After singles by Marcus Crumb and Hakika Lerato, Chris Smith tripled them home on a drive to center field, tying the game at 5-5.

Mario Ellis was the starting pitcher for the Giants and Jeff Dumont was the starting pitcher for the Athletics.

Athletics Coach John "Yahya" Parratt said, "This win says a lot about the A's under pressure. I'm very proud of how our team played situational baseball. We got this win by not giving up, even after the team put itself into some tight jams. I give credit to the Giants staff and players for a hard fight."

The Giants's Stafont Smith commented after their loss, "I went into the game to have fun. I wanted the new players to see that if you go into the



Photo by Lt. Sam Robinson

Giants' and A's coaches confer during opening day

game to have fun, you will enjoy the outcome, win or lose, because of good sportsmanship and good attitude. I knew we were up against their ace starting pitcher because of the games we played before. My approach was to make

a statement in that game, that the San Quentin Giants is another team to be reckoned with."

Lt. Sam Robinson threw the opening pitch, which was a fastball strike. Larry Faison played a rousing version

of the Star Spangled Banner on his trumpet, and the colors were presented by the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin.

— Gary Scott

Prisoner Recalls Olympic Tryouts

By Thomas Winfrey
Journalism Guild Writer

The 2012 Summer Olympic Games conjure up fond memories for San Quentin prisoner Ralph "Red" L. Ligon.

He was a world-class 100-meter sprinter who competed in the Olympic trials in 1972 at Hayward Field in Eugene, Ore. The same venue was used for the Olympic trials this year.

"It brings back memories of competing against guys like Ray Robinson, Eddie Hart and John Taylor," Ligon said.

The 1972 summer Olympics were held in Munich, Germany. Ligon did not make to the games; however, he continued competing in track until 1975.

Sacramento State University track coach Stan Wright recruited Ligon out of high school. Wright was also the U.S. Olympic coach for the track and field at the 1968 and 1972 Olympics. "Wright became the father figure I had been missing in my life," Ligon said.

Ligon's 10.1-second 100-meter record still stands at Sacramento State.

After his competition days, Ligon coached high school and college runners. He said coaching was a dream come true.

"Running taught me discipline, organization, to be a player, and the value of hard work," Ligon said. "Somewhere along the way, I lost sight of those lessons."

Tainted Soap Recalled

By Kris Himmelberger
Journalism Guild Writer

Prison officials recalled soap produced by the California Prison Industry Authority due to a trace amount of a cancer-causing ingredient.

The July 27 alert prompted collection of all PIA soap in San Quentin housing units. Inmates were issued half-bars of commercial soap

pending arrival of new shipments of the PIA product.

"By 7:45 a.m., the officers were breaking bars of Irish Spring, Ivory, and Jergens in half," said North Block prisoner Steve Cortz. "A few minutes later I heard, 'Listen up gentleman! If you have any PIA soap, you need to bring it to the desk.'"



Official Photo

Ralph Ligon

In 2001, Ligon was convicted of a three-strikes offense. He says his downfall was alcohol abuse and a fast lifestyle.

Ligon says today he's clean and sober. "I credit the Addiction Recovery Counseling program at San Quentin for helping recognize my triggers in life," he said in an interview.

"I credit the Addiction Recovery Counseling program at San Quentin for helping me recognize my triggers in life."

He instructs the San Quentin running group called the 1000-Mile Club. His advice to runners: "Always seek to make yourself better, and believe in yourself."

Ligon says he values his family more than anything in life, and is happy just watching the games on television.



In a statement, PIA said the carcinogen was found in its annual review of products. The alert did not specify the known chemical, only that it was a carcinogen.

The PIA announcement said it had not been contacted by anyone reporting health concerns associated with its soap, but discontinued production as a precaution.

Replacement soap production began July 28, the PIA reported. It planned to begin shipping the new bars shortly thereafter.

PIA reported it will reimburse institutions for any unused soap. It said it will also reimburse customers for any additional cost incurred in the procurement of replacement soap from any other vendor.

The Men's Advisory Council

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN EXPLAINS ITS FUNCTION

By Richard Richardson
Design Editor

When California prisoners have a general problem, the first stop is usually with somebody like Sam W. Johnson Sr., executive chairman of the San Quentin Men's Advisory Council.

