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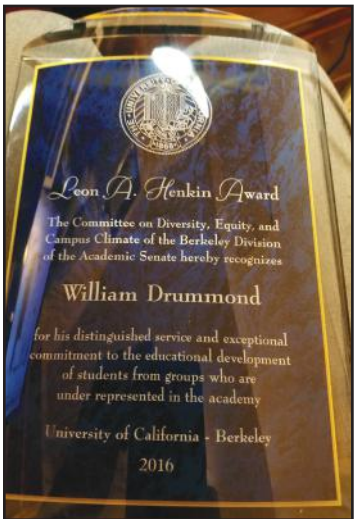
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POPULATION ?,???

William J. Drummond receives prestigious journalism award

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Associate Editor

The University of California, Berkeley awarded Professor William J. Drummond, an adviser to *San Quentin News*, the prestigious Leon A. Henkin Citation for Distinguished Service



Courtesy of William Drummond

Leon A. Henkin Award

in February for his work as a journalist and academic.

In a speech, Edward Wasserman, the dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, cited Drummond's work at the university including a first-of-its-kind course on race and media, his contribution to *San Quentin News*, and the relationship he established between the newspaper and the school.

"It was kind of like a lifetime achievement award," said Drummond, who has a 33-year history at the university. "When I first learned about this award, I thought, 'This is something I've been doing all my life.'"

He said one of his colleagues nominated him for the award, but he was shocked about winning it. "When I was a working journalist I didn't think about awards," he said, adding that he taught because he wanted to inspire students to do well and it was his way of giving back.

See *Drummond* on Page 4



Photo by Eddie Herena-San Quentin News

Justin Meskan receives his certificate from Chris Redlitz, Beverly Parenti, and CDCR Undersecretary Ralph Diaz

Code.7370 Graduation Day at SQ

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Justin Meskan spent the last seven years behind bars, but in August he is scheduled to get another chance at putting his life back on track, with

the assistance of an innovative computer programming class taught at San Quentin State Prison.

Speaking on the occasion of Code.7370's graduation day, March 23, Meskan, 35, said, "I learned a lot about how to work

with other people, and coders, on a team level. I also learned about responsibility, getting to work every day and how to put my life first and get away from my old habits."

See *Code.7370* on Page 9



Courtesy of the César Chávez Foundation

Familias campesinas portan la bandera del sindicato

César Chávez: símbolo del activismo y la justicia

Por Marco Villa
y Taré Beltranchuc

César Estrada Chávez, trabajador agrícola mexicano-americano, líder sindical y activista de derechos civiles nació, el 31 de marzo de 1927, en Yuma Arizona. Hijo de Juana Estrada y Librado Chávez, Cesar Chávez creció con sus dos hermanos Richard y Librado y sus dos hermanas Rita y Vicki, en una humilde casa de adobe. Su familia era dueña de una tienda de abarrotes y una pequeña

finca que perdieron durante la gran depresión. A raíz de esta situación se unieron a otras familias pobres que se dirigían a California en busca de trabajo en los campos. La vida campesina en California se tornó muy difícil para la familia Chávez, ya que vivían en campamentos temporales en la que compartían la vivienda con otros campesinos y sus familias. Debido al tipo de trabajo, la familia Chávez no permanecía en el mismo lugar por mucho tiempo. Cuando el trabajo terminaba, se mudaban

hacia otro lugar, donde el contratista les ofrecía el siguiente trabajo. Como resultado de este continuo movimiento, Chávez asistió a más de 30 escuelas diferentes. Chávez únicamente estudió hasta el octavo grado y dejó de estudiar porque no quería que su madre siguiera trabajando en la agricultura además de no tener una estabilidad en una sola escuela. Posteriormente, Chávez se incorporó al trabajo del campo.

See *Chávez* on Page 10

Titans of CNC Academy offers marketable skills to prisoners

Wearing a T-shirt with Titans of CNC on its front and, in large bold letters, Made in the USA on the back, Titan Gilroy says he is on a quest to "bring jobs back to America."

Gilroy's quest began by connecting with his spirituality while sitting in solitude, in prison.

At 18, Gilroy was a talented

boxer who signed a contract with Top Rank Boxing. Hopes for a career in the ring were derailed when he became embroiled in a nightclub brawl that landed him a 16-year prison sentence, of which he served only three years because of good behavior.

See *Titan* on Page 10



Photo by Eddie Herena-San Quentin News

Titan Gilroy demonstrating to students how an edge finder works

INSIDE EDITION #91

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News Briefs

1. Vermont — Disability Rights Vermont filed a lawsuit in federal court in February, alleging that some state prisons are holding inmates in segregation even when it puts the inmate in danger. The lawsuit claims a man is in solitary confinement despite extensive and significant histories of self-harming behavior, particularly when put in segregation, reports Elizabeth Murray, *Burlington Free Press*. DRV is asking for a permanent order that mandates appropriate medical treatment settings whenever an inmate needs to be separated from general population inmates.

2. Boise, Idaho — The trial in a lawsuit by former inmates against the nation's largest private prison company, CoreCivic — formerly called Corrections Corporation of America — began in February. The lawsuit claims that CCA purposely understaffed the prison in an effort to boost profits in what they dubbed a "ghost worker" scheme, and the understaffing led to an attack in which the plaintiffs were stabbed and beaten by other inmates, *The Associated Press* reports. The allegations against CCA include that company officials, including the vice president, knew that the understaffing was compromising safety of inmates and staff and that the

understaffing meant the prison was often in violation of its \$29 million annual contract with the state. The CCA lawyer explained that the inmates were not hurt that badly in the surprise attack and that they could have hidden in their cells but instead wanted to fight. He said the unit where the inmates were housed was actually staffed by more employees than was required under CCA's contract with Idaho on the day of the attack. On Feb. 23, a federal jury found that CoreCivic had a longstanding custom of understaffing the prison, and the company was deliberately indifferent to the risk of serious harm that's posed to inmates. However, jurors also found CoreCivic doesn't have to pay damages because the inmates who sued failed to prove the understaffing happened in the hours before they were attacked by a prison gang.

3. Columbus, Ohio — (SAT Press Release) Planned changes to the state's administrative rules include limiting solitary confinement to 30 days for all individuals with serious mental illness, juveniles and pregnant women, according to an SAT press release. Disability Rights of Ohio and the American Civil Liberties Union said the changes are an important first step but do not go far enough.

4. Gainesville, Fla. — Families Against Mandatory Minimums praised the introduction of legislation designed to reform

the state's drug laws. The law builds on previous legislation that raised trafficking thresholds for certain drugs, reduced mandatory sentences for certain drug trafficking offenses, and allowed departures from mandatory minimum sentences for lower-level drug offenses.

5. Phoenix, Ariz. — (2-16-17) One-time Death Row inmate turned prisoner-rights advocate Shujaa Graham performed Life After Death Row at the Herberger Theater, Eric Newman of *The Arizona Republic* reports. The performance is about Graham's 11-year experience in the California prison system, part of which included time spent on Death Row for a wrongful murder conviction. Born in Louisiana, Graham grew up on a plantation in the segregated South of the 1950s. After moving to Southern California, he spent much of his youth in juvenile institutions and was sent to Correctional Training Facility in Soledad upon turning 18. Graham taught himself to read and write and studied history. He later became a leader of the Black Prison Movement within the California prison system as the Black Panther Party expanded.

