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Prisoners Work To Fight Fires

Inmates must rely on one another in dangerous, life-threatening conditions

By Wesley R. Eisiminger
Journalism Guild Writer

Inmate fire teams are doing a lot more than work behind the fire lines. They are working off prison time, reports the *Auburn Journal*.

The first permanent conservation camp was established in 1946 for low-level offenders who "have been volunteering to learn the trade of wildland firefighting and a host of oth-

er skills they can use upon release."

Some of these skills such as woodworking, metalwork and welding are not recreational activities. They are a way to maintain equipment and earn money. Examples are making park benches and custom-inlaid tables.

Part of the August story was based on Growlersburg Camp

See *Firefighters* on Page 5



Photo by Sam Heames

California Health Care Facility built inside San Quentin costing approximately \$180 million

U.S. Spends \$60 Billion On Its Prisons and Jails

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Writer

America spent more than \$60 billion for state prisons and local jails, according to a U.S. Department of Justice report. That included some \$40 billion by states and about \$20 billion by cities and counties. The data

includes fiscal years 2005-2011.

"Between 2005 and 2011, total spending by local governments fluctuated between \$1.6 trillion and \$1.7 trillion," the Dec. 13, 2013, report said. Corrections spending fluctuated between \$25.8 billion and \$28.4 billion, or 1.6 percent of the total.

Local governments spent 84 percent of their total corrections expenditures on correctional institutions, such as local jails and detention centers, in 2011.

This is up from 80 percent in 2005. Local government spent the remainder of their correc-

tions budget on other functions, such as supervising offenders in the community and maintaining and operating non-residential halfway houses. Local government also paid for current operations and capital outlay expenditures to operate and build correctional institutions.

Current operations expenditures consist of officer and employee compensation, utilities and any supplies or contractual services not covered by capital outlay.

See *Loc. Prisons* on Page 5



File photo

San Quentin's firefighters unite to prevent fire outbreaks

Will Gov. Brown's 'Cookie Jar' Help Pay for Realignment?

By David Eugene Archer Sr.
Journalism Guild Writer

Many California counties say they need more money to cope with additional prisoners kept in local jails instead of being shipped to a state prison.

That was the main thing officials told Gov. Jerry Brown when he visited California counties last year to assess the impact of the prison Realignment plan, which took effect in October 2011.

The counties said they need more money for new jail cells, inmate mental health counseling and education and rehabil-



File photo

Gov. Brown says that 'the counties and local governments need help with the resources'

See *Gov. Brown* on Page 16

Costly and Broken Death Penalty System

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

More than two-thirds of all countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice, Amnesty International reports. But some countries, including the United States, still carry out executions.

More than half of the world's population lives in 58 countries where the death penalty is retained by their le-

gal system.

At least 778 executions were reported in 22 countries in 2013, according to Amnesty International's 2014 report on death penalties. That is 96 more than in 2012, according to a Sept. 15 story in *The Times of India*. "With at least 369 executions in the year, Iran leads the list," the newspaper reported.

For centuries, civilizations have justified the use of various methods to perform executions. Even as early as the Roman Empire, death penalty sentences were carried out by crucifixions, drowning, beatings, burning a person to death, impalements and hangings.

According to the report, the oil-producing country of Saudi Arabia sent more than 79 prisoners to their death, followed by the U.S. with 39 executions. Other countries

See *Strike Team* on Page 4

See *Death Pen.* on Page 12

S. Q.'s Emergency Medical Strike Team

A rapid response unit known as the Strike Team was created at San Quentin State Prison to combat the various communicable diseases that could possibly affect the overall general population this year.

An emergency unit was needed and necessary to strike as quickly as possible in the event of contamination of a non-med-

ical area in the prison, Nurse Allyson Tabor of the Public Health Care Services notified Correctional Lt D. Graham.

Each housing unit will be responsible for cleaning any contaminated area where the transmission of the various viruses could almost certainly shut down the entire institution for weeks, Graham said in an

interview.

Graham described these viruses as scabies, lice, blood born e-pathogens such as Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, HIV, gastroenteritis cases (suspect Noro or C. difficile), chickenpox or the flu. Any one of these conditions can spread to others if not cleaned up properly.

S. Pulido, the program facil-

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Prisoners United in the Craft of Journalism
In collaboration with students from the



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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 will 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.

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Counselor N. Lee Helps Inmates Seek Rehabilitation

By Phoeun You
Graphic Designer

Correctional Officer N. Lee began working approximately one year ago as the Correctional Counselor I inside North Block of San Quentin. During that time, Lee has helped hundreds of inmates seek rehabilitation through her service as a caseworker.

Before taking the counselor position, Lee became a part of the Honor Guard. Only a few individuals are chosen to become Honor Guards. According to Lee, the purpose of the Honor Guard is to represent and serve the families of fallen officers.

Lee said, "We honor the families; we honor officers and their families through our service." Being a part of the Honor Guard gave her an understanding that human beings share similar struggles and are connected in many ways, she explained. "Being able to connect in a time of pain and suffering is an honor for me. Our presence during this time signifies that their loved ones will be missed and honored for their works."

In 2012, Lee faced a life-changing event. Without details, she mentioned that in order to escape misery, "I had to go within my soul and connect spiritually." Lee's advice for others going through similar difficulties is: "Keep working on yourself. Some people, in some way, are in prison mentally. True freedom comes from within."

In her darkest hours, Lee prayed and found strength in a higher power. "When I did that, I got answers. It was obvious. I was overwhelmed with ease and felt liberated." She said that faith would guide her journey through life.

Although Lee always believed in God, her faith was tested during her ordeal. "I've always known God," she said, "but He has not been the leader of my life. Now He takes priority in my life." Lee turned a potentially traumatic event into a positive opportunity to reconnect with God. "I had to go through this to find the light."

Lee's resilience through adversity also carries over in her work and the way she communicates with inmates. As a counselor, she helps inmates rehabilitate and achieve their goals. "I classify you guys (inmates) in specific programs so that you can succeed at your highest level. It's not just programs; we try to make everything conducive to the appropriate level so you can reach your goals," said Lee.

At times, more than 200 inmates are assigned as Lee's clients; the majority are lifers. Through interactions, she realizes that most lifers share a common goal — to serve their sentence and return to society.

In order for lifer inmates to earn their freedom, they must reflect on the factors that led to



Photo by Lt. Sam Robinson

Officer Lee in front of Central Plaza honoring families, firefighters, and police officers who perished in 9/11

their crime. Lee witnesses the challenges facing them when preparing for their parole hearings. "I understand the severity at the parole hearings," said Lee. "I do my best to obtain the information to prepare inmates for the board. They have to do their part, so I do my part to the best of my ability," she added.

"Being able to look in the mirror and say to myself, I did my best. Now tomorrow I have to do better. I have a lot of compassion for humankind. I approach every situation with compassion"

Despite the endless work and obstacles she faces, Lee takes an optimistic outlook on life. "At the end of the day, things are as they should be." She added, "Being able to look in the mirror and say to myself, 'I did my best. Now tomorrow I have to do better.'" Her motto is a reminder that there is always room for improvement.

Lee's career with the Cali-

fornia Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation also helped her realize that certain parts of the system are broken. Lee expresses concern about sentencing laws and says she cannot understand extreme sentencing. She finds it difficult to grasp why individuals are handed a "135 years-to-life" under the Three Strikes Law. She feels the law should focus on resources like education, trades, drug and alcohol programs, and prevention outlets for the youth instead of harsher sentencing.

During Lee's early days as a correctional officer, others sometimes questioned her about her position. "I had to remind myself that there's the law that we abide by, and there are also people's lives that are at stake."

She said a lifer who had spent over three decades incarcerated once told her to "be true to yourself." She added, "His words connected with me. I was happy to know that he paroled the next day." She further explained that to stay true to herself meant to stand firm in her decisions, despite the outcome, and that the important thing is to continue to learn from the experience.

Looking back on her career, Lee said, "I took a stand for what I believe in." According to many who know her, Lee's faith, fairness and balance contribute to her humility.

Corrections:
In December's edition, Richard Pomo and Louis Scott's last names were misspelled. We apologize for those mistakes.

‘Ban the Box’ Movement Is Gaining Traction

San Francisco Board of Supervisors approves a resolution initiated by All of Us or None calling for San Francisco to eliminate hiring discrimination against people with criminal records

By Lee Jaspur
Journalism Guild Writer

Numerous cities and counties have improved the chances for persons with criminal histories to get jobs, the National Employment Law Project reports.

Known as “Ban the Box,” the reform prohibits asking about criminal records in the initial job application.

The project report estimated that 65 million Americans – or one in four adults – had a criminal history as of 2011.

The report also shows that the background check industry has grown with access to the Internet at the same time that

the numbers of workers with criminal records has risen.

“Implementing this new policy won’t be easy, but it’s the right thing to do ... We cannot ask private employers to consider hiring former prisoners unless the city practices what it preaches,” said then-Mayor Richard Daley when he announced Chicago’s policy banning the box.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued a revised guidance in April 2012 on the use of arrest and conviction records in employment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The commission recommended as

a “best practice ... that employers not ask about convictions on job applications and that, if and when they make such inquiries, the inquiries be limited to convictions for which exclusion would be job-related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity.”

Some of 66 jurisdictions, including Chicago, Jacksonville, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Memphis and Baltimore, were highlighted in the report as locations that have adopted Ban the Box.

“Just in the first three months of 2014, 11 cities and counties across the nation have adopted these policies emphasizing an

applicant’s qualifications rather than his or her past mistakes,” the report said.

The momentum in support of Ban the Box hiring reforms continues to grow. In the report, the campaign to Ban the Box on San Francisco’s application for public employment was led by “All of Us or None,” a national organizing initiative of formerly incarcerated people.

“We cannot ask private employers to consider hiring former prisoners unless the city practices what it preaches”

“In 2005, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved a resolution initiated by All of Us or None calling for San Francisco to eliminate hiring discrimination against people with criminal records by removing the request for criminal history information on the initial job application for public employment,” the report said.

“An individual’s past convictions can only be considered after an applicant has been identified as a finalist for a position. The exception is for those jobs where state or local laws expressly bar people with convictions from employment, in which case the city conducts its background review at an earlier stage of the hiring process.”

Similar policies have been adopted in other Northern California cities such as East Palo

Alto, Berkeley, Richmond and Oakland.

Oakland, working with All of Us or None, adopted the policy in 2010, per the NELP report.

The report stated, “The city conducts background checks on applicants after a conditional offer, but only for those positions required by law or the city has made a ‘good faith determination’ that the position warrants it. The city also notifies the applicant of the potential adverse employment action, provides a copy of the background report and provides the applicant an opportunity to rebut the accuracy or relevancy of the background report.”

Richmond’s new ordinance, according to the report, prohibits inquiry into an applicant’s criminal history at any time unless state or federal law requires a background investigation or the position has been defined as “sensitive.”

San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim wants to make this question, “Have you been convicted of a crime?” virtually obsolete on job applications in the city, the San Francisco Chronicle reported on Dec. 10, 2013.

A Sacramento Bee headline on June 27, 2012 read: “A Job is Best Crime Prevention Program.” The Bee article said, “The job hunt is tough for everybody these days. But imagine having a criminal record. Many employers, including cities and counties, won’t consider hiring someone with a criminal past, no matter how long ago the crime was committed, how minor the offense might have been or how thoroughly the applicant has turned his life around.”

Extra Harsh Sentences For Pregnant Women Slammed

By Isaiah Thompson-Bonilla
Journalism Guild Writer

Women’s rights and civil liberties organizations are calling for the U.S. Department of Justice to renounce the practice of enhancing the sentences of women convicted of felonies while pregnant, particularly those with drug convictions.

Jessica Pieklo, senior legal analyst for the news blog RH Reality Check, reported on the criminalization of pregnancy. Pieklo highlighted a case involving Lucy Weld of Dandridge, Tenn., who received a sentence of 151 months in prison for conspiracy to manufacture methamphetamine.

Presiding Judge Thomas Varlan announced at sentencing that Weld would receive an additional six years because her crime was committed while she was pregnant.

Following Weld’s sentencing, U.S. Attorney William Killian issued a statement supporting the judge’s decision. “Through this prosecution, the U.S. Attorney’s Office sends a message that, should a child, born or unborn, be exposed to a substantial risk of harm through the manufacture of methamphetamine, we will pursue any available enhancements at sentencing.”

A coalition of organizations seeking drug reform policies, women’s rights and civil liberties said in a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder that changes to the current sentencing structure should be made to renounce enhancement penalties.

Seventeen states and the District of Columbia were represented by organizations concerned with the change of the current practice. These organizations argue that sentences that are enhanced due to pregnancy are contrary to science and evidence-based research, which shows the punishing of pregnant drug offenders harms public

health, Pieklo reported.

“Opening the door to enhanced penalties for pregnant women will unquestionably make women of color — a group already subject to extraordinary disproportionality in criminal punishment and sentencing — even more vulnerable to state and federal control and punishment,” said Cherisse Scott, founder and CEO of the Tennessee-based organization SisterReach.

In April, the Tennessee Legislature passed Senate Bill 1391, an amendment to the state’s fetal homicide law. This law allows the judicial system to prosecute women for the illegal use of narcotics during pregnancy, if her child is born addicted to or harmed by the narcotic drug. The bill was an amendment to the previous law that favored the decriminalization policies concerning pregnant women and drug convictions.

Legislators passed the Safe Harbor Act in 2013, giving women that are pregnant the opportunity to seek treatment for their addiction. The incentive for joining the program was retaining custody of their children. However, the passing of SB 1391 allows state district attorneys the leverage they need to bring criminal charges against these women under the current law.

Coalition members wrote a letter to the Department of Justice, asking that it publicly acknowledge and denounce enhanced penalties for women who are pregnant during the commission of a crime.

“The action supported by the federal prosecutor in Tennessee is based on the profoundly discriminatory principle that pregnant women may be subject to separate, unequal and harsher penalties than others,” wrote Lynn Paltrow, executive director of National Advocates

for Pregnant Women. If charged under the law, a woman could face a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.

“Becoming pregnant and either continuing or terminating a pregnancy is a fundamental right for which no person should be subject to punishment directly or through enhanced penalties,” Paltrow concluded.

Prop. 47 Win Sent a Message

‘The Proposition 47 victory is a repudiation of four decades of tough-on-crime policies, and marks the end of the era of politics of fear’

By David Eugene Archer Sr.
Journalism Guild Writer

California voters clearly want an end to excessive prison sentences and the “politics of fear,” the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California concludes with the overwhelming approval of Proposition 47.

“The Proposition 47 victory is a repudiation of four decades of tough-on-crime policies, and marks the end of the era of politics of fear,” the ACLU’s Allen Hopper said in a Nov. 7 news release.

Nearly 60 percent voted in favor of the change, sending “a loud message” to Sacramento, Hopper commented. “The question is whether our political leaders in Sacramento are listening.”

“Voters want smart criminal justice strategies and recognize that longer sentences, especially for low-level, non-violent crimes, have not made our communities safer,” wrote Hopper, director of criminal justice and drug policy for the ACLU of California.

“California’s recidivism rate, one of the highest in the country, is perhaps the best indicator of the degree to which

the state’s harsh sentencing laws have utterly failed to keep any of us safe over the past 40 years of prison and jail expansion, constantly ratcheted-up punishment and the abandonment of even a pretense of rehabilitation as a component of criminal justice,” he wrote.

Hopper noted the Legislature failed to act and “for far too long, the politics of fear and the power of the law enforcement lobby have dominated Sacramento.”

“Sen. Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) tried twice ... to pass bills similar to, though much more moderate than, Proposition 47. (He) was unable to get a bill reducing the penalty for simple possession of drugs from a felony to a misdemeanor out of his own chamber. due to the opposition of the statewide associations of sheriffs, police chiefs and district attorneys”, Hopper wrote.

Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed a compromise bill that would have made similar changes. Proposition 47 was an initiative designed to do the same thing — reclassify many minor crimes from felonies to misdemeanors.

“Lawmakers must abide by the will of the people ... The

Legislature and the governor should work together to ensure Proposition 47 is implemented in an honest, timely manner, and should rebuff any law enforcement attempts to divert the money earmarked for rehabilitation and treatment to still more jail construction,” said Hopper.

The state’s sentencing scheme needs re-evaluation, the ACLU report said. “It’s time for a comprehensive review of our penal code and sentencing laws, starting with the intricate web of sentencing enhancements that the Little Hoover Commission investigated in 2007 and declared ‘complex and confusing,’ with over 100 enhancements strewn throughout more than 20 separate statutes,” cited Hopper.

“Perhaps it’s time for a sentencing commission ... not controlled by the same law enforcement interests that have stymied reform for decades,” Hopper commented.

“It’s time for a serious look at sentencing laws in California with an eye toward real reform and the same investment in innovation that drives our technology sector. And it is time to end, once and for all, the era of the politics of fear,” he added.

Jai Uttal Performs 'Music From the Heart'

By Gino Sevacos
Journalism Guild Writer

The Music from the Heart devotional concert services hosted Grammy-nominated artist Jai Uttal in the Catholic Chapel for the fourth time on Dec. 7.

Those who attended were encouraged to chant sacred Sanskrit mantras along with the musicians.

According to Jai, "Mantras mean that which transforms the mind. When we sing mantras, the mind comes back to the heart."

Kirtan is a particular style of singing that has become popular in devotional circles. Jai is considered one of its foremost exponents. "Kirtan," said Jai, "is when you sing phrases that are names for God. They are sung with music and rhythm. The essence is God's name. Singing is the meditation."

Jai's drummer, Radhanath, played intricate rhythms on a two-headed clay drum that hung like a guitar over his shoulder. In Sanskrit it is called a mridanga-anga (body) mri (earth). Radhanath exuded confidence, grace, passion and devotion as he playfully danced while singing love songs to God. When asked to perform repeated solos, he energized the audience with his expert hand drumming. "Kirtan is being sung all around the world. Holy places (temples) in India are crowded now because Westerners are taking an interest in Kirtan," he said.