MAC's job is "to advise and communicate with the warden and other staff those matters of common interest and concern to the inmate general population," Johnson said.

MAC is composed of an elected representative from each of the prison buildings.

"I became a MAC representative because I wanted to help the general population create a better living environment where positive growth can happen," said Johnson.

He said he wants to be a realistic voice of the general population to the administration; however, "What the general population sometime doesn't realize is the MAC representative is not an alternative for the inmate grievance process or someone's personal problem."

"If the specific problem doesn't affect the overall population, then the MAC really can't do anything about it. Furthermore, the administration still has the last say on any concern. All we can do is present the issue or problem to the administration,"

West Virginia's Prison Problem

By Thomas Winfrey
Journalism Guild Writer

West Virginia is struggling with chronic prison overcrowding, and leaders are warning they need a workable solution now.

"I do believe we're literally at the point where we can't kick the can down the road and defer attention to this matter anymore," Democratic State Sen. Bill Laird, a former four-term sheriff in West Virginia, told The Associated Press. "There's a great sense of urgency in my mind. I can't think of any more important public policy issue facing our Legislature today."

Hope for action has surfaced in a letter signed by a number of influential West Virginia leaders. The letter said West Virginia has the second-highest growth of corrections spending among the states, and its jails have the

Voters Split in Death Penalty Poll

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

An online poll conducted July 30 – Aug 1 shows California voters are in favor of keeping capital punishment as its harshest punishment for murder. However, a poll conducted July 16-17 found support for Proposition 34, which would ban the punishment,

Johnson added. "Depending on the significance of the issue, if we're not satisfied, we can always appeal to Sacramento."

The living conditions in West Block were partly resolved after appealing to Sacramento by its block chairman, Jamal Lewis. The remaining issues are being reviewed by the San Quentin administration, Lewis said.

"When we all work together we can accomplish anything"

As another example of how MAC can be effective, Johnson said recently the administration discovered a "kite" (note) indicating an approaching clash between African-American and Caucasian inmates.

Johnson and the MAC representatives looked into the truthfulness of the note. After going to each building, talking to individual groups regardless of their race, found the note was a fake. The MAC representatives reported that the note was a fake to the administration. After the administration confirmed the note had no validity, institutional programming was not disrupted.

fourth-highest percentage of felons, as reported in the AP. It pointed out that the increased prison population has caused around 1,800 convicted felons to serve parts of their sentences in regional jails.

The letter asked the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a non-governmental organization, to examine and advise them on how to reform the state's penal system.

The state's prison population has quadrupled to 6,900 inmates since 1990, according to state officials. Drugs and drug-related crimes are fueling the population behind bars. Experts estimate that at least 80 percent of inmates committed crimes somehow linked to drug or alcohol abuse, and about half of the total population are in for non-violent offenses.

The JRI has assisted 16 other states reform its penal systems,

was tied with the opposition. The CBRT Pepperdine Initiative Test asked likely California voters: "If the election were today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 34?"

The most recent poll showed 55.7 percent of voters would keep the death penalty while 35.9 percent would end it; the earlier poll showed 46.7 percent for and 45.5 percent against.

"When we all work together, we can accomplish anything. Our goal is to live in a productive environment," Johnson said.

Reflecting on his background, Johnson said when he first arrived in prison, he realized his attitude and his way of thinking was an anchor holding him down, and it was the real reason he ended up in prison.

He said attending the Victim Offender Reconciliation Group at Solano State Prison made him realize he didn't have to continue thinking and believing in old stereotypes regarding violence and prison culture. However, it wasn't until he arrived at San Quentin and enrolled in the Victim Offender Education Group that he was able to let go of his old way of thinking and behavioral problems.

He said VOEG changed his life, allowing him to appreciate the importance of community.

"People who come from other institutions are not aware of how many programs are here. If they participate in them, they'll eventually grow to appreciate all the help that this prison has to offer," Johnson added.

Johnson said Acting Warden Kevin Chappell and Chief Deputy Warden Rodriguez are making his job easy because they support San Quentin's many self-help programs and educational opportunities.