6. Harrisburg, Pa. — Gov. Tom Wolf has proposed a new \$25 per resident fee on municipalities relying on state police coverage. Over half of the state's 2,500 municipalities rely full-time on state police protection.

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We Want To Hear From You!

The *San Quentin News* encourages inmates, free staff, custody staff, volunteers and others outside the institution to submit articles. All submissions become property of the *San Quentin News*. Please use the following criteria when submitting:

- Limit your articles to no more than 350 words.
- Know that articles 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 artwork (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point. Send Submissions to:

San Quentin News
1 Main Street
San Quentin, CA 94964

For inmates that want to receive a copy of the *San Quentin News* in the mail, send \$1.61 worth of stamps for postage to the above address.

The process can be repeated every month if you want to receive the latest newspaper.

Behind the Scenes

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San Quentin News

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CORRECTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PRINTED ISSUE

- In the Van Jones story, Jessica Sloan is the correct spelling and Curtis Carroll did not appear in *The Brief But Spectacular Moment* segment on KQED.
 - In the Veterans paying tribute story, the photo caption for Mary Donovan was misspelled.
- The *San Quentin News* printed an article about High Desert State Prison (HDSP) in the March 2017 edition that was inaccurate. The article titled "Probe finds officers create a culture of racism at HDSP" stated that the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) found in an investigation a "culture of racism" where officers used an "excessive" amount of force against Black inmates. That statement is not true.
- In an earlier report in 2015, the Office of the Inspector General stated that there was a "culture of racism" at HDSP. The *San Quentin News* erroneously attributed the conclusions of the earlier report to a subsequent report by ASCA. We apologize for this error.
- ASCA's assessment team researched HDSP from July 15, 2016 through July 28, 2016 and stated that "In moving HDSP closer to its desired culture, the facility's readiness for change should be examined. Readiness for change encompasses two elements: a commitment to change, and the capacity for change. ... That said, efforts that produce sustainable changes should be made collaboratively with the Central Office."
- The ASCA report also concluded that the "Staff genuinely felt that change could occur if they were part of the process of planning and developing the changes. ... This agreement on the desire not only for a change but also for very similar types of change forms a very positive foundation upon which to base culture change planning and action at HDSP."

Unconstitutional policing conducted by US police departments

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

The country is engaged in a critically important conversation about community-police relations, according to a U.S. Department of Justice report.

Some of the more than 18,000 police departments across the United States are engaging in unconstitutional policing, according to the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Pattern and Practice Police Re-

form Work report published in January. Their actions, the report said, are severely undermining both community trust and public safety.

The division has entered into 40 total reform agreements in pattern-or-practice policing cases.

Twenty of those agreements have been court-enforced consent decrees, and 20 have been settlement agreements, typically known as memoranda of agreement, between the United

States and the local jurisdiction.

Of the 18 reform agreements resulting from investigations opened since 2008, all have been consent decrees, but for those in four jurisdictions (Missoula, Mont.; Suffolk County, NY.; Miami, Fla.; and Alamance, NC).

The United States Department of Justice is using police reform, police-community trust relations, and public safety as tools to accomplish these policies:

a. Investigate cases that begin with the launch of a formal investigation into a law enforcement agency to determine whether the agency is engaged in a pattern or practice of violating federal law. An investigation most often consists of a comprehensive analysis of the policies and practices of policing in a particular community, although an investigation may also focus on a specific area of policing practice.

b. If the division finds a pattern or practice of police misconduct, it issues public findings in the form of a letter or report made available to the local jurisdiction and the public. The division conducts a thorough and independent investigation into allegations of police misconduct and substantiates any conclusions it draws with evidence set forth in its public findings.

c. The division negotiates reform agreements resolving those findings, usually in the form of a "consent decree" overseen by a federal court and an independent monitoring team. The lead independent monitor is appointed by the court and usually agreed upon by both the division and the investigated party but reports directly to the court. If an agreement cannot be negotiated, the division will bring a lawsuit to compel needed reforms.

d. When the court finds that the law enforcement agency has accomplished and sustained the requirements of the reform agreement, the case is terminated. In recent years, the division's reform agreements have included data-driv-

en outcome measures designed to provide clear and objective standards for measuring success and determining whether the law enforcement agency has met the objectives of the agreement.

e. At all stages of a pattern-or-practice case, from investigation through resolution, the division emphasizes engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders, including community members and people who have been victims of police misconduct or live in the neighborhoods most impacted by police misconduct, police leadership, rank and file officers, police labor organizations, and local political leaders. Each of these groups brings a different and important perspective and plays a critical role in accomplishing and sustaining police reform.

f. In keeping with the focus on systemic problems, the division's reform agreements emphasize institutional reforms such as improving systems for supervising officers and holding them accountable for misconduct. It also emphasizes ensuring that officers have the policy guidance, training, equipment and other resources necessary for constitutional and effective policing; creating and using data about police activity to identify and correct patterns of police misconduct; and institutionalizing law enforcement agencies' engagement with and accountability to the community.

At the time of this publication, the division had 18 open reform agreements, 14 of which are court-enforced consent decrees.

FDA impounds approximately 1000 vials of Texas execution drugs

State's supply runs out after nine executions, it sues to have feds release impounded drugs

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has detained a shipment of approximately 1,000 vials of drugs intended for executions in Texas. After waiting for nearly a year and a half, Texas officials demanded an end to the delays, filing a lawsuit that seeks to force the federal government to turn over the drugs, according to a report by the *Dallas Morning News*.

"My office will not allow the FDA to sit on its hands and thereby impair Texas' responsibility to carry out its law enforcement duties," said Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

Lethal injection drugs have not been manufactured or sold by American companies in recent years, and European conglomerates no longer sell to the U.S.

"Amid the drug shortage in 2012, Texas switched from the three-drug cocktail it used since 1982 to a single overdosing injection of pentobarbital, a barbiturate, but that drug, too, is in short

supply," the report states.

The FDA intercepted a shipment of sodium thiopental, another barbiturate that the state had attempted to import from a foreign vendor since July 2015. Government officials said that the drugs lacked the required warnings and directions for use and that they needed federal approval.

According to the report, the state responded to the FDA, explaining that the drugs were legal for importation for law enforcement use. In April 2016, the FDA issued a tentative decision denying admission of the drugs. Since then, the agency hasn't issued a final decision and has kept the drugs.

"Because FDA's delay is unreasonable, the Texas Department of Correctional Justice (TDCJ) requests the Court to declare that the delay is unlawful and compel the FDA to render a final admissibility decision," the lawsuit states.

Texas officials have turned to compounding pharmacies

to make drugs. The state has also sought product from foreign providers. It has restricted public access to information about where and how it gets drugs used in lethal injections.

"The Texas Department of Correctional Justice lawfully ordered and obtained the necessary license to import drugs used in the lethal injection process, yet the FDA stopped the shipment and continues to hold it without justification," the report said.

TDCJ spokesperson Jason Clark said that the agency has enough drugs on hand to complete the nine executions scheduled for the first six months of this year.

From that point forward, "We cannot speculate on the future availability of drugs, so the agency continues to explore all options including the continued use of pentobarbital or alternate drugs to use in the lethal injection process," Clark said.