One of the many Kirtans

taught to the men during the performance was "Om Namah Shivaya, a popular Sanskrit chant. When asked what it meant, Jai explained that one translation is "Thy will be done." For more literal translations, he said that "Shiva (God) is the Lord of transformation and assists us from darkness to light. Om is believed to be the first word of creation, Namah means 'bow to' and Shivaya represents the ocean of mercy and benevolence." It translates to 'I bow to God within.'"

Jai played a small organ-like instrument called a harmonium while his powerful melodic voice rang out clearly through the chapel. When asked why he sang in Sanskrit, an ancient language, he replied, "I love Sanskrit mantras. Words are another form of God. The spirit of God is there." Jai's personal experience is that "Art and music in India are designed to open the heart and connect with Spirit. I see every instrument that one can play can be devotional music for God."

In an interview afterward, Jai was asked how Kirtan affected his life. His reply: "It's saved my life. I was deeply into drug addiction and drinking, and Kirtan maintained a thread of connection to God. It pulled me out of that life." He went on to say, "Yoga practice is expanding and Kirtan is so linked to yoga. Kirtan addresses the anguish of the heart, and our society is becoming desperate."

The female vocalist in the per-



File photo

Jai Uttal's music aims 'to open the heart and connect with spirit'

forming trio, Kalimba, appeared peaceful and poised as she sang accompaniment. In her words, "It's like an honor to come back because people are consciously working on themselves. The truth is we are already incarcerated in a human body. But people in prison are aware they're incarcerated, and there's an opportunity to better oneself."

Jesuit Father George Williams

and San Quentin facilitator and Chaplin Intern Susan Shannon are the co-creators of the Sunday evening devotional concert series. She was questioned how she thought the San Quentin community received Jai.

"I knew Jai would be a good fit. His love of all the faces and names of God come through his voice. The point of these devotional music nights is to create

and unite us all with the resonance of our hearts, all responding to that oneness of love and joy which is available to us when we do our inner work together. My hope is that we sing together and resonate with that light of devotion. This is such an inner and outer blessing, which promotes healing and interconnectedness between all of us present, and all of us not present."

Senseless Laws Resulting in Harsh Penalties

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

Several well-meaning laws lack common sense, resulting in inflexible, harsh penalties.

That is the conclusion reached

by Jonathan Blanks in the *Post Everything* website of *The Washington Post* newspaper.

Some broad statutes have created "a system that can't distinguish grown men from school-children, serial rapists from

amorous teens or drug mules from kingpins. Such a system is dysfunctional —stupid even," wrote Blanks in his June 25 article titled *America's Stupidest Criminal Laws*.

For example, some Drug-

Free School Zone laws punish selling, manufacturing and sometimes just possessing illicit drugs within a specified distance of a school, park or daycare center with a higher punishment for the underlying drug offense.

Many black and Hispanic neighborhoods with high populations have overlapping zones, negating any deterrent effect and slanting enforcement against minority communities, Blanks noted. Heavy penalties are applied whether or not kids are involved and even if school is out for the summer.

Sex offender registries can include someone convicted of public urination or a 17- or 18-year-old who had consensual sex with a 15- or 16-year-old girlfriend or boyfriend. Thereby, hard line laws against child predators could bar the wrong people from certain areas, he pointed out.

The war on drugs was supposedly meant to give harsher mandatory minimum sentences to kingpins. However, the writer says they were used mostly on low-level dealers and "mules."

"Until the 1800s, juries not only determined facts of laws — that is, whether the law was broken — but whether the law in question was just in the first place," wrote Blanks. The four amendments of the Bill of Rights provide rights during criminal investigations.

Those protections have eroded over time, Blanks wrote. However, change is starting to come.

State and federal lawmakers are recognizing that such policies can get awfully expensive.

Many states have amended their Drug-Free School Zone laws. Some reduced the penalty; others require the offense to be "at least tangentially tied to exposing children to the drug trade." Still others have lowered the law's geographical reach, according to the Sentencing Project, wrote Blanks.

The Smarter Sentencing Act would reduce some mandatory minimum penalties for non-violent drug offenders, if passed into law. Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, and Richard Durbin, D-Ill., proposed the act in the U.S. Senate.

The U.S. Sentencing Commission is also considering if recent sentence reductions for all non-violent drug offenses should apply retroactively to all applicable federal inmates. More than 50,000 may be eligible, which could save hundreds of millions of dollars.

"Throwing the book at offenders with well-meant but misguided lawmaking has wreaked havoc on correctional budgets while breaking up families and damaging local economies in the process," wrote Blanks.

He urges policymakers let judges decide who is punished and how severely, instead of blind punishment. Such a system could lead to fewer mistakes than subjecting everyone to the inflexible categorical judgment of legislators and prosecutors, concluded Blanks.

Medical Strike Team Created

An emergency unit was needed to respond as quickly as possible to contamination of a non-medical area in the prison

Continued from Page 1

inator, recruited and trained the Strike Team in two weeks to combat and prevent these winter diseases from becoming a communicable epidemic.

The team will be comprised of 23 individuals selected and housed throughout the institution. Each unit will maintain cleaning supplies, hazardous material equipment and clothing in a designated keyed locker to be used if the problem should occur in the building.

- North Block has three Strike Team members.

- Eight specially trained handicap helpers will respond to the Reception Center, if there is an outbreak in that unit.

- West Block will be assigned three Strike Team members.

H-Unit has two Strike Team members standing by to handle any epidemic problem.

the above communicable diseases affects that unit.

In case of an emergency outbreak, the inmate affected will be removed from his cell by the medical staff, placed and treated appropriately. For example, in a scabies case, the inmate is showered and treated with ointment, and all clothes and linens are replaced. The inmate is isolated until the final shower linen exchange is completed the next day.

The Strike Team will be notified immediately of a contamination event in their respective unit. They should respond within 30 to 60 minutes. Each Strike Team member will dress in a special hazardous material suit, which may include gloves, mask, and shoes. The cleaning materials and disposal bags will be obtained from the keyed locker.

All the bedding, clothing, and personal properties will

be removed from the contaminated areas and placed outside the cell. Contaminated linen will be placed in water-soluble bags and yellow infectious linen bags and sent to the laundry sealed.

Personal items, if contaminated, may have to be bagged and sealed or discarded, based on public health recommendations. The Strike Team will clean and wash down the lower and upper bunk, walls, bars, toilet units, sinks, and floors. The entire cell will be given a thorough cleansing.

Lt. Graham, Allyson Tabor, LVN Sepulveda and S. Pulido want the San Quentin population to know the Strike Team is ready. They urge personnel not to hesitate to report to the medical staff any symptoms associated with these viruses.

For further information, contact your unit lieutenant.

—By Charles David Henry

‘Wrongful Convictions Go Against Fundamental Freedoms as Americans’

By James R. Abernathy Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

America needs to change investigative practices and the criminal justice culture to avoid wrongful convictions, delegates to a Wrongful Conviction Summit concluded.

“Wrongful convictions go against the fundamental freedoms we value as Americans,” said delegate Walter A. McNeil, president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which sponsored the summit.

Eyewitness identifications can lead to wrongful convictions, the summit noted.

“Even after an identification is made, the investigation should continue to make sure that the actual offender has been identified,” the August 2013 summit report stated.

The summit was held in Alexandria, Va., to examine issues surrounding wrongful arrests, prosecutions and convictions.

More than 75 subject matter experts from law enforcement, the justice system and the community participated in the summit. Participants were divided into four different working groups: making rightful arrests; correcting wrongful arrest; technology and forensic issues; and re-examining closed cases.

The purpose and challenge of each group was to develop policy recommendations that could be applicable in jurisdictions across the nation. Such national strategy would reduce the number of wrongful arrests, prosecutions and convictions nationwide.

The group noted technologies such as advanced forensic science and hand-held electronics that capture voice and video data are clearly the future of investigative excellence.

One critical theme developed was the need for all justice system agencies to be open to new information. This means being open to new information received or developed at any point in the investigation – arrest, prosecution, trial and court appeal.

Office of Justice Programs Acting Attorney General Mary Lou Leary asked attendees of the August 2012 summit to put themselves in the shoes of someone wrongly convicted. She also emphasized how deeply disturbing that experience is for a wrongly convicted person, and the challenges they face seeking to prove their innocence.

Major topics included:

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Many jurisdictions lack the appropriate budget, officers, detectives and the most advanced technology and equipment needed for investigations, the report said.

With neighboring jurisdictions sharing their resources or the establishment of a statewide fund to create equal funding among jurisdictions, the recommendation of uniform standards in addressing wrongful convictions could be more easily implemented.

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

Summit participants identified and discussed in detail key features of a climate that encourages investigations that are more thorough and fewer wrongful convictions.

Some of the key features discussed were: greater communication, increased and improved assessment, stronger investigative protocols, frequent and improved training of law enforcement and prosecutors, greater supervision and better case review prior to the finalization of arrest and prosecution decisions.

COMMUNICATION

Increased and improved communication among law enforcement officers, investigators, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, victims, victims’ advocates and the community at large is one key to resolving wrongful arrests, prosecutions and convictions.

ASSESSMENT

The questioning of the original direction of a case between law enforcement officers and the prosecutors is needed and should be accepted and welcomed as a proper investigative protocol.

A culture shift where investigators are open to case assessment and review by supervisors and what summit participants envisioned as “wrongful arrest risk-assessment tools” are also needed. Intelligent dialogue, including the admittance of uncertainty and mistakes, needs to be an expected part of any good investigation.

The following is a summarized reconfiguration of the summit discussions and 30 final policy recommendations formatted into more global topics:

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

The majority of wrongful arrests, prosecutions and convictions result from multiple factors together creating dysfunction. According to the Innocence Project, in cases where DNA exonerated the convicted person the wrongful conviction can be linked to one or more of the following: eyewitness misidentification; forensic science inaccuracies and unreliable measures; false confessions; and inaccurate informant testimony.

“Even after an identification is made, the investigation should continue to make sure that the actual offender has been identified”

Studies show that a high percentage of exonerations are based on eyewitness misidentification. These wrongful identifications often result in the pursuit of a perceived suspect and less consideration given to other possible suspects. This over-reliant approach opens the door to a host of investigative and prosecutorial mistakes to be made.

INVESTIGATIVE ENVIRONMENT

The work environment of both law enforcement and prosecutors is not always conducive to the examination of evidence or the direction of an investigation while exercising healthy skepticism. This challenge is due to the inherent pressure upon the justice system to quickly identify, arrest, prosecute and convict violent offenders.

In particular, the investigative process in high-profile cases is constantly under scrutiny by victims, the media and governing body officials. This may cause premature acceptance of inaccurate information as fact.

In preventing or correcting wrongful convictions, law enforcement and prosecutors must be more cautious and examine, without emotion, the evidence that points to or away from a particular individual.

Summit participants urged investigators to make every effort

to identify errors before or while traveling down a particular investigative path.

TRAINING

Limited resources, or the lack thereof, is a common challenge in the training of law enforcement personnel. For instance, the unavailability of opportunities, funding and staffing may not allow employees to attend critical training sessions pertinent to their respective department or agency.

The potential and effectiveness of law enforcement personnel are stymied by these limitations. Regions and states must share more resources, network and be more inclusive of others in their training offerings.

THE WRONGFUL ARREST RISK-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

An innovative approach discussed by the summit participants was the development of a “Wrongful Arrest Risk-Assessment Guide” used to reduce wrongful arrest.

Features of the risk-assessment tool include leveraging knowledge from prior research. This involves law enforcement investigators questioning information such as: Does the case revolve around a single eyewitness identification?; Is critical information being provided by jailhouse informant?; Was forensic evidence properly collected?; Is the forensic analysis reliable?

INVESTIGATIVE PROTOCOLS

The implementation of investigative protocols helps to prevent investigative bias, overload and auto-pilot behaviors.

Protocols will also foster greater accountability, investigatory support and assurance in the consistent application of standards in each case.

POST-ARREST, POST-CONVICTION REVIEW

Although it may be challenging to obtain resources to examine closed cases, these challenges cannot become excuses to allow potentially wrongfully convicted persons to remain unjustly incarcerated.

A victim-focused support system must be put in place to prepare victims in understanding why a case might be reopened and re-evaluated. This ensures that the victims understand the motivations and reasoning for correcting a wrongful arrest, prosecution and conviction.

In similar contrast, the wrongfully convicted need and deserve significant support when learning that their case is being re-evaluated and possibly overturned. This is necessary to prepare the wrongfully convicted to re-enter society completely exonerated of the crime.

In summary, the welcoming of intelligent dialogue, critique and self-assessment, proper training, carefully considered protocols and review process will greatly serve to transition the law enforcement culture.

In doing so, these efforts will foster the absolute best practices in policing and law enforcement’s commitment to protecting the welfare of the society they serve.

Participations included: Ilse Knecht, deputy director of public policy for the National Center for Victims of Crime; Mike Corely, chief of police, Brownwood, Texas, Police Department; Kristine Hamann, executive assistant district attorney, New York City; Russell Canan, judge, Superior Court Criminal Division, Washington, D.C., and Barry Scheck, professor of law, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, and co-founder and co-director, Innocence Project.

Inmate Firefighters Working In Dangerous Conditions

Continued from Page 1

33, just outside Georgetown. This is where the inmates live and work as part of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to become firefighters.

In this camp, the report talks about Daniel O’Connor, 26, who is serving his fourth year of a five-year sentence for a DUI with great bodily injury. If he were not in this camp, he would be doing his time in prison.

O’Connor said fighting large fires “feels like you’re in a war zone sometimes. Just planes everywhere, flames are right there.” He also said, “You don’t know whether the flames are going to overtake you. It gets kind of scary.”

The report talked about the assistant camp commander, Sgt. Gerald Hoff. Before trans-

ferring to the camp, he worked at Pelican Bay State Prison. Hoff says the atmosphere at the camp is much different from that of a California state prison.

Hoff also said that gang violence or racial tension have no place in the camp — “they sleep together, they eat together,” Hoff said. Like other firefighters, they can also save lives, he added.

The Journal reported that fighting wildfires requires cohesive teamwork. Inmates have to rely on one another in very dangerous life-threatening conditions.

The Growlersburg camp has 112 inmates but can support 132. All inmate volunteer fire teams are trained at CAL FIRE facilities. The volunteers must pass a battery of physical fitness tests.

The department has 44 fire camps, which saves the state an enormous amount of money, the newspaper noted.

Local Prisons and Jails Costing Billions

‘Between 2005 and 2011, total spending by local governments fluctuated between \$1.6 trillion and \$1.7 trillion’

Continued from Page 1

Capital outlay expenditures include major repairs of institutions, constructions and purchase of equipment having a useful life of more than five years.

Local governments outspent state government in capital outlay expenditures from a low 34.1 percent in 2005 to a high 56.4 percent in 2010.

“Between 2005 and 2011, local governments annually spent the largest percentage of funds on education (36.0 percent to

38.4 percent), followed by health care and hospitals (7.3 percent to 7.7 percent), police protection (4.9 percent to 5.0 percent), highways (3.7 percent to 4.0 percent), public welfare (3.2 percent to 3.5 percent), and judicial-legal services (1.3 percent to 1.4 percent),” the report stated.

Combined Banquet Links S.Q. Print and Broadcast Groups

By William Drummond
San Quentin News Adviser

The San Quentin media community is headed into a new year with a commitment to forge new relationships between the print and broadcast communication entities in the prison.

The new communications era was launched informally Dec. 18 in the media building at San Quentin State Prison where print and broadcast practitioners held a joint banquet. The purpose was to celebrate a successful 2014 and welcome to a new year with hope and expectations for growth and success.

The San Quentin News staff and the members of the TV/Audio/Video department combined forces to provide food for 34 persons. All were inmates, except for this writer,

EDITORIAL

who attended at the invitation of Arnulfo Garcia, San Quentin News editor-in-chief.

Garcia said he hoped the shared meal would be the beginning of many more collaborations ahead in 2015 for the newspaper and the men in the electronic media department.

The two programs operate in the same building and share a common entryway. But until now they have gone their separate ways, divided by a wall and a glass partition window.

The sharing of talent, content and expertise between the print side and the electronic media side would enhance the training experience for all the participants.

The informational products

that result would do a better job of telling the San Quentin story to inmates and the public at large, he said. Projects being discussed include radio programming and video.

The word "banquet" does not do the Dec. 18 event justice.

It was a feast of mackerel stew, meat logs, pork sausages, nacho chips, tortillas, refried beans, chili beans, cheese, ja-

lapeños and much rice.

The drinks were sodas, both sugared and sugar-free.

Before the food was served, the prisoners blessed the food, in a Christian invocation, even though the guests included Muslims, Jews, Buddhists and assorted others.

The meal offered several dietary options: no meat, no pork, no shell fish, fish only. As befits San Quentin's diverse population, the men were black, Mexican, white and Asian. They sat shoulder-to-shoulder around a big table in the lounge

area behind the work space and talked congenially.

The media building has no kitchen. The food was prepared in that very room, beginning early in the morning. The cooks filled plastic pails with hot water as a low-budget, but effective crock pot.

This was the medium by which all the food was cooked. If you opted for fish only, the server used a plastic cup to pile you a heap of rice, then you moved down the line and another server used a plastic cup to lay a mound of mackerel stew atop your rice.

"Never has spicy mackerel stew, Vera Cruz-style, been served so simply, nor enjoyed so humbly. It was delicious. And the participants agreed that the service was excellent," said Juan Haines.

'The Value of Humanity Starts at Home'

Letters to the Editor

Inmates Facing Immigration Hold Upon Release

By David Eugene Archer Sr.
Journalism Guild Writer

More than a dozen California counties have stopped honoring requests from immigration agents to hold potentially deportable inmates beyond the length of their jail terms, saying the practice may expose local sheriffs to liability, the *Los Angeles Times* reports.

The counties include Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino, which have stopped complying with ICE detainers.

A federal court ruling in April 2014 found an Oregon county liable for damages. The case involved an immigrant from Mexico named Maria Miranda Olivares who completed a jail sentence, but was kept for an additional 19 hours on a federal hold at the request of immigration agents, the newspaper reported on June 1.