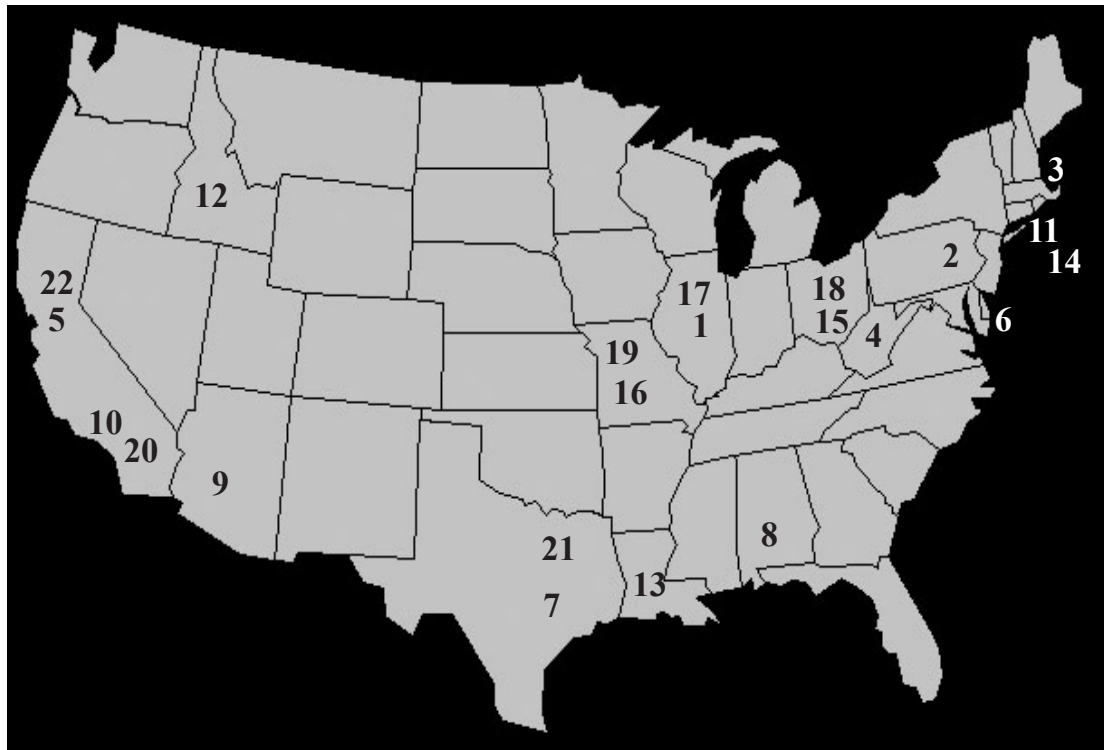
including Pennsylvania and Ohio. Texas reported savings of more than \$443 million since 2007 through Justice Center recommendations, according to the AP.

The Justice Center was not the first organization to study West Virginia's prison overcrowding dilemma. In 2009, a report by the Governor's Commission on Prison Overcrowding made a long list of recommendations without resolving the problem. "Political influences have often swayed the debate," reports the AP.

"The idea behind the Justice Reinvestment Initiative is to remove these political influences from the decision-making process," according to the AP. The Justice Center demands bipartisan and interbranch support for justice reinvestment – putting resources toward policies proven to reduce recidivism.

If passed, Death Row prisoners would receive life imprisonment without possibility of parole. Provisions in the law would direct \$100 million to law enforcement agencies for investigating homicide and rape cases. Analysts estimate state and county criminal justice savings at about \$130 million annually with a one-time cost of \$100 million.

News Briefs



1. SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Three prison inmates are asking a federal judge to order prison officials to improve the living conditions at the minimum-security Vienna Correctional Center in southern Illinois. The suit says many of the nearly 1,900 Vienna prisoners live in moldy, cockroach- and mouse-infested quarters with insufficient bathroom facilities. It also says some broken windows were boarded up, rather than replaced, according to reports by *The Illinoisan*.

2. PENNSYLVANIA — Gov. Tom Corbett signed legislation that would send nonviolent, addicted offenders to facilities that would treat their addiction problems at the local level, reports *The Patriot News*.