-Charles David Henry

Prop 57 proposed new credit earnings

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENDER TYPE	CURRENT CREDIT RATE	PROPOSED CREDIT RATE
Life without parole (LWOP) and condemned	0%	0%
Indeterminate offenders (lifers)	0%	20%
Violent offenders (determinately sentenced)	15%	20%
Violent third strike offenders	0%	20%
Violent offenders earning zero credit	0%	20%
Non-violent second strikers (with PC 290)	20%	33.3%
Non-violent second strikers	33.3%	33.3%
Non-violent third strikers	0%	33.3%
1/3 lifers (admissions for certain crimes before 1994)	33.3%	33.3%
Day-for-day offenders	50%	50%
Violent offenders in fire camps	15%	50%
Day-for-day lifers	50%	50%
Day-for-day minimum custody offenders	66.7%	66.7%
Day-for-day offenders in fire camps	66.7%	66.7%
Non-violent second strikers in fire camps	33.3%	66.7%

Prisoners strike to end 'prison slavery'

By David Le
Staff Writer

Inmates at dozens of prisons across the county were on strike calling for reform to end the practice of slavery in prison, *The Intercept* reported.

"There are probably 20,000 prisoners on strike right now, at least, which is the biggest prison strike in history, but the information is really sketchy and spotty," said Ben Turk, in September 2016. Turk represents the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee, who helped coordinate the inmate-led strikes on the outside.

The incarcerated strikers are hoping that their strikes will repeal the exception in the 13th Amendment that authorizes the "involuntary servitude" of incarcerated people, *The Intercept* said.

According to *The Intercept*, the issue that unified the protesters is a \$2 billion a year prison labor industry. The industry employs about 900,000 incarcerated people, paying inmates from nothing to pennies on the hour in some states.

Inmates across 11 states and 20 prisons joined the protest. Across 24 states, 40 to 50 more

prisons pledged to join in the strikes, said Pastor Kenneth Glasgow, a former inmate and supporter of the strike demonstration.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, some 400 inmates staged a peaceful protest in a Michigan prison, and 150 inmates suspected of being the "ringleaders" of the protest were transferred to other prisons.

The details of the prison strikes are obscured due to prison security, which makes it difficult to obtain information.

"What people have to realize is that these men and women inside prison — they expected to be retaliated against, but they sacrificed," Glasgow explained.

While outside supporters in many U.S. cities coordinated demonstrations in support of the inmate-led strikes, the strikes gained little attention from mainstream media, *The Intercept* said.

"A nation that imprisons one percent of its population has an obligation to know what's happening to those 2.4 million people," Ethan Zuckerman, the director of the Center for Civic Media at MIT said. "And right now, we don't know."

Governor Brown pardons more than 850 since taking office

By Salvador Solorio
Journalism Guild Writer

Gov. Jerry Brown has given more than 850 pardons since 2011. This trend contrasts with the three prior governors, who granted a total of 28 pardons, reported Laurel Rosenhall of *CAL Matters*.

Clemency applications sent to the governor describe youth indiscretions, lives of poverty, drug addiction, drug deals, accidental shootings and drunken driving. Applications also describe transformations showing devotion to living clean, steady jobs, responsible parenting and sobriety.

Governor Brown's actions reflect a swing back in favor of mercy as in Illinois, Michigan and at the federal level. President Obama commuted more sentences for people convicted of federal crimes than any president since Woodrow Wilson.

"The social landscape is definitely changing," P.S. Ruckman Jr., political scientist and editor of Pardon Power blog said. "There is kind of a sea change going on, with respect to the attitudes about clemency and pardon power."

Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez (R-Riverside), who has been critical of Brown's progressive approach to criminal justice, is not complaining. She said, "I've looked at who he is pardoning, and I can't find one particular case that jars my

anger. They've already done their time. It's not lessening their punishment, and they had to prove to the court that they are upstanding citizens and have stayed out of trouble. So I don't view that aspect of his role as governor as being soft on crime."

A pardon does not erase a criminal record but restores rights to people convicted of felonies to get certain professional licenses and serve on a jury. A pardon is not a commutation, which reduces a prison sentence.

After the Civil War in 1868, President Andrew Johnson granted a Christmas Day Pardon to everyone who could have committed treason by rebelling. Christmas time amnesty was common in the late

1800s, when prison wardens would make lists of inmates who should be freed on the holiday.

Governor Brown was criticized when he pardoned celebrity Robert Downey Jr. on Christmas Eve 2015 for narcotics crimes after Downey donated money to Brown's re-election campaign. Most pardon recipients are regular people who say in their applications that a pardon will allow them to get a better job, go hunting or volunteer in a school.

Gabriel Chin, a law professor at University of California at Davis, pointed out that America is the land of second chances. "If somebody does something when they are ... 19 or 20, are they still going to be under this shadow when they're 80?"

Jamie Lindsey establishes All Faith Religious Grounds

By Wesley Eisiminger
Staff Writer

A new religious site for Odinists, called the All Faith Religious Grounds, is now open at San Quentin.

Jamie Lindsey said he is a well-known and outspoken spokesman for the Odinists, known by both the prisoners and correctional officers. When Lindsey first arrived at San Quentin in March 2013, there were no religious grounds for him and his fellow kinsmen to hold their blots each month.

He said that he stayed in contact with the chaplain's officers, associate wardens and anyone else who would listen to him. In December 2015 his persistence finally worked, as he received an All Faith Religious Grounds on the lower yard.

Lindsey said he and his fellow kinsmen could turn this location into what they need. They had to break up concrete to make way for a new fence, get lockers and tables and plant plants to make it a place of worship. On June 21 they celebrated Summer Solstice, feeding more than 50 people. The Odinists practice hospitality whenever possible.

When asked what being an Odinist meant to him, Lindsey replied, "Odinism and Odin



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Jamie Lindsey

are like air, earth, fire and water. You need all to live. Also, I enjoy hanging out and working in the grounds with my fellow kinsmen."

He hasn't been able to go to the grounds that he helped to develop as much as he would like to, because of his end-stage liver disease along with other medical problems, he said.

He said he would like to give a special thanks to his fellow kinsmen and especially his daughter Rocsi. "Being part of this has changed me in a positive way," Lindsey said.

California's first Latino AG leads fight against presidential policies

By David Eugene Archer Sr.
Journalism Guild Writer

California Gov. Jerry Brown has appointed Congressman Xavier Becerra to be the new California attorney general, reported *The Guardian*.

Becerra is leading the state's court battles with President Donald Trump over climate change, immigration and more, the newspaper story reported.

Becerra is a 24-year veteran of Congress. He graduated from Stanford University with a law degree and also worked in the Civil Division of the California Attorney General's Office, *The Guardian* noted on Dec. 1.

He became the highest-ranking Latino member of Congress. He is the state's first Latino attorney general.

"Gov. Brown has presented me with an opportunity I cannot refuse," said Becerra. "I relish the chance to be our state's chief law enforcement officer

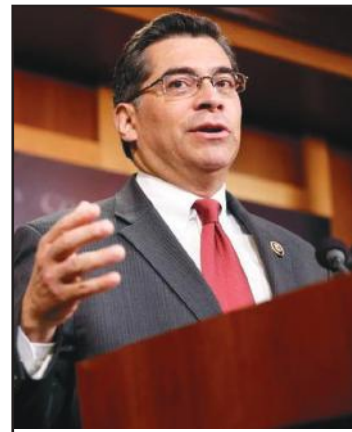


Photo by Sacramento Bee

Xavier Becerra

to protect consumers, advance criminal justice reform, and, of course, keep our families safe.