"Lawyers for the county argued ... the sheriff was required to hold her. The judge disagreed, saying ICE detainers are not mandatory and did not demonstrate probable cause. The judge said the county was liable for damages," the newspaper stated.

California counties are among 100 governmental entities across the country that have stopped the practice since the ruling, according to the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, an advocacy group.

President Obama's immigration enforcement strategy could be impaired, say analysts.

Hiroshi Motomura, an immigrant law professor at UCLA, said, "It's very significant because it represents a reduction of the involvement of local police in federal immigration enforcement."

"It's not just political anymore. It's about liability," Motomura said. He said the decision of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was especially noteworthy. That is because of the large number of L.A. prisoners who could be affected by ICE detainer orders.

Federal statistics show more than 33,000 people in custody in L.A. County have been deported since August 2009. This is due to a federal program known as Secure Communities.

Fingerprints of inmates booked by local law enforcement are checked against federal immigration databases. ICE agents can ask police to hold inmates 48 hours to take them into custody.

In the fall of 2013, Gov. Jerry Brown signed the Trust Act. It instructs local officials to honor ICE detainers only when inmates have been charged or convicted of a serious offense.

San Diego County Sheriff Bill Gore has stopped honoring ICE detainers after consultation with county attorneys about the Oregon case. He said it was too risky to hold inmates for ICE. Instead, he said his department will notify federal agents when inmates who have been flagged for potential immigration violations are released.

"If they want them, they can come and get them," Gore said. "We don't have to hold them for 48 hours."

Sheriffs from some counties, including Kern and Orange, continue honoring ICE detainer orders, the *Times* reported.

Immigrant rights advocates have pushed back against detainers, saying they are unconstitutional and have eroded trust in police among immigrant communities.

Dear OG,

My name is Aminah Dorsey, a female inmate housed in the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, CA. I am submitting my thoughts to your article (9/2014) titled "Capitalism and the Value of Humanity." I hope that you find my views helpful. Take care and I'm looking forward to reading more from you soon.

Sincerely,

Aminah Dorsey

The Value of Humanity Starts at Home

Men today are not held accountable to any standards when it comes to being an "authentic" man. Boys were at one time groomed into the role of responsible men, but today many parents encourage/promote laziness, co-dependency

and an inclination towards the getting needs met even at the cost of others. Many young men have no respect/appreciation for women and are not being motivated to make anything meaningful out of their lives.

Unfortunately, many women don't demand more out of men, choosing instead to accept them as is, B.S. and all. Women tolerate their husbands' failure to maintain employment, playing video games in the bedroom and having multiple affairs.

You stated, "Women often feel pressured to accept and participate in their own exploitation." Pressured? As a woman myself I propose an alternative. At some time or another in many women's lives, their self-esteem and self-worth are compromised, creating insecurities. Somewhere along the way a distorted belief system

was set in place that changed women's perceptions as to what a man should be, do and how they are expected to treat us.

To discern that the young man on the lower yard felt the young lady's "body was an entitlement, a return of his investment - part of the "Deal" "is distorted thinking. American capitalism is no excuse for the failure of our relationships. In my opinion, the young guy harbored such a selfish, immature thought primarily because of the low levels of expectations women have held him to. Women with no self-esteem or self-worth have left an unfavorable imprint on the beliefs of men today. An unsavory impression has been engrained that it's a man's due to somehow "own" a woman's body for the low, low price of a few drinks and a meal.

'VPASS': Convenient or Complicated?

'The ritual of setting up visits so far has been a nightmare'

My friend just got into San Quentin, and the ritual of setting up visits so far has been a nightmare.

I got the VPASS immediately, but then to make appointments could be deemed nearly impossible. He is in non-contact status, which appears to be a separate system from the online system in VPASS but there is no info given there either as to what to do.

Finally after being cleared for

two months by VPASS, I came across the number to call, (415) 455-5022 and made my first appointment ... When trying to make another one for the next week, I called early Sunday and was put on hold for just over an hour when I gave up. Every minute I got the message "All officers are busy taking calls for visiting. Please stay on the line ..."

I finally called the general number again (415) 454-1460

and was told that they were having a problem with that line again, and that after 11 a.m. the line was closed and there was no way to make one for next week.

Really now, we have to be able to do better than that. You say out of one side of the mouth that visiting is important to inmates, but then -

Duke Holtz, commented on the San Quentin News Feedback page.

Website Offers Help to Families of Those Incarcerated

A new and free search engine, www.PrisonPath.com, provides information for the public. The site helps users in clarifying confusion and fear of the unknown when a loved one is charged and arrested, or sentenced to imprisonment in the United States. PrisonPath provides information including the ability to find a person incarcerated, visitation rules, contact numbers, and more about every American prison or jail. It also allows families and friends of inmates to communicate with each other on a specific page.

Human Rights Watch: Elizabeth Calvin Continues Advocacy for Juvenile Justice Reform

Kid C.A.T. Speaks

By Miguel Quezada
Kid C.A.T. Columnist

When Elizabeth Calvin decided to dedicate herself to reforming juvenile sentencing laws in California her boss asked, "Are you going to spend your life's blood on something that will benefit so few people?"

Calvin's response was an unequivocal, "yes."

The reform in question was California Senate Bill 9 (Yee) which would retroactively affect 300 inmates that were under the age of 18 when they committed their crimes and sentenced to Life without the Possibility of Parole (LWOP).

For Calvin, who is the Senior Advocate in the Children's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, passing SB9

represented "part of a bigger mosaic of efforts nationwide in how we treat children and youth who are accused of crimes." The momentum from this victory proved to be influential.

Indeed, SB 260 (Hancock) would follow the passage of SB9. This law would affect the other 6,500 inmates who also were under the age of 18 when they committed their crimes but were sentenced as adults – many to life.

Calvin was key to the passage of another bill, SB 260. Effective Jan. 1, 2014, this law establishes

a unique parole process for an additional 6,500 inmates in California who were under the age of 18 at the time of their crime but sentenced as adults. Many were sentenced to life.

These bills represent the most significant change to sentencing law for youths sentenced as adults. In the prior decade, "tough on crime laws" made it possible to sentence juveniles as young as 14 as adults. "What we heard... was that these people serving life without parole are the worst of the worst, [that] they are monsters," This sentiment represented the political and public beliefs that Calvin and her colleagues were up against. "I realized that to succeed, we needed to ensure people were not defining these men [and women]," Calvin said.

Calvin set out by leading a coalition of the University of Southern California's School of Law Post Conviction Clinic, the Youth Law Center, Friends Committee on Legislation, Youth Justice Coalition, and Kid C.A.T.

Calvin and Kid C.A.T. members sat down in 2011 with Senator Leland Yee to discuss the goals of SB9, and in 2013 Calvin, Jennifer Newsom, and Sen. Lonnie Hancock (D. Berkeley) met to discuss the importance of SB260. Kid C.A.T. members recounted their experiences as youth offenders, discussed their accountability and their work to make amends to society.

Calvin's success is now evident in the passage of SB9, SB260 and AB 1276 (Bloom).



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Elizabeth Calvin at the Kid CAT banquet

"This was a story of failures," she reflects. "It is interesting to go from eight years of failure to the idea that we have won." Still, Calvin noted that the real accomplishment is not a particular policy but in what it represents-making society to confront what it means to sentence a young person to die in prison."

Calvin asserts that there is much more work to do. She states, "SB 9 and SB260 fall short of what we want our system to do, they do not represent an ideal of what we want to achieve." Asked what the goal of juvenile sentencing reform law is, Calvin responded with an unequivocal, "to end the practice of trying minors under the age of 18 as adults."

State of the Youth Address

Kid C.A.T. would like to thank its sponsors, volunteers, supporters and the San Quentin Prison administration for helping to make 2014 a successful year for the group's mission and vision.

Accomplishments include "The Bay Area Hygiene Drive for Homeless Youth," which collected more than 315 hygiene kits to be distributed to homeless families and youth, and "The Amala Walk," which raised funds to sponsor youth from around the world to attend the Global Youth Peace Summit in Point Reyes National Seashore. (info@AmalaFoundation.org). The group also held the inaugural "Kid C.A.T. & The Beat Within" writing workshop in which men shared their personal stories of positive transformation in hope of deterring youth from destructive lifestyles (www.thebeatwithin.org).

Looking forward, Kid C.A.T. will work to make 2015 one of its most successful years. As part of this goal, the group will introduce the first "The State of the Youth Address."

Kid C.A.T. recognizes that the issues youth face are symptoms of a much greater disease that afflicts society – an affliction where society often shifts blame to youth for becoming ill in the first place.

In response to the illness – be it substance abuse or a rising crime rate – societal treatment takes the form of laws and policies that are meant to cure. Instead, these forms of treatment inadvertently marginalize and criminalize youth.

In California in the 1990s this approach made it possible to try minors as young as 14 as adults and sentence them to serve prison terms ranging from life (adding 6,500 new inmates to state prisons) and to life without parole (LWOP) (adding 300 more new inmates) under laws such as Proposition 21, the Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act.

It is evident that these measures did not result in resolution. Instead, they culminated in the conditions that led state legislators to enact laws that seek to rectify the adverse impact of the legacy of tough-on-crime.

Kid C.A.T. understands that any social issues that impact all of society may overextend the available resources the state or

any local government can allocate toward prevention and programs.

"Youth are more likely to join a gang than to be a member of a community service organization, to be incarcerated and placed on probation"

President Obama's initiative, called "My Brother's Keeper," has a pledge of nearly \$200 million for the next five years. It supports minority youth at non-profits such as the 826 Valencia in San Francisco. The initiative backs underprivileged youth and private citizens that have invested millions of dollars and volunteer hours to be part of the solution.

The issues youth face are complex and evolve with technology and changing social structures that include cyber bullying; teen domestic violence; gangs; poverty; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ); homelessness; and an increase in new and more addictive designer drugs.

These complex issues combine to create a toxic environment in which youth are more likely to join a gang than to be a member of a community service organization, to be incarcerated and placed on probation or under other government supervision such as in group homes or foster care. The implications are long-term, affecting youth beyond their teenage years into adulthood. When minors are tried as adults, this subjects them to an adult criminal record that may bar them from employment and education opportunities and voting rights for their entire life and may hinder them from moving beyond their past to lead productive and healthy adult lives.

Kid C.A.T. envisions a society that is safe and peaceful where homes and communities provide healthy and loving environments so that youth can grow into successful and mature adults. This is why to improve

the state of youth, the public must be informed about the issues that affect their community. As a group that is dedicated to service, Kid C.A.T. encourages citizens to support local organizations and causes that serve to aid youth and families by donating to the local food bank or volunteering their time to local causes such as mentorship or tutoring programs.

According to its principles of mentorship, education and restorative practices, in 2015 Kid C.A.T. seeks to bring together all of the issues under the umbrella of Youth Justice Awareness Month (Y-Jam). This aims to have the month of October officially recognized as such in the state of California. This will encourage us all to Create Awareness Together. We wish you well in each of your endeavors.

–By Miguel Quezada

Exposure to Violence Cripples Childrens' Ability to Function

By Nghiep Lam
Kid C.A.T. Columnist

Exposure to violence is directly correlated to a child's inability to trust, and to heightened states of alertness, diminished impulse control and isolation, experts say.

Substance abuse, lack of empathy or concern for others and aggression also contribute, according to the report "Defending Childhood: Protect, Heal, Thrive."

The report is from the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence.

Children in the juvenile justice system are often viewed as beyond hope and uncontrollable, labeled oppositional, willfully irresponsible or unreachable, according to the task force.

The status quo of correction for children with behavioral issues is more often than not punishment, rather than assessment, screening or trauma-informed care, it finds.

The juvenile justice system in recent years has made an effort to restructure itself and to improve outcomes for children and their communities. However, the task force argues for implementing restorative justice and train-

ing to personnel so that they can handle mental health and substance abuse issues among youth.

Studies have shown that 65 percent of girls and 70 percent of boys in detention facilities have been diagnosed with multiple mental health disorders and nearly a quarter of youth in residential placements have attempted suicide.

For many youth, placement in these harsh detention facilities only worsens their problems, triggering memories of past or recent traumatic events, which can bring upon the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, the report says.

Staffs in juvenile justice systems have been found to vary in their willingness to acknowledge the need for mental health and related services, the task force found.

An analysis of data from state agencies responsible for overseeing juvenile detention facilities found that between 2004 and 2007 there were approximately 12,000 documented reports of physical, sexual or emotional abuse by staff members – nearly 10 assaults per day, on average. The actual numbers are likely to be higher than recorded because children are often too

afraid to report such abuse, the report adds.

The studies analyzed by the Task Force have shown that there is a profound need for more effective measures of providing rehabilitation to youth who are incarcerated.

The Task Force made several recommendations, including:

- Upgrading standards in the juvenile justice system
- Abandoning practices that traumatize children
- Basing assessments on each child's needs
- Addressing needs of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender) individuals in the juvenile justice system
- Implementing policies that keep children in school
- Ensuring legal representation to accused children, and
- Whenever possible, prosecuting children in the juvenile justice system instead of transferring their cases to adult court.

The Task Force says its recommendations could save hundreds of millions of dollars if implemented on a national scale. In addition, America would no longer be one of the few countries that incarcerate youth at such an alarming rate.

Malachai Dads: Connecting Fathers With Children

'The work that the men were doing to reconnect with their family impacts cycle of sons and daughters who might following their footsteps to prison'

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

When Douglas Mann called home last Thanksgiving, he said he was surprised and elated at who was at his mother's house—his sister, great niece and son. They met to reconcile their relationship.

"It was a milestone for my family," Mann said. "I credit Malachi Dads for this special day."

Malachi Dads is a faith-based Christian inmate self-help program that teaches inmates ways to interact and mend relations—particularly how to be better fathers.

On a Saturday morning about a dozen San Quentin inmates streamed in a church, filling a cluster of chairs. Sitting in a circle and opening with a prayer, they gather there for one reason: to learn to reconnect with their children.

Inmate Brent Avery with the help of facilitators from the local community; Otis Cole, Donald Mack, Melvin Piper, Alan Roberts, Rene Tovar, Chris Baily, and Karl Davis puts Biblical lessons together for the participants.

"As a facilitator and alumni of Malachi Dads, it's an honor to be a part of how God is transforming the lives of men and turning the hearts of these fathers," Roberts said.

The weekly program originated at Louisiana State Penitentiary, more commonly known as Angola Prison.

"The men who take this class are experiencing God," said Cole. "These men are helping each other's families turn toward each other."

Currently, about 2.2 million children nation-wide have a parent behind bars, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Children with an incarcerated parent are seven times more likely to end up in prison themselves, the DOJ reported. For many, the program fulfills a crucial role in strengthening families with an incarcerated parent.

Malachi Dads participants take a pledge to transform themselves in order to make an impact on future generations

of children. Informally structured, the sessions foster conversations on topics ranging from masculinity and the media to mental health.

The group functions as a space for inmates to express their emotions and frustrations, as well as support each other and exchange techniques on fostering family relations.

"The work that the men were doing to reconnect with their family impacts the cycle of sons and daughters who might be following their footsteps to prison," Cole said.

Cole began volunteering at San Quentin in 1999. He became inspired to create Malachi Dads after visiting the program during a trip to Angola, he said.

"It's here to stay," he said. "When we talk about this program at my church, others want to help."

According to Cole, family relationships for inmates tend to be "more strained" than other families. For some inmates, it might have been years since they last interacted with their loved ones, he said.

"Malachi Dads gives you tools to help communicate to loved ones. Holidays create an opportunity for family members to get together and mend fences," he said. "It takes a lot of give and take. Let your faith drive you."

"That's why they were in this class," he said. "You get out of this program what you put into it. Malachi Dads gives the men the chance to really connect with their children in the only way that's meaningful—a Godly way."

Avery asked the outside facilitators to discuss how they spent their Thanksgiving.

Facilitator, Mack told the class about the value of family gathering. "All of my family meets on Sundays at my brother-in-law's house, and there's always a meal for anyone who wants to eat."

Mack stressed that those gatherings gave him the opportunity to talk to his younger relatives about God. "Sure they were doing their thing," he said. "But they hear stories about our lives. Even though it sometimes seem like they're not paying at-

tention to what we're saying to them, I know they're impacted by what they hear."

Roberts talked about the range of spiritual beliefs in his family. He said in spite of all the diversity, Christ is first for him. However, he said listening and learning from one another is good.

He said that the men partaking in Malachi Dads are fortunate. "Before we just existed," Roberts said. "Now we're living."

Sesame Street Offers Tips For Incarcerated Parents

By Sesame Street

You will always be a parent.

Even though you are incarcerated, you can still play an important role in your child's life. Try these actions to assure your child that you still care about her and will always be her parent.

Answering difficult questions:

- Your child may have trouble understanding why you're gone. There are ways you can answer this question truthfully and in ways that he can understand.

Where are you? "I'm in a place called prison [jail]. Grown-ups go to prison [jail] when they break a rule called a law. I'm not here because of anything you did. This is not your fault."

When will you be home? "I won't be home for a while. I'm waiting for more information and will let you know when I find out. I'd rather be home with you but know that wherever I am, I'm thinking about you."

Will I get to see you? If your child can visit:

- "You can visit me in prison once in a while. Your caregiver will let you know when. Between visits we can write letters and talk on the phone." If your child cannot visit:

- "We may not be able to see each other often, but I want

"I wanted the men to hear what it's going to be like for me," Avery explained to the inmates. "We are not going to be in this place forever. I don't believe this is the end for us. One day in the future, we'll have the same experiences that we're hearing from Otis, Mack and Melvin."

Avery then asked the inmate if they had any "Kingdom stories?"

Kingdom stories are inmate weekly experiences regarding

how the lessons of Malachi Dads influenced their lives. The stories shared included telephoning and writing to family members, learning about insight gained through fellowship, and how to take criticism about being a careless person in a positive way.

The class ended with the showing of a DVD with a lesson on faith. "Do you have a mustard seed of faith? If so, nothing is impossible," the narrator said.