3. BOSTON — State legislators passed a bill that, if signed by the governor, would require offenders who commit a third serious felony to face life in prison without the possibility of parole.

4. PRUNTYTOWN, W.Va. — The starting salary for a full-time West Virginia correctional officer is \$22,584 — \$500 less than Mississippi — and about \$800 below the federal poverty level for a family of four, reports the *Associated Press*.

5. SAN FRANCISCO — The city's Adult Probation Department reports it processed 3,318 cases last year. Sixty percent of the offenders did not go to jail. In 2010, 54 percent of the offenders went to jail.

6. WASHINGTON — Employers could be guilty of discriminating if they use criminal histories to deny jobs, the Employment Opportunity Commission says. They cannot use arrest records in hiring decisions because "arrests are not proof of criminal conduct." An employer can exclude applicants with criminal convictions provided it can demonstrate that the exclusion is job-related.

7. AUSTIN, Texas — With 21 of 111 Texas prisons fully air-conditioned, two lawsuits were filed because of heat-related deaths between 2008 and

2011. One suit claims the indoor temperature of a dorm reached a high of 134 degrees during the summer of 2008, according to *The New York Times*.

8. ALABAMA — State officials say there are about 26,500 inmates in its prison system, which is designed for only 13,000. The inmate-to-staff ratio is about 11-to-1, more than twice the national average of 5-to-1, according to *The Montgomery Advertiser*. State officials say they are concerned the overcrowding may lead to more violence.

9. FLORENCE, Arizona — Samuel Villegas Lopez, 49, was executed in June by lethal injection for the rape and murder of a 59-year-old woman in 1987. He was the fourth Arizona inmate executed this year and the 32nd since the state reinstated the death penalty in 1992. Twenty-three people were executed in the United States this year, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

10. LOS ANGELES — Chief U.S. District Judge Anthony W. Ishii ruled George Souliotes, 72, convicted of setting a fire that killed his tenant

and her two children, has shown "actual innocence" and may now challenge his conviction on other grounds. Ishii examined the evidence against Souliotes and concluded the evidence was insufficient to prove he is guilty of the charges.

11. HARTFORD, Conn. — New state legislation would allow the state's sickest prisoners to be transferred to a nursing home beginning early next year. State officials said the transfers would save millions of dollars in health care costs, according an *Associated Press* report.

12. BOISE, Idaho — The state's overcrowding problem has prison officials planning to send 250 male prisoners to a Corrections Corporation of America facility in Colorado, according to *The Associated Press*. If the prison population keeps growing, plans are to ship an additional 200 inmates out-of-state, the AP report says.

13. BATON ROUGE, La. — State officials are closing the Forcht-Wade Correctional Center in the Caddo Parish community of Keithville and the J. Levy Dabadie Correctional Center at Pineville in Rapides

Parish, according to *The Associated Press*. State officials say the cost-cutting closures are allowed because many prisoners will soon be released.

14. BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — "Children and families are the unintended consequences of the criminal justice system," says Steve Lanza, executive director of Family ReEntry, which includes the Champions Mentoring Program begun in 2003 to provide support for some of the approximately 3,000 children affected by incarceration in the state.

15. AKRON, Ohio — Dewey Jones was granted a new trial after authorities discovered that the DNA on a rope and knife used to murder a 71-year-old retiree matched another person. Jones was convicted of the murder/robbery in 1995, according to *The Associated Press*.

16. JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Gov. Jay Nixon signed legislation that would send non-violent offenders to treatment facilities instead of prison, according to *The Associated Press*.

17. CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Prosecutors dropped the case against Andre Davis after DNA

showed he was not the person who raped and killed a 3-year-old girl. Hours later, he was released from prison, according to *The Associated Press*.

18. COLUMBUS, Ohio — State lawmakers approved the first three inmates for a program intended to assist ex-offenders find jobs once released from prison. Inmates with good behavior who have completed vocational programs, earned high school diplomas and performed at least 120 hours of community service are eligible, according to *The Associated Press*.

19. ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Lonnie Erby served 17 years in prison for the sexual assault of two teenage girls in 1985. DNA cleared him in 2003, and this year another man was convicted for those crimes, according to *The Associated Press*.