"California right now is ahead of the country when it comes to clean energy, common sense treatment of immigrants, real health security and so much more," he added.

Trump has called global warming a hoax "created by

and for the Chinese." The newspaper story stated the president has promised to deport millions of migrants and cut federal funding to "sanctuary cities," where local authorities limit their assistance to federal deportation.

Mayors of Los Angeles and San Francisco have promised to protect migrants from Trump's encroachment into local policies, *The Guardian* reported.

California Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon said, "Becerra clearly has the experience to step into this vital role. Just as important, he has great tenacity, and he respects the rights of all Californians — much-needed qualities for an attorney general, given the troubling times ahead."

Becerra replaces outgoing Attorney General Kamala Harris, who in November won the Senate seat held by Barbara Boxer, who retired this year. Becerra is 58.

Drummond

Continued from Page 1

Drummond has been volunteering at San Quentin since 2012, first developing writing and journalism classes for the Prison University Project and later for the newspaper when the managing editor asked him to help. Before then, there had been no interaction between the prison publication and the journalism school. "These are two of the oldest institutions in the state but there is little interaction between the two," said Drummond.

San Quentin was established in 1852 and two years later, in 1854, the University of California, Berkeley.

According to the university's website, the Academic Senate recognized Drummond "for his exceptional and extraordinary service towards the academic development of students from groups who are underrepresented."

"Throughout his career as an academic and journalist,

Professor Drummond has worked tirelessly to mentor and foster the participation of underrepresented minorities in the field of journalism," the Senate said in a statement, adding that his students include a Pulitzer Prize winner and *The New York Times*' China correspondent.

Drummond received his undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley in 1965 and a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University in 1966.

As a 23-year-old cub reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*, Drummond's big break came by chance during a phone call in June 1968 while he was covering the Democratic primary election between Robert F. Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy.

When Kennedy was shot and fatally wounded, Drummond had been talking on the phone with someone who was at the scene. The person dropped the receiver, but Drummond was able to figure out what happened by continuing to listen on the other end. He wrote about Kennedy's assassination in 10 min-

utes right before the 12:30 a.m. deadline.

"That was the big breakthrough and turning point in my career," said Drummond. "Prison became my main beat."

By accident, Drummond found that men in California's state prison system were educating themselves. One of these men was Eldridge Cleaver, the Black Panther Party's minister of information and author of the book *Soul on Ice*.

In October 1968, Drummond interviewed Cleaver and wrote an article titled "Eldridge Cleaver: A Black Militant Forged by Life." Two years later he wrote "Blue Denim Jungle: Prison Race Trouble."

Later, he worked for National Public Radio and won his first award in 1981 from the National Press Club for a story on Libya.

Drummond has won about 20 awards during his career, including most recently The John Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award in 2015, presented to him at the White House, and UC Berkeley's Chancellor's Award for Public Service in the 2014-2015 academic year.



Courtesy of William Drummond

UC Berkeley English Professor Donna Jones, Professor Drummond and Chair of the Academic Senate at UC Berkeley Robert Powell

Despite his many accomplishments, however, Drummond expressed his frustration with his profession in an interview with *California Magazine* in 2012. He said journalists were suffering from a "loss of faith" in the profession. "I found myself looking back on 40 years as a journalist, trying to identify a story I wrote, any story, that made anyone's life materially

better," he said. "I wasn't able to think of one."

He said that his work with *San Quentin News* brought him back to the kind of journalism that he set out to do in the beginning of his career. He said prison journalists want to get better at what they do and as a result of that, working with them is "much more of a rush than anything I've ever done."

Over \$180 billion a year spent on mass incarceration

Half the money spent on running the correctional system goes to pay staff

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

The system of mass incarceration costs the government and families at least \$182 billion every year, according to a report by the Prison Policy Institute.

“Our goal with this report is to give a hint as to how the criminal justice system works by identifying some of the key stakeholders and quantifying their ‘stake’ in the status quo,” reported the authors, Peter Wagner and Bernadette Rabuy.

The report revealed that half of the money spent on running the correctional system goes toward paying staff. This group is an influential lobby that sometimes prevents reform and whose influence and jobs are often protected even when prison populations drop.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT

- Private prison companies act as extensions of the public system. The government payroll for corrections employees is more than 100 times higher

than the private prison industry’s profits.

- The U.S. Constitution requires counsel to be appointed for defendants unable to afford legal representation, but the system only spends \$4.5 billion funding this right. Over the last decade, states have been reducing this figure even as caseloads have grown.

- Private companies that supply goods to the prison commissary or provide telephone service for correctional facilities reap profits (\$2.9 billion) — almost as much as governments pay private companies (\$3.9 billion) to operate private prisons.

- Feeding and providing health care for 2.3 million incarcerated people — representing a population larger than that of 15 different states — is expensive.

Below are some lesser-known players in the system of mass incarceration:

- Bail bond companies collect \$1.4 billion in nonrefundable fees from defendants and their families. The industry actively works to block reforms that threaten its profits,

even if reforms could prevent people from being detained in jail because of their poverty.

- Specialized phone companies monopolize contracts and charge families up to \$24.95 for a 15-minute phone call.

- Commissary vendors sell goods to incarcerated people who rely largely on money sent by family and friends, but some from in-prison jobs. This industry brings in \$1.6 billion a year.

The report shows the criminal justice fines and fees can be substantial. In at least 38

towns and cities in the U.S., more than 10 percent of all public revenue is court fines and fees. In St. Louis County, five towns generated more than 40 percent of their annual revenue from court fines and fees in 2013.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports the combined total of federal, state and local expenditures on the judicial and legal system was \$57.9 billion in 2012. Since these figures include both criminal and civil law aspects of the court system, reporters estimated

that 50 percent of court expenditures were criminal law related. After further investigation, the report adjusted this figure to \$29 billion.

With emphasis on the disparate impact on women and the poor, the report illustrates the extreme financial burden and emotional strain caused by incarceration: families, not defendants, typically pay for court-related costs, phone calls and visitation, and continue to support people upon their release, the report comments.

President’s deportation policy could increase prison population

America’s prison population is likely to rise for the first time in nearly a decade if President Donald Trump keeps his promise to detain and deport millions of immigrants, *The Associated Press* reports.

Such a policy would benefit private for-profit prison companies, the story added. After Trump commented on immigration policies, their stock prices jumped, according to a Nov. 23 *AP* report.

Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), re-branded as CoreCivic Co. (CCC), saw the biggest percentage gain on the New York Stock Exchange at 43 percent. Geo Group’s stock prices soared 21 percent.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration announced in August it would phase out private prison use, but this policy change did not affect Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

“I do think we can do a lot of privatizations and private prisons,” Trump told MSNBC in March. “It seems to work a lot better.” He did not offer any details on what that might mean for the federal system.

“Trump was saying during his 100-day plan that mandatory minimums for people re-entering the country would be set at two years — that’s going to require a longer-term need for beds,” said Michael Kodesch, a senior associate at Canaccord Genuity, Inc.

Kodesch also stated immigration detention centers are

particularly profitable because they command a higher rate for each inmate bed. ICE holds up to 34,000 immigrants awaiting deportation with about 73 percent held in private facilities.

When asked for comment, CCC spokesman Jonathan Burns said the company doesn’t take positions on proposals or legislation that determines an individual’s incarceration. Instead, the company aims to “educate lawmakers on the benefits of public-private partnership generally and the solutions CoreCivic provides.”