LITTLE Children

BIG challenges: incarceration



you to know that I'm always thinking of you."

Connecting through visits:

- Seeing you can assure your child that you are OK. Here are some things you can do:

Help your child feel comfortable:

- Your child may feel nervous at first. Let her know you are happy to see her. Continue any rituals or customs you have together such as singing a song. Ask her questions about herself, such as:

- "What do you do with friends? What have you learned in school?"

Make the most of your time together:

- Take turns describing something you see and asking her to guess it; making funny faces; or discussing favorite colors, music, or sports teams. Make goodbye easier:

- Saying goodbye is hard. Come up with a special phrase you both can say at bedtime or something you will both do at the same time each day even though you are apart. Good communication is one way to help support your child. Build a positive relationship with her caregiver so she experiences support and love from you both. Talk to your child's caregiver about visits, letters and phone calls.

Sesame Street Ofrece Consejos Para Padres Encarcelados

Traducción Jorge Heredia

"Usted siempre será un padre," la guía afirma. "Aunque se encuentre encarcelado, usted puede todavía jugar un papel importante en la vida de su hijo."

Más Información puede ser obtenida online en: sesamestreet.org/incarceration.

Usted será siempre un padre. Aunque usted se encuentre encarcelado, usted puede todavía jugar un papel importante en la vida de su hijo(o). Trate de poner en práctica estas acciones para asegurarle a su hijo que usted todavía se interesa por ella y que siempre será su padre.

Respondiendo preguntas difíciles. Su hijo puede que tenga problemas entendiendo el porque usted esta ausente. Existen maneras como usted puede contestar sus preguntas sinceramente y de formas en que el pueda entender.

¿Dónde estas? "Estoy en un lugar llamado prisión [cárcel]. Los adultos van a prisión [cárcel] cuando ellos quebrantan una regla llamada ley. Yo no estoy aquí por algo que tu ayas hecho. Esto no es tu culpa."

¿Cuándo volverás a casa? "No voy a estar en casa por un rato. Estoy esperando por más información y te lo haré saber en cuanto yo lo sepa. Preferiría estar en casa contigo más

quiero que sepas que donde quiera que yo este, estoy pensando en ti."

¿Podré ir a verte? Si su hijo puede visitarlo: "Tu puedes visitarme en prisión de vez en cuando. La persona encargada de cuidarte te hará saber cuando. Mientras tanto, podemos escribirnos cartas y hablar por teléfono." Si su hijo no puede visitarlo:

- "Pueda que no podamos vernos a menudo, pero quiero que sepas que siempre estoy pensando en ti."

Comunicándose a través de visitas. Mirarlo puede asegurarle a su hijo de que usted se encuentra bien. Estas son al-

gunas cosas que usted puede hacer:

- Ayude a su hijo a sentirse cómodo. Su hijo puede que se sienta nervioso al principio. Hágale saber a ella que usted esta feliz de mirarla. Continúe cualquier ritual o costumbres que ustedes tengan juntos tal como cantar una canción. Hágale preguntas sobre ella, tal como:

- "Que haces con tus amigos? Que as aprendido en la escuela?"

Disfruten al máximo los momentos juntos. Tomen turnos describiendo algo que ustedes miren y dígame a ella que lo

adivine; haciendo muecas; o hablando de sus colores favoritos, música, o equipos deportivos.

Hága la despedida más fácil. Decir adiós es difícil. Trate de decirle alguna frase especial que ambos puedan decir a la hora de dormir o algo que ambos harán al mismo tiempo cada día aunque estén separados.

Buena comunicación es una manera de ayudar apoyando a su hija. Desarrolle una relación positiva con su niñera así para que ella sienta el apoyo y amor de ambos. Hable con la niñera de su hijo(o) sobre las visitas, cartas, y llamadas telefónicas.

Artist Ned Axthelm Shares Artistic Talents With the San Quentin Community

His Mother Encouraged Him to Make Art With Visits to Museums

By Tommy Winfrey
Arts Editor

Ned Axthelm says he finds it rewarding to teach San Quentin and Solano prisoners the fine points of artistic painting.

"I like that art can enrich someone's life and that enrichment can be in different ways for different people. But there are still similarities amongst the differences, and I like being able to see those things," he said in a recent interview.

He began teaching San Quentin inmates about the art of painting a little over a year ago as part of the San Quentin Prison Arts Project. The project is sponsored by the William James Association.

Axthelm began his teaching career as a middle school teacher but decided he wanted to give his art career a shot. So he went back to school and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

"I chose this school because they were more about the process of making art than just teaching about art," he explained.

He says going to school helped him to speed up the process of trial and error. Axthelm says in school he was given mentors to help shepherd him through the process, and this helped him a lot because he likes to ask questions.

Axthelm has been out of school for two years and considers his main medium to be oil paint, although he says he has made art in a lot of different mediums. He used to express himself through sculpture, and he has done quite a bit of painting in acrylics and watercolor.

When he was a child, Axthelm says his mother encouraged him to make art by taking him to see paintings in museums and showing him the possibility of making art existed.

"For as long as I can remember, I've always had my hand in art. I'm a visual person; some people are into music, well, I'm just not that guy."

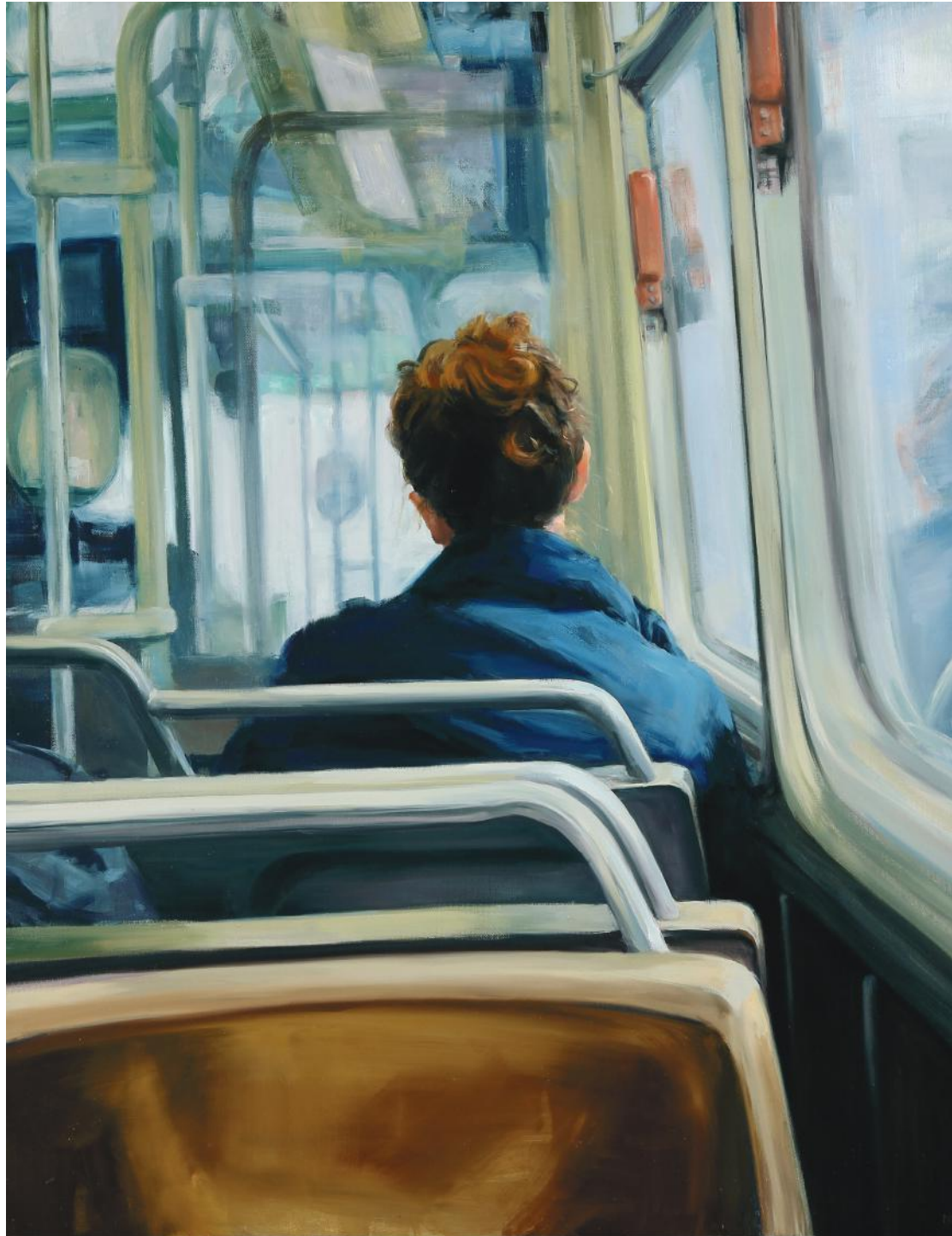
When Axthelm was teaching middle school, his art took a back seat because he says he was exhausted, and he only made art on the side. This has changed since he went back to school and earned his art degree.

The first year out of school he showed his work in more than 20 art shows, and just last year he showed his work in another 12 art shows.

"Art is a long-haul game," Axthelm admits. He knows he won't get rich overnight being an artist, but he has met his goals so far. "I can look back at the last two years and be proud of what I've done."

Axthelm says he got back into teaching when he started to make art full time, and he began to feel isolated. He sees art as a form of communication, and he missed the social interaction.

"Making art full time is a



Quiet Bus, oil on canvas, 40" x 32"

Photo by Ned Axthelm

solitary act," says Axthelm. He says he recognized his art would suffer from the lack of social in-

teraction.

When a position opened up to be a teaching artist inside

San Quentin, he went for it. "I decided to go with my intuition instead of trying to make a logi-



Reading the Train, oil on canvas, 22.5" x 30"

Photo by Axthelm

cal decision when I took this job, and it has been a good one."

He has enjoyed his time so much at San Quentin that when the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation awarded money to work with the California Arts Council to open up new art programs inside of other California prisons, he took on the task of opening a program in Solano.

"I like that art can enrich someone's life and that enrichment can be in different ways for different people. But there are still similarities amongst the differences"

Axthelm has been working for the past few months to get the new painting program up and running. "There are a few challenges to opening up a program like this, as you can imagine," says Axthelm. He says figuring out time, space and other logistics has been the hardest.

"There is not even a sink to wash out brushes," explained Axthelm. But he is not letting these details deter him. On Jan. 2, Axthelm opened up the first painting and drawing program at Solano.

The painting and drawing classes are being held in the visiting room along with a block printing class. He teaches two classes in Solano, one class for the Level II yards and another for the Level III yards.

He says he has 12 men in each class, but there is room for 16 men. He hopes that as the program becomes more established, both classes will fill up.

One of the issues that Axthelm may face in filling up the classes is that a prisoner has to be disciplinary-free for an extended period of time in order to be eligible to attend the class.

Part of the reason CDCR awarded funding for such programs is that previous studies have found that art programs in prison reduce disciplinary infractions. New programs like the one Axthelm is teaching in Solano will help to further study this effect.

Axthelm has recognized some important aspects of himself by teaching art in prison. "I've learned so much coming in here by being forced to communicate what I know." He has to explain to his students what he is doing as an artist and why he is doing it, instead of just applying paint to the canvas. He says this has been an important lesson for him.

Positive Ripple Effects of San Quentin's Restorative Justice Movement

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

The Restorative Justice movement – aimed at healing crime victims, offenders, their families and the community – has rippled out of San Quentin State Prison into use with juveniles in schools.

“A handful of people can and do make a difference,” said community member Rose Elizondo during a recent Restorative Justice symposium in San Quentin.

“A lot of this started here.

Malachi (Gary Scott, former sports editor of San Quentin News) was somebody who was locked up, paroled and then we co-founded the North Oakland Restorative Justice Council,” she added.

“Parolee Kevin Tinsdale wants to start a RJ reentry house. The idea for the juvenile lifer group Kid C.A.T. happened in a healing circle. It's just beautiful, these ripple effects.”

Restorative Justice is about dealing with criminal wrongdoing in a way that focuses on

restoration instead of a punishment, which often does more harm than good.

The San Quentin RJ group started in 2004 and is expanding inside and outside the walls.

“I'm planning to be a public defender, and I think that there is a lot of room in the criminal justice system for incorporating RJ principles,” said Olivia Taylor, a UC Berkeley Law school student. “I also want to use it in my personal life. People avoid talking about uncomfortable things in private life, but it's really cathartic.”

“We are all wise men for going through this prison experience,” said inmate Dwight Krizman. “Most people have not gone through this and gained this insight.”

Master of ceremonies Louis Scott read an article called *Restorative Justice has Become a Vital Tool for School*, by Fania E. Davis, at the Dec. 13 event.

The article said Oakland Youth's use of Restorative Justice in middle schools has reduced suspension rates by 87 percent, reduced violence and teacher attrition and improved academic outcomes.

The school board adopted Restorative Justice as official policy in 2010 and its concepts are used in about 30 Oakland schools. A school district report states that from 2011-2014:

- Suspensions of African-American students for defiance decreased by 40 percent,
- Harm was repaired in 70 percent of the cases of conflict circles,
- Students were learning to talk instead of fight through differences at home and at school,
- Graduation rates and test scores were increasing while chronic absence and dropout rates were decreasing.

Oakland's Community Works West reports it has launched a restorative diversion pilot that is dramatically reducing recidivism.

People in the North Oakland RJ Council paint murals, plant trees and facilitate healing circles after youth homicides. Police and probation officers are being trained in restorative justice principles, according to the article.

Guest speaker Orlando Bishop is a founder of Shade Tree Multi-Culture Foundation. The foundation has been active for 20 years and has trained mentors working throughout the U.S., Mexico, Europe, Germany, Sweden, West and South Africa and Brazil.

“I absolutely think it's making a difference,” said Bishop.

He works with people in Los Angeles, mentoring and helping them leave the gang life. He aided in negotiating the 1992 peace treaty between Bloods and Crips that lasted 12 years in Watts.

Bishop's teachings come from a mix of Zulu, Western



File photo

Orlando Bishop

and other philosophies. He spoke about his method called the Genesis Pathway. It starts with acknowledging the power of your word.

“When I express my word through my deeds, I'm giving you something that's part of me. It gives power to agreements,” said Bishop.

Bishop also expounded on how learning about ancestors is important because it influences the human capacity to have a connection to something much larger.

“My life is an extension of other people's lives, so I'm not in this world by myself; I'm connected to ancestry and their hopes and contribution are still living in me,” said Bishop. “I'm also a host for the future.”

Prisoner Demond Lewis, who is serving 109 years to life for shooting a man in the leg, gave a personal testimony about the ripple effects his conduct has on his family.

“When I shot Sherman, I never knew that one bullet would cause not only him pain, but my family and friends as well,” said Lewis.

Lewis's little brother, sister and daughter all followed his footsteps into prison.

“This is the negative ripple that I created amongst my family,” said Lewis. “I never had a father, never knew what a man is supposed to do. I now know real men take responsibility for their actions. The gift I've learned from RJ is giving me the tools to build and strengthen my community.”

Influenced by his positive changes, Lewis' little brother got his GED and his daughter paroled and is back in school.

“We can change and have a positive effect on those we connect with,” said Lewis, leaving the podium with tears in his eyes.

Jamie Sanchez, a member of the Spanish-language RJ group in San Quentin, followed with testimony about how the destruction he has caused his family is even worse for the victim.

“It doesn't matter how many programs I take, I can't change a death,” said Sanchez. “I'm honoring what I did ... I am giving back for my victims because they deserve better.”

Inmate Chris Gallo dis-

cussed his transformation from “Boomer,” a skinhead filled with anger and pain, into Chris, who “just broke bread” with Moe (Darnell Washington).

“Moe's my friend in different color skin. Pain brought me here, but love keeps me coming back,” said Gallo.

Inmate RJ coordinators led the symposium in a discussion of accountability, responsibility, vulnerability and healing.

“Taking accountability took a long time because I blamed everyone else for what I did and found justifications. When I started to accept responsibility, I began to interact with people better and love myself better,” said Scott.

Krizman read inmate Danny Plunket's letter about responsibility on his behalf.

“Lawyers won't let you confess because it gives prosecutor advantage,” read aloud Krizman. “Being responsible provides vindication for victims and helps them start their healing journey and helps offenders start theirs.”

Mike Webb tackled vulnerability.

“To be vulnerable takes honesty, strength, humility and courage,” said Webb.

He told the audience about a letter he wrote to his grandpa, who was murdered when Webb was 10 years old.

“I'll always remember how you used to throw me in the air and catch me ... because you made me feel loved. I used your murder and my father's abandonment as an excuse to commit crimes. Grandpa, will you please forgive me for doing wrong? I dedicate my life to helping other people,” said Webb without a trace of the big smile he normally displays.

Washington dealt with healing by telling a story of a boy who held up a sign during an Eric Garner protest that read “Free hugs.” In the middle of the demonstration, a police officer walked over and hugged the boy.

“We sit in circles; we talk about everything we've been through, and we heal,” said Washington. “They don't do that out there ... everybody is separated.”

“I wanted to give gratitude to all the men in blue here,” said Sandy Claire, a community member. “You create this chalice of authenticity, honesty and willingness for us to come to. That's why we come back ... because of you guys.”

“I was blown away by the insights that you have,” said Caitlin York, a student who sits in RJ circles most Thursday nights in San Quentin.

“Some people go to church or synagogue, but when I want to find real spiritual depth, I go to San Quentin,” said Bruce Berkowitz, an older community member.

Dacher Keltner, a previous RJ symposium speaker, commented, “I come back for the truth and wisdom.”

Benefits of Yoga



File photo

Yoga instructor James Fox inside the Muslim/Jewish chapel teaching his weekly yoga class

By **C. Kao**
Journalism Guild Writer

“Research has shown that yoga offers great benefits for relieving stress and anxiety, something that is of great value for anyone living or working in a prison environment,” said James Fox, founder and director of the Prison Yoga Project.