20. LOS ANGELES — County officials are considering sending some prisoners to San Joaquin Valley to ease jail overcrowding, according to *The Associated Press*. More than 5,000 inmates have been shifted to Los Angeles County jails since the state implemented its state prison population reduction plan. Sheriff's officials say space will likely run out by Christmas. There are now 18,600 inmates in the jail system, according to the AP report.

21. DALLAS — Texas officials have switched to a single drug for executions, reports *The Associated Press*. Officials said they would use pentobarbital instead of a three-drug combination.

22. SACRAMENTO — Hollywood producer Scott Budnick has been named California prisons "Volunteer of the Year." Gov. Jerry Brown said Budnick was selected for his "marked devotion" to helping California inmates get a higher education. Corrections Secretary, Mathew Cate said, "Scott Budnick has gone above and beyond, giving hundreds of young offenders a chance to trade a seemingly hopeless path of crime that landed them in the criminal justice system for a path of opportunity."

Policies That Can Reduce Sexual Abuse in Prison

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

Two reports by the U.S. Department of Justice say prison rape can be dramatically reduced by changing attitudes toward those most vulnerable to abuse, and implementing policies and procedures that provide effective victim services.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported data on sexual victimization in prisons and jails from October 2008 until December 2009 based on computer-assisted self-interviews of 81,566 inmates, age 18 or older, in 167 state and federal prisons and 286 jails in the United States.

A 2008 survey by the BJS of former prisoners concluded that

prison officials could prevent sexual abuse by recognizing common characteristics of inmates who are vulnerable.

Key factors that would help officials implement effective policies:

- Understanding the differences between male and female facilities
- Utilizing professional language in establishing a safe environment
- Recognizing the vulnerability of non-heterosexual inmates and their need for proper treatment, strengthening the integrity of the entire complaint process
- Providing effective victim services
- Equipping staff to respond effectively to inmate sexual victimization

The DOJ's Review Panel on Prison Rape discovered that an estimated 9.6 percent of former inmates experienced at least one incident of sexual victimization during their last stay in jail, prison, or a post-release community treatment facility. More than three-fourths of the victimization transpired while the inmate was in state prison.

Although the rate of sexual victimization in state prison reported by former inmates (7.5%) was higher than the rate reported by inmates in previous BJS surveys (4.8% in 2008-09), the difference may reflect longer exposure periods (39.4 months and 7.9 months, respectively).

About 3.7 percent of the victims said they were forced or

pressured to have nonconsensual sex with another inmate.

About 5.3 percent of former state prisoners reported an incident that involved facility staff. An estimated 1.2 percent of former prisoners reported that they unwillingly had sex or sexual contact with facility staff, and 4.6 percent reported they "willingly" had sex or sexual contact with staff.

Among victims of staff sexual misconduct, 79 percent were males reporting sexual activity with female staff.

The report said female inmates were victimized by other female inmates three times the rate of male inmate-on-inmate victimization.

According to the report, 4.4 percent of prison inmates and

3.1 percent of jail inmates — approximately 88,500 people — experienced sexual victimization within a period of 12 months.

Seventy-two percent of the inmates who were victims of sexual abuse by other inmates said they felt shame or humiliation after getting out of prison, while 56 percent said they felt guilt, according to the BJS report.

National Council on Crime and Delinquency recently launched a web site, for training and technical assistance to eliminate sexual assault in jail, prisons, and other places of confinement for corrections, detention, and law enforcement professionals. www.preare-sourcecenter.org

Asked On The Line

By Angelo Falcone
Journalism Guild Writer

In prison lingo, *program* refers to the daily routine of an inmate. For the most part, it involves rehabilitative groups, educational or vocational classes, sports activities, and religious services. There are roughly 79 active programs at San Quentin.

Asked on the Line conducted random, informal interviews with the men at San Quentin and asked three questions: How long have you been at San Quentin? How many programs are you actively involved in right now? Which has made the most impact on you?

The length of time the men had spent at San Quentin was from one to 15 years. Based on the interviews, the average stay was about five years, three

months. The inmate with the most time, Randy Maluenda, arrived in 1997. Somewhere in the middle is Larry Histon, who has been at San Quentin since 2001.