A Department of Homeland Security (DHS) review panel concluded immigration authorities should continue to use for-profit prisons despite safety complaints, poor conditions and inadequate medical care, reported the *Los Angeles Times*.

The DHS panel determined cost to detain immigrants currently in private and public facilities is \$3 billion, whereas using government-run prisons solely would cost up to \$6 billion.

Marshall Fitz, a member of the Center for American Progress, who helped draft the DHS report, wrote a dissent saying evidence “points directly toward the inferiority of the private prison model.” Although the report passed the advisory council, 17 of 23 members signed on to Fitz’s dissent.

—Salvador Solorio

By Salvador Solorio
Journalism Guild Writer

Donald Trump’s presidential victory has breathed new life into the for-profit prison industry. After the Department of Justice announced phasing out privately run jails in August, shares in CoreCivic, formerly known as Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), and GEO Group dropped, but the day after the election CoreCivic traded as much as 60 percent higher before settling to 34 percent, and GEO traded 18 percent higher, reported *Bloomberg News*.

Analysts at Height Securities LLC wrote a note the day after the election, “Private prisons would likely be a clear winner under Trump, as his administration will likely rescind the DOJ’s contract phase-out, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

capacity to house detainees will come under further stress.”

Mass deportation of illegal immigrants would likely run into legal obstacles, “further necessitating a sizable contract detention population,” the analysts said.

Former history teacher K.J. McElrath commented two days after the election that Trump’s victory “will be putting the agenda of privatization of our public institutions — including the corrections system — on steroids.”

According to McElrath, private prison facilities aren’t exactly new. “They were even used in England in the wake of the American Revolution. ... San Francisco Bay’s infamous San Quentin Prison started out as a private prison, built by inmates on a prison ship in the early 1850s. During the Reconstruction Era that followed the American

Civil War, Southern plantation owners, who had been deprived of slaves, began contracting for services of convicts. That system continued well into the 1900s.”

The Reagan administration’s “War on Drugs” policy resulted in increasing prison populations. After being awarded a contract to operate a jail in Hamilton County, Tenn., CCA offered to take over the Volunteer State’s entire correctional system for a bargain price of \$200 million — and a new industry was born.”

According to McElrath, “By 2011, the private prison industry had grown into a \$5 billion a year industry. This has not been lost on Wall Street, which has invested heavily in private prisons. In only 13 years, the price for CCA stock went from \$1 to over \$34 per share. Journalist Chris Hedges calls it a ‘lucrative (and hugely profitable)’ industry.”

Mayors and police chiefs push back against deportation policies

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

Mayors and police chiefs are pushing back against President Donald Trump’s proposed deportation policies.

“I don’t intend on doing anything different,” said Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*. “We are not going to engage in law enforcement activities solely based on somebody’s immigration status. We are not going to work in conjunction with Homeland Security on deportation efforts. That is not our job, nor will I make it our job.”

During Trump’s interview with CBS’ *60 Minutes*, Trump said that he plans immediately to deport approximately two to three million undocumented immigrants.

Trump has threatened to pull federal funding to states and local governments that refuse to cooperate with federal law enforcement.

Since 1979, the city of Los Angeles has pushed back

against federal immigration authorities by prohibiting officers from initiating police action with the objective of discovering a person’s immigration status.

“We can’t allow ourselves to be divided and sorted out. That’s not America”

ABC News noted on Nov. 17 that many major cities with democratic leaderships have bristled at Trump’s immigration proposals. These so-called “sanctuary cities” discourage full cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

In New York City, Mayor Bill De Blasio said in a press briefing that Trump’s proposed initiatives would create a rift between police and the communities they serve around the country.

“I reiterated to (Trump) that this city and so many cities around the country will do all we can to protect our residents and to make sure families are not torn apart,” De Blasio said.

In Seattle, Mayor Ed Murray spoke of his city’s commitment to remain a sanctuary city, “These are our neighbors... We can’t allow ourselves to be divided and sorted out. That’s not America.”

In Philadelphia, newly elected Mayor Jim Kenney signed one of his first acts with an executive order to restore the city’s status as a sanctuary city and bar most cooperation between police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

“I vow to uphold the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution, yes, by not holding people in jail without a warrant, which I think is in violation of the U.S. Constitution,” Kenney said.

Under Pres. Obama’s administration, there have been more deportations than any previous administration, *ABC News* reported.

Father and son bond over experiences of San Quentin

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Chairman

Anthony Ammons Sr. and Jr. not only share the same name. They also share the experience of being prisoners in San Quentin State Prison.

One in eight African American children has an incarcerated parent. In addition, before the age of 18, one in 10 children who has an incarcerated parent will be incarcerated themselves, according to San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership (SFCIPP).

Anthony Sr. was incarcerated in San Quentin in the early 2000s for drug-related offenses. After his release, he got his life together. Now he regularly travels at least eight hours from Los Angeles to San Quentin to visit Anthony "Ant" Jr.

"I can't help but to think that I am responsible for my son being there," said Anthony Sr. "If I was there in his life, he probably wouldn't have gotten in that car."

At age 16, Anthony Jr. was sentenced to 102 years-to-life in prison for his role in a gang-

related homicide.

"I was very irresponsible as a father," Anthony Sr. said. "It was all about me, even when I had family members, or my wife, bring him up to see me in prison."

"I want him to get all he can get out of the prison and the self-help groups"

Anthony Jr. now 32, added, "I don't blame him. We all make our own decisions. I take responsibility for what I done."

Anthony Sr. grew up alone in one of Watts' notorious projects after losing both of his parents at the age of 9. He was raised by family members but turned to gang-banging. That led to violence, drug addiction and ultimately prison.

"I have given the system over 26 years of my life going in and out of prison," Anthony Sr. said. "I understand now that my son

was looking for love, and he started looking for it in other places."

Anthony Jr. said when his father got out of prison and moved to Oakland, the son started gang-banging, thinking it would bring his father back to L.A., but that never happened.

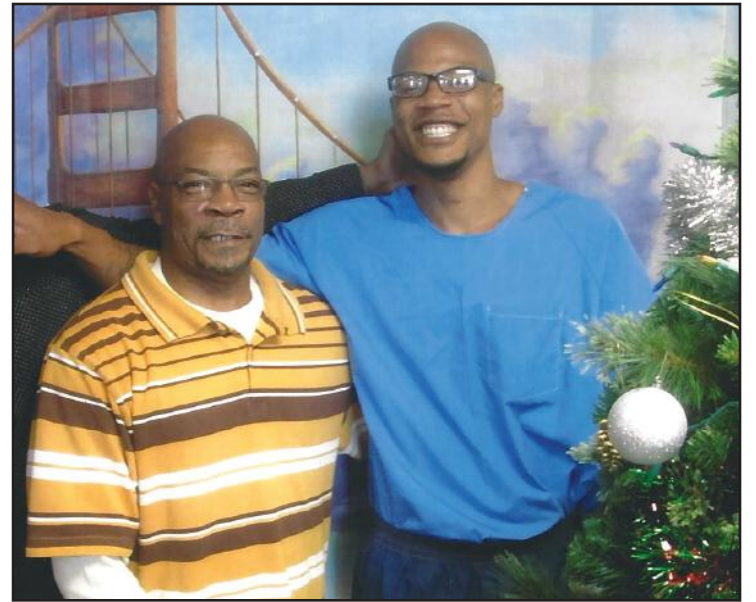
"So I tried to live up to my father's (gang) name 'Amp' and his reputation," said Anthony Jr. "My dad's homeboys knew him better than me, and they kept telling me about the things he would do."