Fox earned the credential as a yoga instructor in 2000. Deciding to bring the practice to people beyond the yoga studio, he has taught a bi-weekly class at San Quentin State Prison for 12 years.

Fox's dedication has turned his class into something bigger: the Prison Yoga Project, an acclaimed and widely replicated model for bringing yoga into prisons around the country. “I've trained more than 800 yoga instructors who go teaching in institutions in different states,” Fox said.

“In 2012, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency assessed results of a small study of San Quentin prison projects, among them Fox's,” reported *The Yoga Journal*. It found that inmates were calmer and had better emotional control and anger management after taking his class.

“It also concluded that such course offerings were ‘prom-

ising rehabilitation tools’ that could reduce recidivism, a welcome validation that is helping Fox expand the reach of the Prison Yoga Project,” continued the *Yoga Journal*.

Among Fox's yoga instructor trainees is a Canadian provincial investigator, Chantele Theroux, who came across a photograph of inmates doing yoga at San Quentin and was inspired. She later sought Fox's training and traveled to San Quentin to check out his program.

“Because they've learned how to breathe and calm themselves down and not just react in the face of challenge and ego, there's less violence. You can feel it,” Theroux said. “Not once did I feel intimidated, scared, worried, concerned for my safety.”

Theroux later spoke for prison yoga programs at a conference of the Canadian Criminal Justice Association.

Fox has even helped establish prison yoga programs in Norway, Germany and the Netherlands.

“What kind of person do you want returning to society?” Fox asks. “If you don't offer prisoners these types of programs, they're not going to improve. They are only going to get worse.”

“What kind of person do you want to run into at the grocery store?” he asked rhetorically.

Prison University Project Presents Its 12th Annual Open Mic Reading

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

An audience of inmates and community volunteers gathered in San Quentin's Catholic chapel the day after Christmas to hear more than two dozen inmates take the stage in Prison University Project's 12th annual open mic.

The inmates performed acts including poetry, spoken word, songs and testimonies of transformation.

Inmate Syyen Hong's spoken word performance, *True Identity*, focused on how he grew up without understanding his culture, "So, who am I?" he asked, after dealing with the trials and tribulations of life. "I am a student in a university," he said, which brought a round of applause from the audience. Hong addressed racism and hatred in California prisons. However, he said that he learned that "We are all a part of the human race." Hong empathized that he found his true identity when he found God.

Prisoner Ali Muhammed read a testimony, *Prison Is*, which described life behind bars.

"Prison is a place where you

write letters and can't find anything to say," Muhammed said. "You have been forgotten. You are only remembered in past tense." The somber tone of his testimony was met with a silence in the audience.

Inmate Danny Ho sang a gospel song, *God's Love*, in Vietnamese with a translation displayed on a teleprompter. The song broke into rap then back to the gospel with the audience clapping and cheering the performance.

Frankie Smith read *A Letter of Forgiveness* to his children. It addresses who he's become since being incarcerated. "I am willing to prove myself not only through my words, but through my actions," Smith read to the audience.

Edito DeWeaver read *Fowl Game*, a satirical poem about how feeding the birds on the prison yard is against the rules. The audience related to the poem, which addresses why he feeds the birds and how he notices the social patterns of each species, his empathy for the birds' continual struggle for survival. DeWeaver said that he notices that when there was an abundance of food, the "birds all get along well."

Jason Jones read *Pain* that



Photo by Sam Hearnes

PUP's open mic organizers Kara Urion, behind the podium, and Jody Lewen inside the Protestant chapel during the graduation ceremony

defined pain through empathy. It was a self-degradation performance that confessed the pain that he caused other people.

Prisoner Richard Lathan read *Ascending to Heaven*, which was written in honor of the children of Sandy Hook.

The Native Hawaiian Spiritual Group performed a dance,

The Sweetest Gift, about rebirth, reconciliation, hope, peace and love.

Aaron "The Jeddii" Taylor performed, *You Ain't Ready Yet*, lampooned inmate behavior and used audience interaction.

Six Inches off the Ground, an original contemporary pop tune, was performed by

Robert Tyler on keyboard and sung by Richie Morris.

Michael Tyler read *Where I'm From*, which described small town-America, a place called Los Banos, Ca.

The acts touched on subjects such as: the power of language, self-discovery and self-awareness while struggling through life as an inmate; what life is like for a man who is the youngest of eight children and confessed that he could not read or write at age 42; true identity, hate, anger, sadness and life's struggles; a tribute to struggling mothers; supporting educating women in Pakistan; what it looks like seeing the landscape from inside a prison; loved ones who died since incarceration; the killing of black youth today; understanding one's purpose in life; and growing up in the suburbs.

"These guys are my tribe," said PUP Program Associate Kara Orion, referring to the students/performers.

Executive Director Jody Lewen and Program Assistant Simon Woodard attended the event along with more than a dozen teachers and volunteers of PUP.

Inmate Julian Glenn Padgett was the event's emcee.

13 PUP Students Gain New Appreciation for Biology

By Phoenu You
Graphic Designer

Prison University Project's (PUP) fall 2014 semester ended with 13 students gaining important knowledge and new appreciation for biology.

The biology course was collaborated and taught by professors Xan Chacko, Troy Lionberger, Ryan McGorty, Brock Roberts, Moe Turner, Diane Wiener, and Adam Williamson—all with different backgrounds in biology.

Throughout the course, students discussed basic biology topics that included information flow, cells, evolution, emergent properties, and homeostasis.

Students were asked to form hypotheses and conduct experiments to test their theories. Students then were asked to present their independent projects in front of the class at the end of the semester.

Research topics from students included exploring multiple sclerosis (MS) on a cellular level, identifying whether left or right handedness is genetic, understanding consciousness, prisoners' emotional mindset concerning love and romance, causations of drug addiction, stress and food addiction, environmental factors that cause breast cancer, dangers of human cloning, HIV, cognitive behaviors of domesticated dogs, depression on a cellular level, and inherited genetic factors of breast cancer that explain why specific ethnic groups are at greater risk than others.

PUP also provided a hands-on laboratory that included microscopy, statistical analysis, and discovery of organ function through dissection, according to the course schedule.

"Having a goal in biology helps us get to where we're going faster. There's a purpose and an end to this"

Student, Danny Nha Ho said, "I have gained a great deal of understanding about information transmission, cells, evolution, and human disease among other things," he adds. "The hands-on laboratory experience observing biotic organisms under the microscope was beyond my expectations."

The lab experiments involved DNA extraction from strawberries, along with dissecting sheep brains and cow eyes, and observing how light causes leaves to float or sink under the microscope.

Microscopy experimentation also looked at how sea urchins cells divided or didn't divide during fertilization. "I saw the stage of an egg after the fertilization process forms its own ring to prevent other sperm from entering the egg," said Ho.



Photo by Kara Urion

Back row: Isiah Fields, Charlie Spence, Rosario Banda, Brock Roberts, Barton Buenavista, Jerome Boone. Secondrow: Adam Williamson, Eddie Herena, Danny Nha Ho, Phil Senegal, Carlos Flores. Frontrow: Van Wilson, Phoenu You, "Zakee" Hutchinson and Alexei Ruiz

"I am more aware of how close living organisms (bacteria, plants, animals, and humans) rely on one another to continue the cycle of life," said Jerome Boone.

Eddie Herena was amazed at how much information is contained inside each cell. "A cell is big as the universe," said Herena. He added, "Having an understanding in biology deepened my interest in science and math."

Biology gave him clarity and purpose in life, Carlos Flores said. "Having a goal in biology helps us get to where we're going faster. There's a purpose and an end to this."



Photo by Kara Urion

Carlos Flores looking at how cells divide under the microscope while the teacher and students observe

SQUIRES Banquet Celebrates 50 Years of Mentoring At-Risk Youth

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

About 50 people gathered at a banquet marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of SQUIRES. It's a program that brings at-risk youth in to San Quentin Prison for a close-up look at what their future holds unless they change their behavior.

"There is no agenda other than it's a heartfelt, devoted effort to help at-risk youth make good decisions in their lives and reevaluate the path they are presently on," chief sponsor Raphael "Raffie" Casale told the audience of sponsors, volunteers, mentors and community members.

Twice a month SQUIRES brings in a group of youth to tour the prison and meet with inmates. Hundreds if not thousands of young people have been part of the program in the past five decades.

SQUIRES was founded in 1964 by Death Row inmate Ross Pactor Keller as a way of reaching out to his troubled young son who had become too difficult to handle.

The Dec. 6 banquet in the Education Building also included case managers, program directors of boys and girls clubs, and Rotary Club members.

The SQUIRES program has continued since 1964. The popularity and success of the program was the central theme



Photo by Raphael Casale

Kevin Porter expressing his appreciation to the SQUIRES mentors for dedicating their time to the troubled youth

at this year's annual banquet where Raffie, co-sponsor Romania "Mana" Jaundoo and Chairmen Vaughn Miles, greeted guests to an evening of ceremony, testament and food.

Raffie gave certificates of appreciation that read: "In recognition for outstanding performance, dedication and commitment towards the positive development of At-Risk Youth. In appreciation for offering your time and energy in directing, counseling and guiding youth towards healthy goals and decisions. We acknowledge you for taking the principles and values of SQUIRES within the San Quentin Community and holding yourself to a high standard so as to be a humanitarian and mentor."

Recipients included inmates Al Borey, James Cavitt, Arnulfo Garcia, Jorge Heredia, Wayne Holt, Ke Lam, Venetria Laster, Sandy Lockheart, Vaughn Miles, David Monroe, Vinh Nguyen, Miguel Quezada, Alexei Ruiz, Chris Schumacher, David Stephens, Michael Tyler, Shadeed Wallace-Stepter and Tommy Winfrey

Chairman Vaughn Miles, who epitomizes and exemplifies the success and popularity of the SQUIRES' program, was introduced amid applause and a standing ovation as he accepted the 2014 Richie Earle Man of the Year Award.

In an interview with Miles, he promised to take up the challenge of expanding the SQUIRES program by designing a website and webpage to attract support on the internet.

SQUIRES' sponsors and facilitators want to reach a broader group of supporters and organizations whose mission relates to things that affect the development of today's youth.

Miles said he believes, when possible, parents and adult family members of the youth are encouraged to attend and participate in the workshops. In

addition to their own personal experiences, the youth's greatest learning assets are their family, and the knowledge they have garnered over the years. "We stress effective communication and we encourage parent participation."

This same sentiment resonated as a number of speakers were called upon to share their experiences with the kids that come to San Quentin Prison.

Larry Levy told the audience how he's been encouraging law enforcement officials to seek out parents and kids to participate in the SQUIRES program. "Continue to spread the love of SQUIRES. These are a group of amazing men at San Quentin. You exhibit the principles and a work ethic that is needed to reach children today."

Kevin Porter a youth agency counselor said, "I'm amazed at the impact this program has had on my kids."

Larenda Brooks-Williams, a case manager, shared a story about a young son who was disrespecting his father in a parking lot. She walked over to the father with a SQUIRES questionnaire and told him to check the program out.

Robert Perez, retired principal in San Jose, "I enjoy being here with you; the work you've done with these kids has really changed my perception."

When speaking to the Men of SQUIRES, Lieutenant Luna told them, "You've set high goals, and your potential is unlimited, and continue to do good work."

Joe "Robbie" Robinson, the recipients of a food certificate from Mania, told SQUIRES mentors to "keep the faith, remain loyal and trust the kids." He confessed, that after 25 years, "This is one of the best collections of SQUIRES members I've worked with. Also this will be my last year with the program. I'm retiring."

Ross Pactor Keller's vision of SQUIRES would not exist today without the dedication and commitment from Raffie and Mana. Moreover, in appreciation of their wholehearted devotion to the program, the men of SQUIRES gave them individual plaques to commemorate their loyalty to the kids.

In her closing remarks, Raffie told the guests and the mentors, "I'm blessed to be a part of SQUIRES. I believe in the SQUIRES Program and I believe in SQUIRES members."

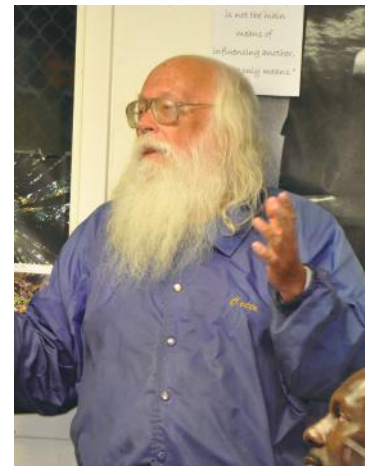


Photo by Raphael Casale

SQUIRES staff
Jack Jacqua

Death Penalty Spending Increases

Continued from Page 1

that reported the death penalty include Somalia, "where at least 34 judicial executions took place" in 2013. Iraq ordered more than 169 inmates to death.

The global figures for Sudan and Yemen show that more than 10 prisoners were executed in each country in 2013. Even though China has one of the largest populations on earth, the country classifies its death penalty as a state secret. However, the report said it is believed that "thousands of convicts" were sent to their death.

"The report also shows that at least 1,925 people were sentenced to death in 57 countries in 2013." In that same year, 23,392 inmates were on Death Row globally. "The method of execution range from beheading, hanging, lethal injection to shooting."

Amnesty International reported 98 countries have abolished capital punishment for all crimes. Most of these are in Western Europe and the Americas. Seven countries, including Brazil, Chile and Kazakhstan, have abolished it for "ordinary crimes." In "these countries, death penalty can

only be given for exceptional crimes such as crime committed under military law or under exceptional circumstances."

The report identified 35 countries as abolitionist in practice. However, they "retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes, but there have been no executions in the past 10 years."

Worldwide studies show in most cases, that persons sentenced to death are generally from an economically and socially backward section of society, Amnesty International wrote.

Opponents say, "It is possible for innocent people to get executed because of unfair and discriminatory application of the death penalty," the report adds. In many cases, poor defendants don't have resources to hire good attorneys to represent them, the report said.

"Many studies have suggested that there is no evidence to show that capital punishment has any affect on murder rates," the report noted. There are critics who believe an execution is a denial of human rights and it "sends the wrong message, that killing is acceptable under certain circumstances."

Pastor Finds New Spiritual Calling

By Girard Rooks
Contributing Writer

Why me? Why this? Who hasn't asked this at times?

Two men serving time in San Quentin asked me to talk about how and why I send sermons to California prisoners. I can answer in two ways. One, my experience of how it happened, and the other is through God's view, as I read it in the Bible.

My experience comes from the fact that I have a brother who used to teach a Bible class in a county jail in California. He connected with some men who went on to state prison. For them he made copies of sermons preached by the minister at his church. Over time he was mailing these to 60 or 70 men, and family members of some.

For years I've preached about 10 times a year at Mel Trotter Mission in Grand Rapids, Mich. However, once I retired I had time to type my sermons. My brother read one, and thought



Photo provided by Girard Rooks

J.F. Girard Rooks

they'd make a good mailer, so I began sending them to him.

A few years ago something changed and he stopped mailing sermons. When I learned of this, I asked for his mailing list and I started mailing my messages myself. Then, I contacted some prison chaplains and a few of them agreed to accept, copy and make my messages available to men in their

facilities. Over time, we have reached more and more men (and now women too) in prison, and members of their families. For several years I have also mailed Spanish translations of the messages.

Now, God's view on this:

- Psalm 139, verse 16: All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

- Ephesians 2: 10: We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Why me? Why this? Because God planned it and then worked things in my life to make it happen.

If you're on Death Row, in jail or prison, or have a family member who would like to receive these mailings, write me at: J.F. Girard Rooks, c/o Hanley Christian Reformed Church, O-372 Jackson St., Grandville, MI 49418.

Remembering Dr. King, Ferguson and Moving Forward

An 'OG's' Perspective

Thanks to a positive decision in Sacramento, this is my final article while incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison. Subsequent articles will be from me on parole. Because of the length of this article and the limited space available, the second part will appear in the February edition (Black History Month). My son, Larry Jr., will contribute an article for the March column.

"[Racism] is something that is deeply rooted in our society; it's deeply rooted in our history."

—Barack Obama

In light of the righteous outrage surrounding successive grand jury decisions not to indict police officers Darren Wilson and Daniel Pantaleo for the killings of two unarmed black men, Michael Brown and Eric Garner, I would be remiss in my responsibilities if I didn't offer an OG's perspective on these latest miscarriages of justice.

In the aftermath of Ferguson, let us turn our respectful gaze on the life and struggle of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I was coming of age at the height of Dr. King's influence, during the time when his dynamic speeches and powerful leadership were constantly in the news, a time when he met with presidents and led marches of thousands. I was 15 years old when he made his electrifying "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. In this thrilling speech, what is most quoted and remembered is King's impassioned articulation of a vision of a "post-racial" world of harmony and economic justice, where a man is judged "not by the color of his skin, but by the content of his char-

acter."

King's "Dream" gives form to hope in a description of human society in which equality and human dignity prevail. His powerful words come from a deep conviction, the same passionate conviction that says all lives matter, and that a free, egalitarian and just society is possible. The hope of that vision reverberates today, and continues to have the capacity to inspire and empower.

"We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force"

However, there are a whole lot of words King speaks before he gets to that utopian dream. He lays out for America the challenges and urgency of the issues at hand, and just why such a dream is so desperately needed. King also taught that there can be no racial reconciliation in this country without the requirements of justice or struggle.