On average, the men are presently involved in three groups or programs. Terrell Merrit is involved in six programs; the ones that have made the most impact in his rehabilitative progress are the Buddhist services, Alliance, GRIP, and Yoga. Many of the programs the men mentioned were: Centerforce, Breaking Barriers, VOEG, Patten College, SQUIRES, TRUST, Creative Writing, IMPACT, ARC, MVB (vocations), MOMAS, Hobby Program, Kid CAT, Non-Violent Communication, Shakespeare, Coastline College, and the Journalism Guild.

Do the programs make a difference in the lives of the par-

ticipants? They definitely do. Kenyatta Leal said, "The programs make a difference in the culture of the prison community here at San Quentin. Programs like Centerforce and Breaking Barriers have helped me understand how important health is in our lives and how important it is to give back and help other people."

Sam Johnson said he believes "VOEG helped me to be a better man, father, and member of the community."

"The two programs I am involved in both go hand-in-hand. It gives me balance," said Marvin Arnold.

Jeff Long attends Patten College classes and enjoys the Hobby Program.

--Kris Himmelberger contributed to this story.

Bail Bond Industry Practices Bump Up County Jail Costs

By San Quentin News Staff

The California bail bond industry's influence on how county jails operate is costly to taxpayers and injurious to the poor, according to several recent reports.

In California, 71 percent of the people in county jails are awaiting trial — far exceeding the national average of 61 percent, according to a report by the ACLU. Nationwide, the percentage has increased more than 20 percent in the last decade, found a report by the Justice Policy Institute.

The state's pretrial detainee population costs taxpayers approximately \$100 per day or \$1.8 billion annually, according to a report by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. Approximately half of these people have

been found eligible for bail — meaning they do not pose a flight risk or a risk to society — but cannot afford it, so they remain incarcerated until their trial is over, which can take months or years.

Notably, when bail decisions are made by commercial bail industry administrators, the only relevant factor is the person's assets, regardless of risk factors that might show the person is a danger to public safety, finds the CJCJ report. In addition, bail bondsmen are not obligated to prevent criminal activity of their clients.

The reports point out that bail policies do not ensure public safety and discriminate against those who cannot afford bail, which results racial disparities.

A 2003 study found that Latino and black defendants are more likely than white defendants to be held in jail because of an inability to post bail.

In order to reduce the pretrial detainee population in California, jurisdictions must reduce the use of the money-based bail system and instead base release decisions on individualized risk assessments, like family ties, employment, and length of time the person has been in the community, suggests the CJCJ report. Counties should make a commitment to utilize risk assessment tools and pretrial service programs, and also ensure that these programs are funded adequately so that they can function safely, efficiently, and sufficiently.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 17: T.R.U.S.T ninth annual Health Fair in the gymnasium
August 18: Restorative Justice Roundtable symposium in Catholic Chapel
September 22: Recovery Month Celebration on the Lower Yard.

We Can Use Your Help

The San Quentin News is the only prisoner-produced newspaper in the California prison system and one of the few in the world. Prisoners do the reporting and editing work inside the prison, but they need help paying to have the paper printed and mailed.

From its founding in 1940 through 2009 the paper was printed by prisoners in the print shop. But in 2010 the print shop was closed due to statewide cost cutting measures.

Since then the paper has been printed at Marin Sun Printing in San Rafael. The cost has been covered by private donations through a non-profit established for that purpose, the Prison Media Project.

Those donations are shrinking and if the paper is to continue, new support is needed. Please go to our website, www.sanquentinnews.com, to see how you can become a supporter. You get a tax deduction...plus a year's worth of copies of the newspaper mailed to you.

Many thanks, San Quentin News Staff and Advisers.

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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The San Quentin News is written, edited and produced by prisoners incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison. The paper would not be possible without the assistance of its advisers, who are professional journalists with over 100 years of combined experience. A special thanks goes to Marin Sun Printing in San Rafael. These public-spirited groups and individuals have defrayed the cost of printing this issue:

FOUNDATIONS:

Marin Community Foundation
Pastor Melissa Scott
The Annenberg Foundation
RESIST Foundation

INDIVIDUALS:

Alliance for Change, Anonymous, Bill Anderson, Iris Biblowitz, Christopher B. Kasi Chakravartula,
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