After 15 years, at their first visit Anthony Jr. had so many questions: Why were you never there? Did you love me? Did you care?

"I was scared to ask those questions," said Anthony Jr. "I needed my brother, Michael Ammons there. But once I got that first hug from my father, it said it all; because of that hug I became a son again."

Anthony Jr. credits a San Quentin self-help group, The House of Healing, for helping him forgive his father.

"They not only teach you how to heal your inner child," he



Courtesy of Anthony Ammons

Anthony Ammons Senior and Junior

said. "But also you have to forgive your parents."

Through getting to know each other, father and son are reforming a loving bond.

"My mom (Shelly Warren) is my heart and best friend, and now my father is getting there," he said. "When I call him, no matter where he's at or what he's doing he will stop and pick up his cellphone. Even when he misses my call, he let me know what's going on and that showed me how much he has grown."

Today, Anthony Sr. says he is drug-free and is working for Caltrans, the state transportation department.

"I never thought I would

be working for the state after spending so many years in state prison," he commented.

"I went through the process of writing the warden to see my son. I'm trying to be that dad now that my kids are in their 30s. As a parent, you love your kids no matter what they do."

Anthony Sr., now being a responsible person, is setting a better example for his son.

"I want him to get all he can get out of the prison and the self-help groups. I want him to get out and not look back," said Anthony Sr. "Because one of the hardest things I have to do now is walk away from my son after a visit."

Letters To The Editor



Editor:

The January 2017 book review of Hannah Arendt's book regarding Adolf Eichmann was going well until the senior editor began spouting off about the president of the United States of America. This leads us to believe that the senior editor is a member of the third and unofficial national political party, "The Mediocratic Party."

Issue is taken with the following:

"That being said I couldn't help but feel uneasy with the negatively tainted rhetoric coming from the U.S. president-elect against Mexicans and Muslims and its similarity to 1930s Germany's vicious criticisms against the Jews that resulted in the holocaust."

The Holocaust was the product of a psychopath attempting genocide of an entire race of people. Many of my people were needlessly slaughtered because they didn't fit the psychopath's ideal of a pure white race.

The president is not against Mexicans; he is against illegal aliens. It is a crime to enter the United States of America outside of proper procedures. My ancestors, like many Americans, came here legally through Ellis Island. They applied for U.S. citizenship the proper way. They did not scale a wall and sneak in unannounced. If someone steals something, they are guilty of a crime. If they are not caught for that theft for 10, 15 or 20 years, are they suddenly not guilty of committing the crime?

The president is not against Muslims; he is against radicalized Muslim terrorists. It is the duty of the office of the president of the United States of America to protect the citizens of the United States from all threats, both foreign and domestic. The president is anti-terrorist, and it makes no difference to him what a person's ethnicity or faith is.

The senior editor then would potentially chastise "law-abiding government workers" for "executing to the best of his or her ability the full force of the law in the United States." Apparently, in his view, laws were made to be broken.

To "think about millions of undocumented people in America who are in peril of deportation"... Peril? If you run a red light while driving, then you are in "peril" of receiving a citation; that's how the law works. Maybe next time you won't run the light and potentially kill somebody!

To compare (Trump) to Adolf Hitler is completely uncalled for, unwarranted, and unprofessional.

J. Weston

Dear J.A. Riccardi:

After receiving your letter to the editor regarding December 2016's article about Sgt. Cuevas, members of the editorial board felt it was necessary to print it in *San Quentin News*. In addition, I felt the need to respond personally, as I cannot imagine how it must have felt being on Death Row. I would assume that it is a very deserted and lonely place.

I spoke to Sergeant Cuevas after your letter was printed and he said that he remembered you. He said he wishes you well where you are. He also commented on how he would sometimes stop by your cell and others. He made sure to speak to everyone who wanted to talk. For you to recognize that a correctional officer took time to speak to you when he didn't have to seems unforgettable. I also want to highlight the fact that prisoners and correctional officers work together through jobsites and programs. It is a working relationship that sometimes results in correctional officers writing letters of recommendation to the parole board for those prisoners who have made significant changes in their lives. So, thank you for your letter and the promotion of positive behavior.

I hope that we can get Ms. Roberta from KPIX Channel 5 News and Sgt. Cuevas to meet in the near future.

Richard "Bonaru" Richardson
Editor-in-Chief

Prisons trying to help fathers re-establish relationships

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

There are 24 million children in America, and one out of three lives without their biological father in the home, the U.S. Census Bureau calculated.

When the father is absent it can lead to the following: behavioral problems, abuse and neglect, infant mortality, substance abuse, dropping out of high school, obesity and increased likelihood of going to prison, according to a study by the National Fatherhood Initiative.

To help remedy the problem, some prisoners at California State Prison-Solano have joined a parenting class called Parenting Inside Out.

In class, the men found that to be a good father starts with digging deep into one's own relationship with one's parents, according to a Justine Lee article, "Being a father, from Inside Prison," written for KALW.

When asked about their own experiences of being disciplined as children, the men said they believed discipline was necessary but so was explaining "why" to the child, the article stated.

"Because parenting doesn't come with a handbook," stated inmate Abraham Gasper. "And a lot of times our parents only gave us what their parents gave them, and so this is an

opportunity to learn things that we didn't necessary receive from our parents."

Dameion "Nation" Brown, a former Solano inmate, added, "The things that I could not give my children, I gave to the young people in prison."

He was convicted of physically abusing his children and was sentenced to 23 years-to-life. He learned in parenting class of the harmful effects of corporal punishment.

Brown was granted parole after Dr. Mary Jo Bauen, who works for Community Works West and directed the parenting classes at Solano, advocated for him.

Since being paroled, Brown has been hired as a case manager by Community Works West, an organization that helps formerly incarcerated adults from 18 to 25. He appeared last summer in Marin Shakespeare Company's production of "Othello."

At San Quentin State Prison, L. Harrison was interviewed concerning the effect of incarcerated separation from his children.

"I believe due to the fact that my father was not in my life," Harrison said, "I didn't have that role model to emulate what a good man is supposed to be. An important aspect of being in a child's life is to help him to identify with who he is and his importance to his family."

Youth Offender Program gains traction at San Quentin

Kid CAT Speaks!

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

Youth Offender Program (YOP) inmates between the ages of 18 and 23 are embracing a program specially created for them at San Quentin.

"We started a support group specifically for YOPs originally with three guys, and in three months the attendance exploded. The YOPs have been recruiting and are spreading the word and coming up with ideas about creating a curriculum," said Charlie Spence, Kid CAT chairman.

"What's unique about this program is that prison officials aren't building it. The youth offenders are the ones taking the initiative to expand the program, and it is something they want, which is perfect because no one knows what these young men want besides themselves," said Spence.

"The program is very important," said 20-year-old

inmate Summit Lal. "Most of the programs here in San Quentin are geared toward prisoners who are serving life sentences, which is a problem, because I'm not a lifer.

"I started attending the support group in May. At first I felt that I had nothing to offer, but since coming here, I learned how to put my potential to work and not let life pass me by."

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the YOP support group is that the participants drive it. The participants determine the direction of the group, topics to cover, and who can be their mentors.