Listen to the prescient words King uttered to the marchers nearly 52 years ago:

"We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is no time to en-

gage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

"It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of (Black's) legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that (Blacks) needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the (African American) is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

"But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

"The marvelous new mili-

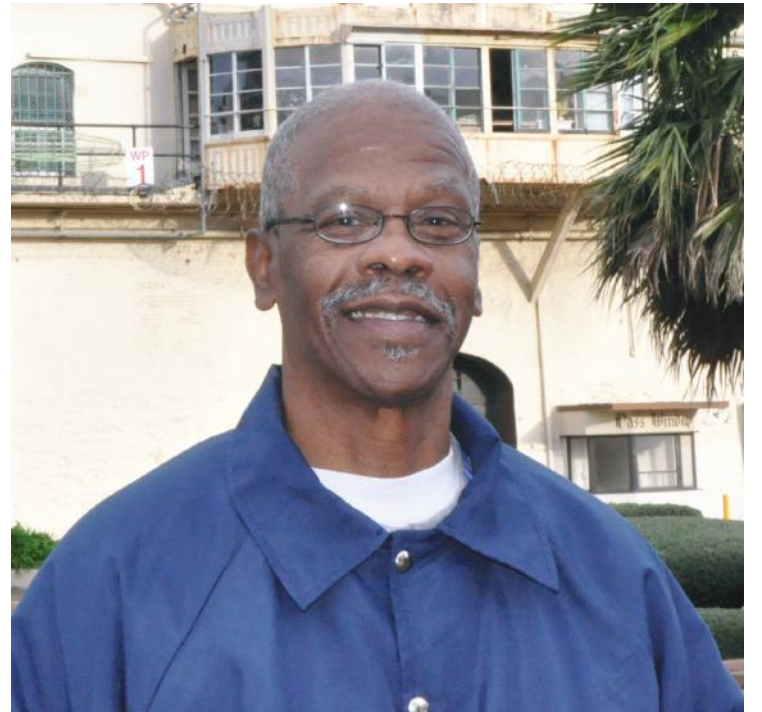


Photo by Sam Hearnes

Watani Stiner standing in front of the Skull Gate

tancy which has engulfed the (Black) community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom.

"We cannot walk alone.

"And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead.

"We cannot turn back.

"There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, 'When will you be satisfied?' We can never be satisfied as long as the (African American) is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality..."

Could this speech be any more pertinent to the issues facing us today, as a movement grows against that self-same racism and police brutality King spoke of a half-century ago? King is remembered for his nonviolence (sometimes scornfully by those who take the view that violence is necessary for social change) and for his Dream, but is he re-

membered enough for his impassioned plea that *"This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism."* That *"there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the (African American) is granted his citizenship rights."* And the very first violation of those rights Martin Luther King, Jr. names in his famous speech: police brutality.

I'm sure that many of you reading this will agree with King that we must march ahead, that we must not rest until we have reached the goal. But that raises the question: what does marching ahead entail? What work can we put ourselves to that will be most effective in moving forward?

In another, lesser-known speech given in Michigan five years after his Dream speech and just a month before he was murdered, King discussed this. In next month's (Black History Month) column, we'll remember what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had to say about moving forward.

END OF PART #1

1936 San Quentin 'Murder of Wife' Trial Revisited

By Steve Lech
Contributing Columnist

On Aug. 13, 1936, sheriff's deputies were called to the home of fellow officer John McNeill in Temecula. McNeill, a Temecula blacksmith and deputy constable, reported the beating of his wife, Melvey. A few minutes beforehand, his son, John Jr., had similarly called, reporting that he had found his mother severely beaten and unconscious. When help arrived, Melvey McNeill was rushed to the county hospital where she died that night.

During questioning, John McNeill Sr. had indicated that he had seen a "prowler" running from the house just before his call. However, that story began to unravel almost as quickly as other facts came in. John Jr. had told investiga-

tors that he had seen his parents quarreling often, mostly about money and ill treatment of some of the animals they kept.

The most damning evidence, though, came from Melvey McNeill herself. Despite being severely wounded, she managed to tell officials on three different occasions that her beating had been at the hands of her husband. She had indicated that the weapon had been a rubber-covered roller from a washing machine. Deputies quickly discovered the weapon, covered with blood and hidden in a box, and began grilling John Sr. further. His contention that a "prowler"

had been in the area was quickly dismissed by neighbors, and soon the only "prowler" police were investigating was John Sr.

John McNeill was a blacksmith by trade, but already had a criminal record. He served two years in San Quentin for forgery. In addition, he was known for having a caustic temper and being argumentative with his wife. He later stated that he had hit her a few times in self-defense because Melvey had threatened him with a gun, which she was holding in her left hand. Forensics investigations quickly ruled that out as her left hand was badly deformed, and op-

erating a pistol with that hand was out of the question.

After days of investigation, on Aug. 24, the grand jury recommended that John McNeill be held without bail for the slaying of his wife. McNeill immediately obtained a lawyer and began to "work the press," as people would say today. A few articles appeared in the Riverside newspaper, *The Press*, during August, September and October indicating that he would plead justifiable homicide and/or insanity in the killing of his wife.

Jury selection began on Oct. 26, 1936, with District Attorney Earl Redwine facing off against John Neblett and

Russell Waite. In what *The Press* described as a "meticulous selection of jurors," each team dismissed many people before coming to an agreement on a nine-woman, three-man jury. At 11:15 p.m. on the night of Oct. 30, the jury released their verdict that John McNeill should be sent to the San Quentin gallows for the murder of his wife.

The verdict was automatically appealed to the state Supreme Court, which denied the appeal on April 27, 1937. With that, Riverside County Judge Oakley Morton sentenced McNeill to be hanged on July 9.

On July 9, McNeill "mounted the gallows nervously, but did not falter" according to *The Press*. He was pronounced dead at 10:16 a.m. Less than five years later, California would do away with hangings in capital cases in favor of the gas chamber.

BACK IN THE DAY

Inmate Gains a Following and Fame For Creating Financial Literacy Class

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll is teaching fellow inmates financial literacy as a practical and better alternative to crime, and the media has taken notice.

"Sixty percent of people in prison are in for money-related crimes, and this is the only money management finance program I know of," said Carroll. "It's really bigger than just helping men make money. When someone asks me to help him get out of criminal activity, I am helping him build a new foundation, and that means the world to me."

The Dec. 4 class was covered by Wilson Walker for CBS (KPIX-TV) in San Francisco, Emily Green for NPR, and Joe Orlando of the Office of Public Employee Communications for California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. They came to see what "The Oracle of San Quentin" (as Carroll is now called for his win-

ning stock-picking ability) is teaching.

"I wanted to see what people are learning, the whole learning process," said Orlando.

Carroll said he was motivated to learn how to read in order to understand the place where "White people keep their money." He's serving life for his part of committing a murder at age 17.

He learned all about the stock market from an inmate and reading, once he learned how to read. He then developed a system for picking stocks. Studying the stock market opened a new way of looking at money and how proper management and investing can stop crime, he said.

"If not for financial education, I'd be on that yard selling tobacco, weed, and phones," said Carroll. "Financial education has been a lifesaver. Now I can earn money legally and manage it properly."

Troy Williams, who recently paroled, came up with combin-



Photo by Sam Hearn

NPR's Emily Green taping Curtis Carroll during a class session about reentry and money management

ing emotional intelligence and finance. The two met at San Quentin, co-founded Freeman Capital, and started teaching other prisoners.

The classes have three modules. The first is Reentry, and it's about teaching inmates what they need to know to re-

enter society. This includes how to make a resume and handle job interviews.

The second module teaches money management.

"Why does a guy working in PIA earning \$100 a month, \$1,200 a year and \$6,000 in five years parole broke? He doesn't have a financial education or understand his emotional connection to money," said Carroll. He inspires inmates to invest in stocks and save money instead of wasting it on junk, so they can parole with a head start.

Module three shows how to prepare for retirement.

Several community volun-

teers helped design the curriculum and some help teach the classes. Kevin Lundquist and Adam Sanders do mock interviews and teach the inmates how to prepare resumes.

"I found the hardest thing for parolees is getting jobs when they get out. So I thought a program like this would help," said Sanders. "You can't let guys out of prison who haven't been in the workforce for 20 years and expect them to make it without any help. They will be much happier and productive citizens with options."

Valentina Bravo helps teach money management skills. "The world revolves around money. If inmates don't have money management skills, they will go back to their old ways," she says. "So the money you do have, know how to make it last."

For sponsor Tom De Martini, "My involvement is giving back to the community and helping to effect change in our penal systems and how we need to start looking at restorative justice, not just punitive. These types of programs should be at all prisons."

Carroll added, "Some think stocks are risky... that's not true. I couldn't read, so if I can do it, we all can. Financial education can help those who feel they have no hope."

Exonerated After Nearly 20 Years

Police records showed that Taylor was in custody at the time of the crime

By **James R. Abernathy Jr.**
Journalism Guild Writer

Daniel Taylor received a life sentence in 1995 after being charged with murder, robbery and home invasion.

The problem? Police records showed that Taylor was in custody at the time of the crime. In 2013, nearly 20 years after his arrest and conviction, he was exonerated when a series of reports by the *Chicago Tribune* revealed missteps and cover-ups by police, which led to the wrongful conviction. This is one of 87 cases in 2013 in which an innocent individual was cleared of false charges in the United States.

Exonerations across the country are increasing, according to a report released by the National Registry of Exonerations. The group, a collabo-

ration between the University of Michigan and Northwestern University, found that wrongful convictions often relied on false confessions and erroneous eyewitness testimony. Exonerations often use DNA testing that was unavailable at the time of the original conviction.

This rise in recorded exonerations is in part due to a growing focus on the validity of criminal convictions, which at times land innocent people behind bars. Between 1989 and 2014, there have been 1,281 individual exonerations in the nation, according to the report.

Exonerations nationwide have ranged between 53 and 85 in each of the past 13 years. That is more than double those in 1989, which has 20 cases of exoneration on record.

The number of cases in which innocent individuals pleaded

guilty is on the rise as well. The Registry report said this trend indicates a greater understanding between authorities and defendants who accepted plea bargains rather than risk greater punishment at trial.

Homicide and sexual assault make up the most wrongful convictions. Between 1989 and 2013, 597 homicide cases and 398 sexual assault cases were overturned.

Black defendants make up the largest percentage of exonerees at 47 percent of all cases. This is particularly glaring for prisoners jailed for rape. Black defendants make up a quarter of prisoners convicted for rape, but over half of those exonerated.

Exonerations on record will continue to rise as the National Registry of Exonerations examines and tracks more cases, the report said.

Citizens Shift Political View After Run-ins with Criminal Justice System

By **Isaiah Thompson-Bonilla**
Journalism Guild Writer

An increasing number of citizens are coming in contact with the criminal justice system, a fact that is shaping how citizens participate in the political process and their political voice.

The *American Political Science Review* published a study, "Political Consequences of the Carceral State," by Vesla M. Weaver and Amy E. Lerman, of Virginia and Princeton universities respectively, which expressed strong belief that America has become a carceral state, which is instrumental in influencing how citizens view

their government.

As a carceral state, many citizens find that their only connection to government is through contact with the courts, police and prison. A 1977 study found that most offenders who were formerly incarcerated have only dealt with the political system through criminal justice venues. These venues include, but are not limited to, halfway houses, probation and parole offices and some employment opportunities. Penal institutions provide healthcare and education.

Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox completed a study in the South Bronx in which one of

their respondents said, "In cities like this ... most people have their only real contact with government in hostile confrontations with the police."

Although the study covered many aspects concerning the effects of the carceral state, the main focus of the study was the effect it had on the people.

A substantial portion of the population is adversely affected by what they view as a government that has misrepresented them. As these perceptions become real in the minds of the people, the study showed that criminal behavior became more prevalent.

Sociologist and author Tom

Tyler has written exclusively on the subject of procedural justice. Tyler's theory on the procedural justice model is: In order for citizens to believe in the government and the judicial process, it is essential that their voices be heard, that they have trust in government authorities, that they are treated with dignity and respect and that the forums in which their opposing issues are heard show impartiality.

This depiction of civic en-

agement clearly shows that the more contact with the criminal justice system, the more likely political engagement will be diminished. The cause and effect of a carceral state threatens the moral fiber of the United States, the report contends.

The United States was founded on successful cohabitation and shared responsibility. The carceral state is a polarizing element in which cohesive living becomes less likely to develop, said the report.

VGSQ COLUMN

By **Lee Jasper**
Journalism Guild Writer

Chairman of the Holiday Toy Program, Gary Cooper, headed up a team of veterans who began decorating the San Quentin visiting area on Dec. 5.

They expected to be finished on Dec. 12, just in time for the first day of gift giving.

The program was manned by these veteran members of the VGSQ: Stan Baer, Lawson Beavers, Larry Faison, James Foster, Dennis Lacrosse, Tedrick Sims and Cooper.

Also assisting in the gifting during weekends which began Dec. 13 and ended on Christmas day were Terry and Gloria Godchaux from Operation MOMS and Jlynn Manley, the webmaster for the VGSQ.

All children of San Quentin inmates who are under the age of 14 are eligible to receive two gifts per visit.

Steve Emrick and Heather Entzel picked up the toys and brought them into San Quentin.

The United States Marine Corps provided the toys for the Toys for Tots program, VGSQ has been doing the holiday toy program for 27 years.

By Angelo Falcone
Journalism Guild Writer

This year the month of January is marked with many celebrations, observances and symbols.

New Year's Day and the Solemnity of Mary were both on Jan. 1. The Epiphany of the Lord was observed on Jan. 6, and Martin Luther King Day is Jan. 19.

According to the World Almanac, January celebrates Jump Out of Bed Month, National Mentoring Month and National Poverty in America Awareness Month.

Finally, there are two astrological signs in January: Capricorn, the goat (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) and Aquarius, the Water Bearer (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18).

During the first month of the year, many people make resolutions to achieve person-

Reflecting on Past Mistakes

Asked On The Line

al goals related to their health, their career or their finances. They may also commit to losing a bad habit, to cease procrastinating, to quit wasting time or to stop dwelling on their mistakes and starting over, a "do-over."

If an opportunity to go back in time were possible, how would people change history?

If an older version of ourselves appeared before us to warn us or give us advice, would we listen?

"Asked on the Line" asked mainliners, "If you could go

back in time, any time before your arrest, for only 30 seconds, to speak to your younger self, what would you say?"

Johnny Gomez said that he would tell his younger self, "Never take the easy way out. Hard work will take you farther in life."

Ralph Cendejas said that he would say to himself, "Control your anger. Don't be so angry. Don't lose your temper. Be patient."

Zakee Hutchinson would provide a directive to his younger self, "Stay in the mili-

tary, and don't get out!"

Richard Morris said that he would tell himself, "Wake up and understand that everything you say or do impacts everyone else. Don't be rash, and consider things before you act."

Joey Mason said that he would urge his younger self to, "Go to therapy and follow your heart. Chances are, if you follow your heart you won't end up in prison."

Shawn Perry said he would tell a young Shawn, "Don't do drugs! Listen to your parents!"

Tim Thompson said that he would advise his younger self to "stay focused. Don't believe the hype that 'easier is better.'"

Orlando Harris said that he would tell his younger self, "You have choices. The choic-

es you make are going to affect your future."

Billy Terry said he would simply say to himself, "Listen to your boss. I would still have my job and not be in prison."

Alexei Ruiz said that he would tell a young Alexei, "You are not alone. Your family loves you. You have people who love and care about you. Think about the consequences of what you're doing."

Vincente Gomez said that he would tell himself, "Mirate a ti mismo y no sigas cometiendo mas errores." [Look at yourself and stop making so many mistakes.]

Jesus Flores would say, "Hay muchas mujeres que estan interesadas en ti. No pierdas el tiempo con las que no te quieren." [There are many women who are interested in you. Don't waste time with those who don't like you.]

What I Wish I Knew When I Was 20

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

As a 57-year-old convict, *What I Wish I Knew When I was 20*, by Tina Seelig (2009) immediately caught my attention. I believe I would have done exactly what Seelig suggests if I knew when I was a youngster what the mature me knows — look at the world as "rich and full of possibility."

Seelig challenges readers to take healthy chances in their lives: "The most interesting things happen when you get off the predictable path," and to get a fuller understanding of failure: "Failures offer learning opportunities and increase the chance that you won't make the same mistake again. Failures are also a sign that you have taken on challenges that expand your skills. In fact, many successful people believe that if you aren't failing sometimes, then you aren't taking enough risks."

BOOK REVIEW

"Essentially, the goal of this book," Seelig writes, "is to provide a new lens through which to view the obstacles you encounter every day while charting your course into the future. It is designed to give you permission to question conventional wisdom and to revisit the rules around you."

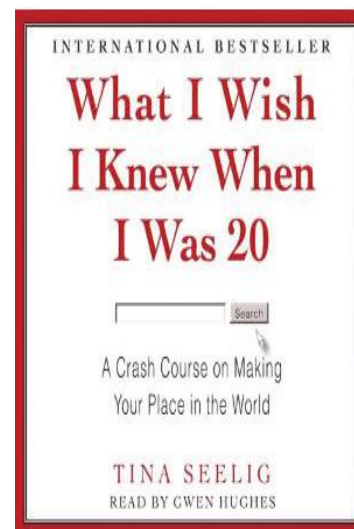
Seelig has a trustworthy voice in *What I Wish I Knew When I was 20*. She asks readers questions to get them thinking about sound choices. She begins Chapter 1 by asking, "What would you do to earn money if all you had was five dollars and two hours?"

The book tackles scenarios that people might consider as problems. She says to view them as opportunities, while

recognizing societal limitations.

"These social rules and norms are designed to make the world around us more organized and predictable, and to prevent us from hurting one another," Seelig writes. However, "Don't be afraid to get out of your comfort zone, to have a healthy disregard for the impossible, and to turn well-worn ideas on their heads."

Seelig tells her readers, "Don't be in a rush to get to your final destination — the side trips and unexpected detours quite often lead to the most interesting people, places, and opportunities. And, finally, be wary of all career advice, including mine, as you figure out what's right for you."



Moreover she writes, "You can maximize your chances by being well prepared physically, intellectually, and emotionally. We dramatically increase the chances that we will be lucky by exposing ourselves to as many diverse experiences as possible, boldly recombining these experiences in unusual ways, and fearlessly

striving to get to the stage on which we want to play out our life."

According to Seelig, if you want to be that person leading the charge, then you have to take on that role; "It takes hard work, energy, and drive — but these are the assets that set leaders apart from those who wait for others to anoint them."

"Protect and enhance your reputation — it's your most valuable asset and should be guarded well. Learn how to apologize with a simple 'I'm sorry.'" Keep in mind that everything is negotiable and learn to navigate toward an outcome in which all parties win."

"Tina Seelig is one of the most creative and inspiring teachers at Stanford. Her book ought to be required reading," said Robert Sutton, Stanford University professor and New York Times bestselling author.

I wholeheartedly agree.

Caesar Chavez: Fighting for Equality Among Farm Workers

By San Quentin Reviews

Director Diego Luna's *Cesar Chavez* underscores the point that no matter how powerless we feel, we always have the power to decide who we are.

Cesar Chavez portrays the hardships of the immigrant worker and Chavez's struggle to help farm workers secure higher wages and more humane working conditions. When Chavez (Michael Pena) peacefully organizes Delano's farm workers, their resolve is tested as they are arrested, run down with cars and even shot.

Pena's performance captures the anguish of a Mexican-American stretched between his pride as a husband and father who chooses not to protect his often-threatened family in the traditional macho way and his commitment to meet violent intimidation with non-violence. Chavez's non-violent approach, however, not only creates a rift between him and his followers,

MOVIE REVIEW

it strains the loyalty of his wife (America Ferrera) and alienates his oldest son (Eli Vargas).

Chavez's non-violent methods also cause a rift among the members of S.Q. Reviews when we meet in the back lot behind San Quentin Prison's education department. Juan Meza characterizes the movie's message as American propaganda designed to promote a world that can't challenge U.S. power.

"America is always promoting heroes that suit them," Meza says. "If the hero isn't white, he's always non-violent. George Washington and Daniel Boone shot their enemies in the face, but America's idea of a heroic Mexican is a guy who looks dignified while you pee on his shoes."

Eyebrows rise among the reviewers. Each is a lifer who wants to parole one day, and



to go on record as a proponent of violence is a bad pre-board plan.

"I thought the non-violence message was powerful," says Rahsaan Thomas. "It shows us how we can beat injustice in America."

Meza disagrees. "We can beat American corruption by lying down and letting them

poop on us," he says sarcastically. "No — I'm always of the argument that you meet guns with guns. When Sitting Bull defeated the U.S. at Little Big Horn, he didn't want to fight. But he knew he had to go to war to have peace."

"Sitting Bull won a battle," Emile DeWeaver says. "But can you name one person who won a war on U.S. soil through force of arms?"

Meza can't think of anyone. We can understand Meza's indignation. It does feel unjust that there seem to be two standards of heroism when we read American history.

"I know injustice," DeWeaver says. "It's immediately satisfying to respond with violence, but look where it's gotten me long-term. And, I could mount an argument about why I was right. Let's say I was justified. I'd be 100 percent right and still

100 percent serving a life sentence. How does that move me closer to a solution?"

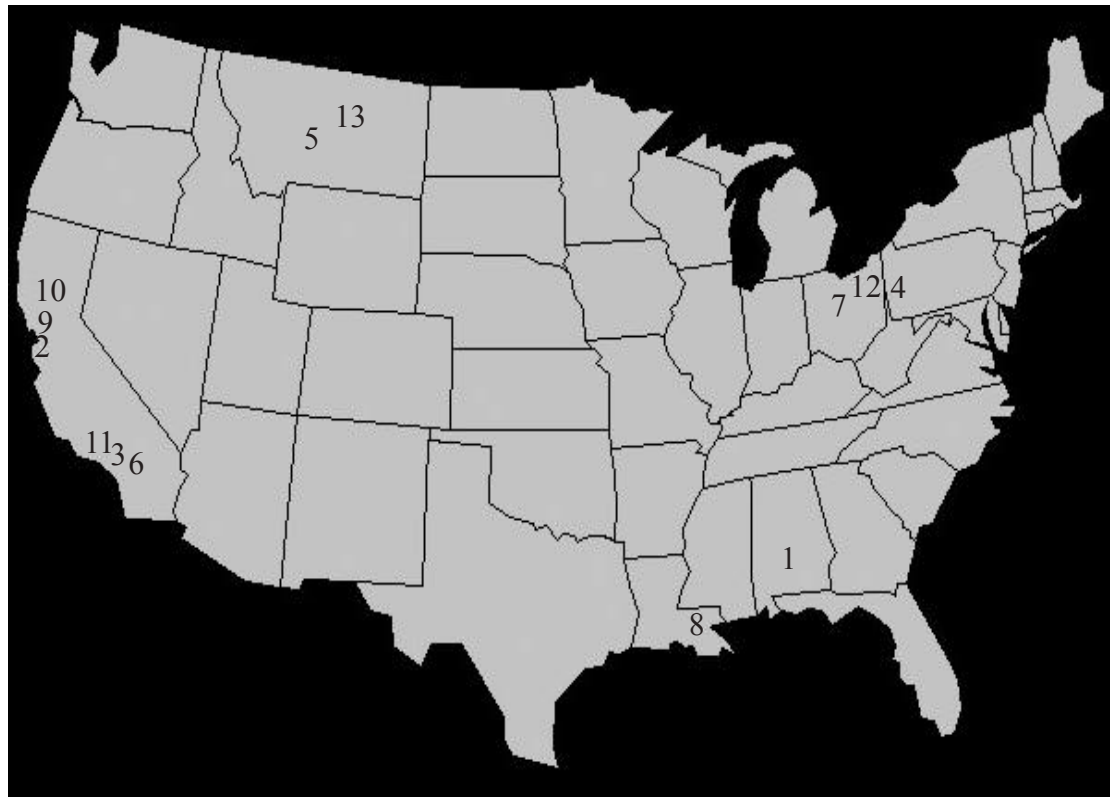
Thomas agrees. "There's enough good in the system to fix the system if we work together. But, if you fight fire with fire, then you both look like dragons. Then people start choosing sides, and it doesn't matter who's right. If you kill my dad, I don't care if he's wrong. But if Dad is alive, I can vote against him and help you."

It's easy to side against Meza, knowing his position is unpopular in the American mainstream, but to judge him is to miss the movie's point. We all have a choice. It's less about whether we fight oppression with non-violence and more about taking responsibility for the men we want to be and the world we want to create.

On a scale of one to five dinner cookies, *Cesar Chavez* rates two and a half cookies.

Contributors:
Emile DeWeaver, Rahsaan Thomas, Juan Meza

News Briefs



1. Alabama — A nonprofit law firm asked the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate the prison system in October after a six-month investigation that revealed corruption, criminal misconduct and abusive behavior among correctional officers at a female institution. The report found that violence, sexual abuse and leadership problems were worse than previously believed.

2. Oakland — Ronald Ross, who was sentenced to 32 years to life for shooting Renardo Williams in 2006, was freed in 2013 and declared innocent after Williams confessed to have falsely identified Ross under pressure from an officer. Ross sued the officer and the city for damages. The suit alleges the city failed to teach officers how to conduct a photo lineup without coercing the witness and respond to evidence pointing to a suspect's innocence.

3. Los Angeles — A judge voided Susan Mellen's murder conviction in October, deeming she received "subpar representation" from her attorney, who did not conduct a thorough investigation of the witness's credibility. The judge said the trial had hinged on the claim of a single witness, who was revealed a habitual liar. Jurors never learned that the witness's sister, a Torrance police officer, believed the witness (her sister) was a pathological liar, and that years earlier police had deemed the witness an "unreliable informant."

4. Pittsburgh — In October, a federal jury awarded \$100,000 in compensatory damages to Joseph Consonery, a former west-

ern Pennsylvania jail inmate who claimed officials neglected his dental treatment after he broke a tooth. Consonery sued Washington County and jail employees in 2009, saying they repeatedly ignored his treatment requests during his four-month stay in jail. When his tooth became infected, he wasn't allowed access to an oral surgeon — which his attorney said would have cost about \$1,000 — until he was sent to state prison in June. Jurors declined to award punitive damages.

5. Springfield, Mo. — Muslim inmate Richard Ray McLendon

Jr. is suing the Greene County jail and its program coordinator of religious matters, alleging jailers violated his civil rights by denying him a Quran and a prayer rug and refusing to let him attend Friday prayers, the Springfield News-Leader reported in September.

6. Los Angeles — The Justice Department announced in September a \$435,000 "Smart Prosecution" grant for a pilot program in Los Angeles aimed at keeping first-time offenders arrested for "quality-of-life" crimes out of jail by giving them a chance to make amends. The grant will

pay the salaries of two full-time staffers for two years. Chicago, Houston and San Francisco also received similar grants.

7. Columbus, Ohio — About 100 Ohio prison workers picketed outside Department of Rehabilitation and Correction headquarters in October, claiming that staff shortages and other issues have made prisons more dangerous. The prison workers said bad food from a private vendor, overcrowding and security breaches contributed to unsafe conditions inside 27 state prisons.

8. New Orleans — Four months

after Nathan Brown, who was imprisoned almost 17 years for an attempted rape he didn't commit, was released from prison, the state was ordered to pay him \$330,000; the maximum from its wrongful conviction compensation fund. DNA tests proved that he was not the man who the victim said attacked her outside her apartment in 1997.

9. San Francisco — California Attorney General Kamala Harris filed a brief Dec. 1 urging the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to overturn a lower court ruling that nullified the state's death penalty law. The lower court ruled executions were uncertain and involved lengthy delays.

10. Sacramento — Gov. Jerry Brown signed a bill that prohibits California prisons from forcing women to be sterilized for birth control.

11. Ventura — Michael Hanline was freed Nov. 24 after more than 30 years in prison for a crime that DNA tests showed he did not commit, Reuters reported. The California Innocence Project worked for 15 years to win the case for Hanline, 69.

12. Cleveland — Ricky Jackson, 57, was freed Nov. 21 after 39 years in prison for a crime he did not commit, Reuters reported. A second man convicted in the case, Wiley Bridgeman, 60, was also freed. A man who testified in the trial recanted his testimony and told authorities he never witnessed the crime.

13. Bonne Terre, Mo. — Leon Vincent Taylor was executed Nov. 19 for fatally shooting an Independence gas station attendant in 1994. It was the ninth execution in Missouri last year.

Maxing Out on Long Sentences

By Tommy Bryant
Journalism Guild Writer

One out of five offenders serves "...the full duration of their sentences and transition out of prison with no legal conditions, monitoring or reentry assistance," states a report from the Pew Charitable Trusts.

A rise in crime in the 1990s made "protecting public safety" a big issue. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement

Act of 1994 authorized billions of dollars in federal grants for prison expansion capacities.

Prisoners had to serve a minimum "85 percent of their original court sentence before becoming eligible for release," according to the Pew report. The 1994 law made the 85 percent sentences viable by constructing room for extended incarcerations.

If an inmate has substantial disciplinary time added

on while incarcerated, the 85 percent minimum can become a 100 percent maximum sentence.

In some cases, inmates go straight from solitary confinement to the streets, creating another dilemma, said the report. Most of these inmates are already stressed and mentally challenged after serving time in restricted lockdowns and being confined to a cell 23 hours a day with limited human con-

tact. Abruptly going from that environment to a crowded bus station or shopping mall increases their stress. This group of inmates has high rates of recidivism, compared to the general population.

California's AB109 Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011 keeps lower-level offenders in county jurisdiction jails. Judges can now use a split sentence, which combines a jail term with mandatory supervision. All this helps to lower recidivism and protects community safety.

The mandatory supervision

policy, when properly implemented, can also save substantial taxpayer dollars. This is especially true for post-release inmates who are considered violent, serious or repeat offenders.

From a victim's point of view, mandatory supervision is good for communities. "Using increasingly sophisticated tools, officials can estimate the probability of recidivism and identify criminal risk factors that can be addressed to reduce the likelihood of reoffending," according to the Pew report.

Governor Brown Increases Spending to Support Realignment

Continued from Page 1

itation programs, among other issues.

"I can report ... that Realignment is working," Brown said to a gathering of the state's major law enforcement organizations last April.

After meeting with Monterey County Sheriff Scott Miller in January, Brown said he would look through the Capital "cookie jar" to see if he could find more money for counties. "I'm still waiting to see what he found in his cookie jars. I haven't heard anything back yet," said Miller.

The governor visited 10 counties between January and April last year, touring jails and meeting with inmates as well as with

sheriffs, district attorneys, judges, county supervisors, police chiefs and probation officers to discuss the Realignment law, reported *The Associated Press* in an April 20 story.

Criticism of the law from crime victim advocates, Republican lawmakers and some county officials is that "it is creating the same kind of overcrowded conditions in county jails that gave rise to the federal court intervention in the state prison system," the AP reported.

"Overcrowding is forcing many counties to release convicts after serving only a fraction of their sentences ... and the harder-core inmates that counties are now housing have led to an increase in violence in the state's largest jail systems," the article continued.

The state has provided nearly \$2 billion for jail construction since 2007. Riverside County is using \$100 million of the state money to build housing for about 1,300 jail inmates. Sheriff Stan Sniff and Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff Stone told the AP much more money is needed.

Stone noted he had suggested the governor streamline environmental reviews for new jails. The governor "said he thought it was a good idea ... he would look into it. I haven't heard a thing," Stone said.

Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood worried that county jails built to hold criminals for no more than a year are now housing them for a decade or more. Brown has proposed modifying the law so that in-

mates sentenced to more than 10 years would serve their time in state prisons, reported the AP.

"Three years, from my standpoint, might be reasonable," Youngblood said, convinced the sentence should be shorter for jail time.

Brown cautioned in the law enforcement gathering in April that the state could not overspend. He said he realized local officials are under "a lot of stress," reported AP.

Diane Cummins, the governor's special adviser on Realignment, said "...the state is unlikely to increase the operating funds it provides counties, but it might help with county-provided mental health and drug treatment programs."

One key to making Brown's Realignment law work is hav-

ing enough classroom space and money to provide drug and alcohol treatment and other programs that can keep criminals from committing new crimes, said Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson and County Supervisor Vito Chiesa, the story said.

Stanislaus County benefited from an \$80 million state grant to build a new housing unit holding 456 inmates and will include classrooms and areas where criminals on probation can receive services, AP reported.

"The take-home message (to the governor) is, if you want to see success in Realignment, then the counties and local governments need help with the resources to do that," said Christianson.

Arts & Entertainment

Snippets

Alice Walker published her first novel, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*, in 1970.

Mercury can cause liver, kidney and skin damage if consumed.

Blue and green eyes can be found underneath the Ameraucana and Araucana chicken.

Insects have four wings. Flies are the only insects that have two wings.

Talking on the phone can get you struck by lightning. It is the leading cause of lightning injuries inside of a home.

In Cuba you would be hard pressed to find a Monopoly board game. Fidel Castro ordered all Monopoly sets destroyed once he took reign in Cuba.

Only one Japanese soldier, Kazuo Sakamaki was actually arrested during the Pearl Harbor attack. His submarine was grounded and he swam ashore.

No one really knows the truth about Rameses the Great offspring. The rumor was that he fathered over 100 children before he died.

Sudoku Corner

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

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

Last Issue's Sudoku Solution

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

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



Samantha SantaMaria in Cholula, Puebla (Mexico) enjoying the S.Q.News

We Can Use Your Help

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Golden Bears Capture Title With 13 Seconds Left, 21-18

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Writer

The San Quentin Golden Bears scored a touchdown with 13 seconds remaining, defeating All-Madden, 21-18, to capture the Intramural Flag Football League championship.

"It was fun; we won," said Golden Bears quarterback Royce Rose.

With time running out, the Golden Bears had the football, but were losing, 18-14. A blitzing

SPORTS

All-Madden defense pressured Rose to throw a high wobbly pass towards the end zone.

All-Madden cornerback Satinder "7" Singh misjudge the pass and missed the interception, leaving Cleo Cloman wide open. Cloman made the touchdown catch, which gave the Golden Bears the victory.

"I just waited on my number to

be called; I did not play well, but it's a team sport," said Cloman.

The Golden Bears and All-Madden traded leads all game. With 38 seconds left in the game, All-Madden backup quarterback John Windham found wide receiver Kevin Carr on a slash route for a five-yard walkin touchdown, giving them the 18-14 lead.

This touchdown came after a miraculous catch by All-Madden wide receiver Kent Craig for 40 yards, setting up red-zone posi-

tion.

Craig was All-Madden's most explosive player, making leaping and diving catches. He had seven catches for 198 yards and one touchdown.

"Even though we lost, everybody played hard-nose football. It was the mistakes that killed us," said Craig.

Early in the third quarter, Craig caught a fantastic 30-yard pass from Windham, leaping over Golden Bear cornerback Donald Ray "Texas" Walker. As Walker fell to the ground, Craig ran for an additional 40 yard, into the end zone, edging the Golden Bears, 12-7.

The first half of play showed both teams at their defensive best. All-Madden's defense frustrated the Golden Bears running game. D. "Zayd" Nicholson, the league defensive player of the year for All-Madden, sacked Rose five times, three in the first half. Nicholson had 18 sacks for the season, averaging four per game.

The Golden Bears did manage to score before half-time. With three minutes left in the half, Rose found tight end Mario Washington on a cross play after faking a run to running back Christopher "Cutty Bo" Smith to tie the score 6-6. The Golden Bears made the one-point con-

version, giving them a halftime one-point lead.

Windham stepped in to run the offensive because starting quarterback Antonio "Boobie" Cavitt was out recovering from surgery. His passing game timing was off due to little or no practice. The Golden Bears bought their own sets of blitzes and tight end coverage that helped box All-Madden in.

Golden Bears defensive end Shatka Wells sacked Windham three-times and cornerback Walker intercepted Windham once.

Like any good team, All-Madden made the proper adjustments. Windham settled in the pocket and found Craig for his first 25-yard reception, moving the chains down the field. The next play Windham used his speed and athleticism to weave through the Golden Bears, pressuring defense for a 30-yard touchdown run to open up a 6-0 lead in the first quarter.

All-Madden failed to complete any of its one-point conversion attempts, which ultimately contributed to losing the game. Those three points could have sent the game into overtime.

The Golden Bears went undefeated at 3-0 for the championship, while All-Madden finished the season 4-1.