Selected peer mentors were once young men when they started their adult sentences. YOP mentors share a wealth of prison experiences to help guide the next generation of young offenders toward a path of rehabilitation.

"As a mentor, I often share my experience of spending six years in the SHU (Security Housing Unit) for gang validation to show them what can happen when they are engaged in a



Photo by Ralpheale Casale

Youth Offender Program facilitators and participant (third from right)

certain lifestyle," said George Torrez, 34, YOP mentor.

"I encourage these young men to think about the consequences of their decisions and not resort to violence to deal with issues and to get their GEDs."

Meeting twice a month on Sundays, the YOP support group discusses a range of topics such as reentry, developing coping skills, and one-on-one mentoring.

"The most important thing for me are the outside resources, because once we walk out of these walls that's the real challenge," said Mauricio Salazar, 22, YOP participant.

Commenting on the group, Juan Juarez, Kid CAT volunteer, said, "Since my time here, I have seen people change their lives.

"I take what I learn here back into my community to end gang

violence and help kids in my neighborhood avoid the route of prison," said Juarez. "I also use things I learn here to teach teachers and administrators in northern Sacramento how to deal with students with behavior problems, and it has been successful."

The YOP support group is staffed with 12 peer mentors and four YOP facilitators with an average attendance of 25 YOPs.

They Call Us Monsters sheds light on juvenile reform

Aiming to de-stigmatize California's incarcerated juveniles, a documentary entitled *They Call Us Monsters* sheds light on the lives of those incarcerated and the state's legislative debate over juvenile sentencing reform.

"Juan Gamez, Antonio Hernandez and Jara Nava are the youthful offenders at the heart of...a new documentary that follows their lives in a Los Angeles juvenile detention center," *Youth Today* reported.

"Their stories are framed by their participation in a screenwriting class taught by Gabriel

Cowan, one of the documentary's producers — and by the debate among California lawmakers over a bill that would grant young offenders with lengthy terms a chance at parole after 15 years."

The film discussed Senate Bill 260, which became law in 2013. Supporters of the measure included the film's director, Ben Lear. He said, "I feel as a society that we do have the obligation to provide (juveniles) an opportunity to earn a second chance."

Juan and Jarad were 16 when they were arrested; Antonio

was 14. Juan was charged with murder, while Jarad and Antonio were accused of attempted murder.

"Juan's older brother drew him into gang life as a child in their native El Salvador, before they moved to California. Antonio, a methamphetamine addict, recounts seeing a man shot to death in front of him when he was 8, but insists he's not traumatized: 'I guess you do kind of get used to it.' When he was 12, Jarad found his stepfather trying to stab himself to death — an unsuccessful attempt that nonetheless

resulted in the breakup of his family," *Youth Today* reported.

Not shying away from the subjects' culpability, the film shows Jarad's victim, who describes waking up paralyzed, and shows her trying to navigate in her apartment in a wheelchair.

The film includes surveillance video of the killing committed by Juan, who now says, "I really was a monster."

Antonio admits he feels no remorse for his actions and began getting into trouble after his release.

Lear was inspired to make the documentary after an invitation to sit in on a scriptwriting class run by InsideOUT Writers, a Los Angeles organization that teaches creative writing to incarcerated kids.

Expecting to meet scary characters like those in the movies, Lear found merely "a classroom full of kids." Lear

now sits on InsideOUT Writers advisory board.

Since the film's completion, California voters approved Proposition 57, which takes away from prosecutors the decision on whether a teen should stand trial as an adult and puts it in the hands of a Juvenile Court judge.

"California seems to be well on the right path, but there are a lot of states that are much further behind in that conversation," Lear said. "I want the film to reach those legislative buildings, those communities, to start a conversation around this population and how it should be treated."

Lear acknowledges that these kids "have to do their time" and "they have to pay for what they did." But he emphasizes the point that we "don't know how they will turn out to be when they are 25, 26 or 27."

—John Lam

Dear Kid CAT

Dear Kid CAT,

I have been reading your articles for the past 19 months, and it has opened my consciousness to better myself and express that remorse we lifers need, so that one day, we can re-enter society with a healthy mind.

I have been incarcerated since the age of 16 for murdering a rival gang member, and I am ashamed that it took me a long time to change my perspective regarding the death of my victim.

Throughout my incarceration, I have been an active gang member and been to the SHU (Security Housing Unit) because I was so narrow-minded that my gang membership was my identity. In 2011, I decided to disassociate myself from the street and prison gang. It has been a long journey to get to where I am today without that false image I dressed myself in.

Today, I am a chairman for a lifer group here at my institution, and I would like to make a humble request: Can we get the privilege of duplicating your program (Kid CAT)? I will appreciate your support in helping us transform our lives and become pro-social human beings for our families, society and the many victims we created by our criminal behavior.

On behalf of my group, we all want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Sincerely,

Jose O.
Chairman of Lifer Group
Chuckawalla Valley State Prison

Dear Jose,

My name is Charlie Spence, and I am the new chairman of Kid CAT. I first want to thank you for your letter and commend you and the positive changes that you have made in your life. Your letter also shows that you care and are genuinely searching to find ways to improve the lifer group that you all have there, and we want to commend your leadership for that.

We are currently working to create a facilitator's manual for the curriculum, which we hope to complete by the middle of 2017. Once we are done, we will send you a copy.

Take care and keep up the good work!

The Beat Within
A Publication of Writing and Art from the Inside



Kid CAT and *The Beat Within* hold monthly writing workshops. *The Beat Within* conducts writing workshops in juvenile detention centers throughout the country. Kid CAT Speaks will publish one topic each month. Your writing should reflect a positive message that may help the youth make a better decision in life. Your stories will be read by the youth in detention centers. If published, you will receive a free copy of the publication. Your story can make a difference. Tell *The Beat Within* you read about them in Kid CAT Speaks!

The Relationship - What relationships matter the most to you? Tell us about the most important relationships you have and with whom. What makes them important to you? What have you recently done to support these relationships? How can you maintain and improve them? Describe these important relationships and the role you play.

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

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

Inmates find opportunity at Folsom's Braille program

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

Since 1989, Folsom State Prison's Braille program has been transforming lives by transcribing books into Braille for the blind through the California Prison Industry Authority.

It started when the Folsom Lions Club was creating audio books on tape. Select prisoners would read the books for blind people like Amelia Diaz. Her favorite reader was an inmate named William. After listening to William read, she would write back to him in Braille, thanking him for the work he did.

Not able to read her notes, he asked if the prison would teach him how to read Braille. The warden at Folsom approved and the Braille program began, according to a Jan. 17 story in the *Folsom Telegraph*.

Inmates first learn literary Braille and must pass a certification process. Later they learn the notations for mathematics



Courtesy of CDCR

Inmate inserting words into videos for hearing impaired

or science or music, which often use similar dot configurations for completely different meanings. Each separate Braille course requires lengthy study and certification

The United English and Braille Certification process has only 600 people certified. Inmate Layale Shellman has

received six certifications in six years.

"I once, during a drug-induced state, not making excuses, but I stole from a blind woman," said Shellman. "In 1980, I became a Christian, and this is one of the ways you have to make amends," he said, tearing up.

"Nemeth (for science notation) takes about one to one-and-a-half years to complete and there are only 400 to 500 people left doing it," said Shelton. "There are about 60 people in the world who have ever done music, and currently there are about 30 who are active. There are about 12 people in the world who have all the certifications and we have three of them here."