After the game on this warm and sunny day, all the players and officials formed a circle and thanked All-Madden head coach and league Commissioner Chris Markham for salvaging the football season.

There's More to NFL Officiating Than it Seems

Key to all football games are the officials.

These are the seven uniformed individuals who don black and white striped jerseys, black and white pants, black shoes and caps.

They interpret and enforce game rules, enforce penalties, monitor the game clock and timeouts. They also aim to keep players from hurting each other.

The referee is the head official. He wears a white cap; the others wear black caps. The letter R on the back of his jersey denotes his position.

He is responsible for the general supervision of the game.

He stands in the offensive backfield, 10-12 yards behind the line of scrimmage. He monitors the quarterback, illegal blocks and illegal hits on the quarterback.

The umpire wears the letter U on the back of his jersey.

He makes sure players' equipment is legal, and watches the play on the line of scrimmage, which includes making sure the offense has 11 or fewer players. He stands on the defense's side of the ball, 4 to 5 yards from scrimmage. He needs to move out of the way quickly on running plays.

The umpire calls most the holding penalties and watches for offensive linemen going downfield on a pass play.

The head linesman wears HL on the back of his jersey.

He stands with one foot on each side of the line of scrimmage. He monitors encroachment, off sides and illegal players downfield.

He handles the chain to measure first downs, and spots forward progress by a ball carrier. He assists the line judge with monitoring illegal movements/shifts by receivers and running backs on his side of the field.

He has to know who the "eligible" receivers are before each play. For example, in week 14 (Dec. 7, 2014) of the NFL season, during the Battle of the Bay game between the Oakland Raiders and the San Francisco 49ers, the Raiders' left tackle, Donald Penn (No. 72), caught a pass for a touchdown. Linemen normally cannot catch passes, but Penn was allowed to because he was designated eligible before the play.

The line judge wears LJ on the back of his jersey.

He stands on the line of scrimmage opposite the head linesman. He monitors violations for offsides, encroachment and illegal shifts/motions. He assists with other calls such as illegal use of the hands and holding, particularly on kicking and passing plays. He assists the referee in making certain the quarterback does not cross the line of scrimmage on a forward pass, watches forward laterals behind scrimmage, false starts. When the ball is punted, he stays on the line of scrimmage to make sure the ends do not move downfield before the ball is kicked.

The line judge supervises substitutions by the team on his side of the field, and the timing of the game. He also informs the referee of the two-minute warning and when time expires at the end of a quarter.

The back judge wears BJ on the back of his jersey.

He stands 20 yards from scrimmage on the side of the defense on the wide receiver side of the field. He makes certain the defense has no more than 11 players, and he monitors receivers on his side of the field.

The back judge monitors catches, recovery and illegal touching of loose balls that go beyond the line of scrimmage. He rules on pass interference and whether a receiver has possession of the ball before going out of bounds.

He makes clipping calls on punt returns. During extra point and field goal attempts, he and the field judge stand under the goalpost and rule whether kicks are good.

The field judge wears FJ on the back of his jersey.

He lines up on the same side as the home team, 20 yards downfield. In the NFL, he is responsible for the 40- and 25-second clock. The field judge also counts the number of players on the defense. He is responsible for passes crossing the defense's goal and fumbles in his area. He observes the tight ends' pass patterns, watches for pass interference, and makes decisions on catches, recovery, out-of-bounds spots and illegal touching of a ball fumbled after it has crossed the line of scrimmage. He also looks for offensive players' illegal use of the hands, especially the wide receivers, and for defensive players on his side of the field.

The side judge wears SJ on the back of his jersey.

He stands 20 yards from the line of scrimmage, downfield opposite the field judge. He is a second set of eyes on long pass attempts. According to *Football for Dummies* (3rd), on extra point and field goal attempts, the side judge also lines up with the umpire under the goalpost and rules whether kicks are good. The side judge was added to the NFL in 1978 as the seventh official due to teams passing the ball more. Some high school games are played without a side judge, but college teams have adopted the use of this official.

— By Kevin D. Sawyer

Lakers Dominate Championship Game Over the Youngsters, 31-25

By Rahsaan Thomas
Sports Editor

The San Quentin Lakers over-38 half-court team showed they know how to use a broom in their undefeated playoff run to become Championship Basketball League champions by beating the Youngsters, 31-25.

"We swept everybody," said D. "Frog" DeWitt after winning the championship on Dec. 1.

In the CBL, created by Aaron "Harun" Taylor, the players were drafted in rounds, just like the NBA. Allan McIntosh, Joseph "Wig" Kelly, DeWitt, Vincent O'Bannon, Kevin Faquwa and Demitris McGee were picked up by Lakers coach Edward Moss.

"When I drafted my team, there were no doubts in my mind we would be in this position," said Moss.

The Youngsters made it all the way to the finals to face the Lakers in a Cinderella tale. Only P. "Strange" Walker was picked when their coach, Maurice Gipson, failed to attend draft night. Gary Townes, Will Anderson, Kenny Ray and Andre Yancy were compiled from leftovers. Jeffery "Mailman" Ratchford and Antonio "Boobie" Cavitt came later.

"I'm proud to be part of this team. A lot of people thought we wouldn't win a game and we started off 7-0," said Townes. The Youngsters finished the regular season 8-1.

"We did good by our standards," said Ratchford.

The Lakers beat the Youngsters by an average of 10 points

in their first two games of the season, but the third encounter in the finals was closer. With their backs against the wall, the Youngsters came out aggressively. Walker had his best game of the playoffs, scoring 10 baskets on 10/16 shooting, and hit a free throw for 11 points. He completed a double-double with 11 boards. Ratchford added 7 points and 10 rebounds.

The Lakers started out with a 3-0 run and led midway through until O'Bannon, who was guarding Walker, subbed out for Faquwa due to a prior injury flaring up. The 6-foot-5 Walker took advantage inside and scored five baskets almost in a row to take a 14-13 lead.

Once the stocky O'Bannon came back in the game, Walker's production slowed down.

"We won on defense when we put (O'Bannon) back on Strange," said Kelly.

"My shoulder was injured in the first game. I had to help my teammates out," said O'Bannon. "Strange might be taller than me, but I played bigger than him."

The lead was short-lived. The Youngsters had no answer for McIntosh and Kelly. McIntosh made a layup on Ratchford, tying the score at 14. Then McIntosh went on to make his team's next three baskets.

"It was a mismatch 'cause I can't stop (McIntosh) and he can't stop me," said Ratchford.

McIntosh scored 15 points on 11/17 shooting from the field and hitting three of four free throws. McIntosh was named the finals

MVP by Taylor.

"This was too easy. I just go out there and try stuff," said McIntosh.

Kelly only made two out of 11 three-point attempts (worth only two points each in this league). However, Walker could not stop his first step. Kelly scored seven baskets inside, for a total of 11 points and snatched 12 rebounds.

"It wasn't easy (getting around Walker), especially with a swollen knee; I had to play through pain," said Kelly.

"The games were very competitive. I don't believe they had an edge. I believe we didn't play up to our potential. They showed up; we didn't," said Townes.

"We had a great coaching staff. They executed well, calling timeouts and giving us breathers," said DeWitt, who added three baskets and a free throw for four points.

"We're a complete team; no individuals. When you play together as one, you win," said Lakers GM Donald "Tex" Walker.

For next season, Taylor said he would like to see better officiating, live play-by-play and the games taped and aired on the institutional TV channel.

"This season was better. The guys coming together with a prize and the level of play picking up made the games more interesting," said Taylor.

"I'm not of age, but this is a good league for the older guys. I hope to play at that level at their age," said S.Q. Warrior Harry "ATL" Smith.

Staying Connected With Sports Through Coaching

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Sports Editor

Coaching gives ex-players a way to stay close to the sport they love and share their knowledge. When injuries or age push them to the sideline, they became teachers of the game, but the job comes with some difficulties.

“Once I stopped being able to play, I wanted to stay involved,” said S.Q. Kings As-

sistant Coach Ishmael Freelon. “I love teaching — showing younger cats things they can’t see, bringing out talent they don’t think they have, encouraging.”

“When I hurt my knee and had to have surgery, it was time to stop playing and start teaching,” said All-Madden Coach Isaiah “Adbur Raheem” Thompson-Bonilla.

“I like being able to share knowledge of the game to

help others elevate theirs — if they’re coachable,” said S.Q. Athletics Coach John “Yah-Yah” Parratt. “I love seeking and spotting new talent.”

“Cutting people is the hardest thing to do – seeing that look on a guy’s face when you have to tell him he didn’t make the team or when you play many tight games and some guys don’t get to play”

All of the coaches have years of experience to share. Some even played at the semi-pro level.

Thompson-Bonilla started playing football at age 9 for Pop Warner and made it to the Canadian pro league. There, he played for Toronto and then the Chicago Argonauts with quarterback Doug Flutie.

“Coaching sports teaches a sense of community on a small scale and getting brothers to come together to obtain a common goal,” Thompson-Bonilla said.

Parratt played for the New York Yankees farm club, the



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Mike Tyler and coach Frankie Smith (right) smiles for camera

Calaveras Cementers and for the Cijus Phillies out of Danville. In high school he played right field and shortstop for the Shasta Wolves, then second base for the Shasta College Knights.

Freelon played point guard for Bell High School until he blew his knee out in 12th grade. “Being so good at point guard allowed me to see places where people needed to be on the court,” said Freelon. S.Q. Kings Head Coach Orlando Harris gave him the opportunity to help coach the Kings.

Harris started as a boxing trainer, which gave him the discipline to coach the game he loves – basketball. He started as a player for the S.Q. Kings. When the previous coaches didn’t show commitment, he stepped up, asked for the job and got it. He led the Kings to back-to-back winning seasons, 18-6 in 2012, and 19-5 in 2013.

The key to coaching is “being able to create a team concept while having individual relationships with each player,” said Harris.

“It’s about TEAM, Together Each Achieves More,” Parratt said.

Nevertheless, coaching isn’t easy. The hardest part is “having to cut players and having to tell players if they don’t come to practice, they can’t play,” said Thompson-Bonilla. “Some of San Quentin’s best players aren’t represented on All-Madden because many chose not to play because of a lack of commitment to practice.”

“Cutting people is the hardest thing to do – seeing that look on a guy’s face when you have to tell him he didn’t make the team or when you play many tight games and some guys don’t get to play,” Parratt said.



Photo by Raphaele Casale

Coach Orlando “Duck” Harris (middle) brings the Warriors together to strategize on the next play

Half-court Basketball Promotes ‘Unity in Community’

‘This tournament is more than just a basketball game. It is an opportunity for our community to unite and build a stronger support system for one another’

Several inmates celebrated the holidays with a half-court basketball one-day elimination tournament. Adnan Khan led his team to a 19-12 victory.

“Events like this put the unity in community,” said Khan.

“I consider these guys my family. This was the next best thing to being with family for the holidays,” said Rafael Cuevas.

Seven teams, with members picked in rounds like a draft, battled to win the prize of one soda, Snickers, honey bun and a pack of vanilla cookies each. Any team with two losses was booted from the contest.

After playing about five games, the two teams in the finals were Khan, Cuevas, Harold Meeks, Tom Saevang and Jonathan Chui pitted against Phirak Kim, Damon Cooke, Alladin Pangilinan, Nick Lopez and Phoehn You.

“I want you to score at least 11 points. We got the other eight. That’s teamwork,” Cuevas told Khan just before the game started.

Khan did much more than



Photo by Lt. Sam Robinson

Front: Vinh Nguyen; Middle: Juilo Martinez, Alladin Pangilinan
Back row: Jonathan Chiu, David Chow, Phirak Kim, Adnan Khan, Upu Ama, Zitsue Lee, John Wang and David Kim

that. He scored 16 points and snatched 12 rebounds.

“My team played exceptional defense and got me the ball so I could make easy shots,” said Khan.

Pangilinan, who was guarding Khan, answered back with six points and six rebounds, but Khan was unstoppable, hitting layups, short-range jumpers, making shots from three-point

range and a technical free-throw that was worth three points.

“He got away from me,” said Pangilinan. “I’m 38; he’s only 21. Main thing is having fun

and playing with passion. We did that.”

“This tournament is more than just a basketball game. It is an opportunity for our community to unite and build a stronger support system for one another,” You said about the Dec. 26 event.

“It was a good tournament. Friendly games, hardly any technical fouls, high energy and everybody played great,” said John Wang, the tournament organizer.

For the second year in a row, Lopez tricked the opposing team into passing him the ball by calling a fake check. He then laid the ball up for an easy basket.

Another team that did well was Vi Chau, Eli Fejeran, David Kim and Donald Ray “Texas” Walker Jr. A key player, Reginald Hola, couldn’t make it to the game. Despite missing one of their best, they upset several teams and made it to the final four.

“Playing ball feels good; it releases a lot of stress,” said Fejeran.

“We have to do this more often,” said Juilo Saca, who played in the tournament.

– By **Rahsaan Thomas**

Guests Hear 19 Gifted Writers At Ninth Annual 'Brothers in Pen' Event

By Leslie Lakes
Contributing Writer

On a warm, sunny Saturday in November, more than 60 guests from outside the prison traversed the lower yard – past a football game, a basketball game and men doing pushups and stretches – to the ARC building to attend the ninth annual “Brothers in Pen” public reading.

This event, introduced by creative writing instructor Zoe Mullery and with Julian Glenn “Luke” Padgett serving ably as master of ceremonies, featured short readings of fiction or memoir (or some combination of the two) from 19 gifted writers.

Intelligent, insightful and intimate, some of the stories were nostalgic, some autobiographical, some pure fantasy. Writing styles ran the gamut from humorous to gritty, raw and edgy, tender and sensitive, light and dark, creative and entertaining ... each touching on personal truth in a wide variety of ways.

The readings began with Arnulfo T. Garcia’s “The Counselor,” an excerpt from the first chapter of his memoir – written for his daughter so that she could understand who her father is – and concluded with Michael Zell’s “Wisdom Exhortation,” a story about the mystery of finding wisdom in a place where it is difficult to know how to share it.

Each piece segued seamlessly, one to another. Listening to this collective of talented writers, the audience was reminded that they are far more than incarcerated “men in blue.” They are also fathers, sons, husbands, lovers, friends, brothers, former businessmen and students. The writer Ella Turenne wrote in a *Huffington Post* article about a previous Brothers in Pen reading: “In each of these stories lay the foundation of humanity. In word, inflection and intention was the truth: everyone has a story. One story is no better than the other, but collectively, they make up life as we know it.” (huffingtonpost.com/ella-turenne/brothers-in-pen_b_1002433.html)

Ron Koehler’s “Letter’s End, Heart’s Beginning” is a sweet and tender memory of his toddler son’s embodiment of innocence. “There were birds he attracted, too, his spirit pulling them right out of the sky, a baby-blue boy heaven above the Penn State Campus, blue birds with proud chests and courageously continuous songs of flying delight. Sky droplets of God’s joy.” The love permeating the story aches from the first sentence: “My son’s letters stopped coming, but my heart remembered.”

Wayne Boatwright’s “500 Lbs of Happiness” is a tale of how a child’s small gesture produced a quarter ton of happiness for two incarcerated men. The story brought a smile to everyone’s face.

Emile DeWeaver’s “Crumbling Brick Dreams” was reminiscent of O’Henry’s style of short story writing, using wit, wordplay, warm characteriza-



Photo by Peter Merts

The men of ‘Brothers in Pen’ with instructor Zoe Mullery



Photo by Peter Merts

Host of the event Julian Glenn “Luke” Padgett entertains the audience

tion and a clever ending.

Rahsaan Thomas’s “Institutionalized” pulled the listener in from the get-go, with a driving pace and musical rhythm to his phrasing to give form to the meaning of his tale.

Eric Curtis’ “Not So Ugly Anymore” is a story where the “bullied” comes to the rescue of the “bullier.”

Kenneth Brydon, who read a story entitled “Mad World,” was recently published in an anthology titled “Prison Noir,” edited by Joyce Carol Oates.

The readings were followed by a brief Q&A period revealing deeper insights. When asked: “Writing is hard work. What helps?” some responses were:

“I love writing. Writing is its own reward.”

“Writing is like breathing.”

“It’s freedom. It’s how I share my inner world, through imagery.”

“It helps me to untangle my thoughts to gain deeper self perception.”

“Writing serves as therapy.”

And a facetious single word: “Lockdowns.”

When asked by a woman who was struggling with confidence in her own work: “What makes you think that you have the right to share your stories?” the men responded in persuasive fashion: “Every human being has a right to tell their own story.”

“It’s a fundamental human trait to share through storytelling. To NOT do so is to deny your humanity and identity.”

“To create is an essential gift of freedom!”

One of the guests was asked what she liked best about the event. She replied, “Hearing the men read their own story lends a vastly different experience for me than reading their stories myself. It reveals a whole other

dimension since their emotions and unique individual personalities came through.”

The Brothers in Pen class is a place where the men find their voices to work through their struggles to cope while serving their terms and find an essential sense of dignity, acknowledgment and empowerment through personal creative expression.

A blog at brothersinpen.wordpress.com has information about the anthologies and occasional updates about the class.

The class is sponsored by the William James Association’s Prison Arts Project (william-jamesassociation.org). Heartfelt thanks were communicated to Community Partnership Manager Steve Emrick, San Quentin’s Public Information Officer Lt. Samuel Robinson, Executive Director of the William James Association Laurie Brooks, as well as Carol Newborg, Cory

Georgeson, Peter Merts (photographer who has been documenting Prison Arts Projects events for years) and Walkenhorst (represented by Natalie To-var) for providing snacks for all. The late Jeffrey Little, a former member of the class who died shortly after paroling last year, was honored and remembered.

Zoe Mullery began the day by quoting celebrated short story writer Tobias Wolff, who visited the “Brothers in Pen” creative writing class several years ago, from his foreword to one of the anthologies: “We are story-telling animals ... It’s how we organize the past, and try to make sense of it – to see the patterns our actions and inactions create, to see how those patterns break or repeat themselves. Stories are the embodiment of those patterns, and in them – even in the stories of others – we can begin to recognize ourselves.”