"Some of us came up because it's a career; some of us came up here because it is away from the madness. This place is quiet," noted Shellman. "I have been in prison for 38 years. I was a biker; a bad dude. I killed a man in Florida and I am doing time here."

Inmate Samuel Martinez came to prison at 18 years old, and is a former gang member.

His efforts at self-rehabilitation include a college degree, several trades and two certifications in Braille.

"I used to have life without parole, but my sentence was re-

duced and now I'm going home in a month," he said in a recent interview. "A lot of my accomplishments and positive things I've done in here have shown that I am no longer a threat to society and I can give back."

"I am convinced that even in prison someone can be a success story and continue that on the streets. It's not just a dead end in here in prison. I have really learned from the blind project and it has been the thing that has really inspired me the most."

Martinez didn't have any prior job experience prior to incarceration.

"In here we have to meet deadlines, we have cubicles, we have coworkers and the work is meaningful. I really get a sense of responsibility here and I really do feel like I am working at a real job," he commented.

Martinez's goal upon release is to work with the Department of Education and community colleges.

Business owner shares his knowledge and energy at DVI

By J.R. Abernathy
Contributing Writer

Three days a week, you will usually find volunteer and business owner Scott Bohlmann devoting his valuable time, knowledge and positive energy to inmates at Deuel Vocational Institution (DVI) in Tracy, Calif.

"Prison is my sanctuary," said Bohlmann, 54, explaining why he volunteers his time to teach three different classes to inmates at DVI.

"I'm not into altruism. I do this for myself...it helps me."

Bohlmann, who is White and has a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Mary's College in California, teaches an African-American history class composed primarily of Black inmates.

The other two courses he teaches are philosophy and creative writing with Keith and Kent Zimmerman, twin brothers who have been teaching creative writing at San Quentin State Prison for the past 14 years. This year Bohlmann

intends to add Latin American history as well. The African-American history class is based on an undergraduate course taught at Yale University titled "African-American History: From Emancipation to the Present." The purpose of the course is to examine the African-American experience in the United States from 1863 to the present. Prominent themes include the ending of the Civil War, the Reconstruction era, the urbanization experience of Blacks, the development of the civil rights movement and an examination of notable and historical Black leaders.

"I just wanted to do something different as a challenge. It's not like I have a background in Black history studies. I came in knowing nothing about Black history. I'm learning right along with the students. These students have taught me more about the experience of being Black in America than I could've ever learned from a book," Bohlmann said of his inspiration to teach the class.

Bohlmann began volunteering at DVI more than 20 years ago to help support the mechanical drafting classes being offered to inmates at the time. He stopped only because the classes shut down. In 2013, he returned to DVI under the condition that he wouldn't be obligated to teach any particular subject.

"I'm here to make myself useful in the capacity of a volunteer. I'm a tool for DVI," Bohlmann said.

Currently, Bohlmann is in talks with prison officials about establishing a mechanical engineering program that includes computer-aided design (CAD) at DVI. The CAD program is a 15-month course that trains inmates in engineering design drawing and the use of CAD software. Participants will learn how to design 3-D images, for example. Bohlmann is the owner of a company called Valley Engineering Group (VEG), in Livermore, Calif. VEG provides mechanical engineering resources to companies in the San Francisco Bay Area and

elsewhere across the nation.

"There's a high demand for mechanical designers nationwide, and there are certainly not enough mechanical designers in Silicon Valley," Bohlmann said.

CAD doesn't require knowledge of physics, chemistry or biology. Inmates just need to understand basic arithmetic, have mechanical aptitude and a good work ethic. The particular skill sets are selected in accordance with industry demand. With time and repetition, the development of such skills will lead to proficiency and marketable skills that are applicable to the real-world job market.

"In my experience, people do really well after receiving hands-on training in design. Providing this training is something we've done for years at VEG and find those with the training tend to out-pace those without it," Bohlmann said. His goal is to provide inmates with training skills more in line with current technology, which means that inmates will have a better chance of obtaining more advanced and higher-paying jobs upon their release.

"Not every inmate wants to spend eight hours a day working outside on a roof. There are a lot of smart men in here. These guys want to seek something different other than laborious jobs after their release. My goal would be to help provide that to them."

"The students here at DVI are awesome. I can't even explain how much gratitude I have for these guys. They've given so much more to me than I could ever give back," Bohlmann said.



Courtesy of Scott Bohlmann

Scott Bohlmann

"Scott is very uplifting, informative and inspirational," said Black student Damian Scott. "He provided us with something that is lacking in the prison system ... which is the love for the self. I consider him a friend. He is genuine, honest and transparent."

"To me, Scott is innovating," said Ray McClenton. "He's trying to provide us with modern-day learning tools and technology that will enable us to work with our minds instead of our hands."

Radciffe Walker, who studies Black history, philosophy and creative writing, says Bohlmann's understanding of Black history impresses him because he's White. "He's passionate about where we [Blacks] come from, and he's very interested in the cultural barriers between Whites and Blacks. His demeanor in teaching gives me a sense of comfort with him being so knowledgeable with history. I'm proud that Scott is teaching us Black history from Yale University."

Tehachapi gets upgrades with security and medical clinics

Tehachapi State Prison inmates may soon find themselves under new security cameras, according to a *Tehachapi News* article.

"By knowing they (inmates) are on camera, they will generally be less likely to do something inappropriate" stated Lt. Brian Parriott.

Due to an inspection of the prison, a Kern County Grand Jury recommended that California Correctional Institution (CCI) in Tehachapi repair the roads leading to the facility and also recommended upgrading issues with fire suppression

and security cameras in all visiting areas.

"We knew that these things needed to be fixed and have been working to fix them, but money is always the issue," Lt. Brian Parriott said. He added that cameras are already used in some of the visiting rooms to help monitor inmates. Installing new ones is an extra measure.

The cameras throughout the institution, except facility B's visiting area, record in loops and are kept for 48 hours, except facility D, which is kept for 20 days.

Other noted upgrades were the construction of new medical clinics and examination rooms. "Currently the prison has been able to conserve water by decreasing usage by 38 percent," the grand jury noted.

Tehachapi was built in the 1920s and '30s, then added on to in the '60s. The requirements have obviously changed in the years since, Lt. Parriott said.

The grand jury finished with the statement that "in spite of its age, the prison remains a very functional institution."

-Harry C. Goodall Jr.

Graduation brings media, celebs and business executives

Code.7370

Continued from Page 1

Dozens of business leaders, tech executives, venture capitalists and government workers wandered through the classroom inside the California Prison Industry Authority building, talking to the graduates and looking over their shoulders while the coders were working on their presentations.

"This is the kind of program that we should be doing at all 35 institutions," said Ralph Diaz, undersecretary of operations for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. "These are the opportunities that we are seeking for all 35 institutions."

Meskan sat in front of his double-screen computer as a multi-player chess game's pieces floated on its screen.

International business analyst Fernando Figueriredo praised Meskan's coding skills.

"I was extremely surprised considering that he has limited available material," said Figueriredo, who consults for the Brazilian government on its farming practices. "When he's outside, he will increase his knowledge, because of access to information." He added.

"When I heard about this program, I thought it was a great idea to put the prisoners on the right side. There is a huge need for coders in the Bay Area. It would be a way to help local companies and a great way to give prisoners a new beginning."

Meskan said he spends a lot of his spare time reading everything he can find that relates to coding.

Code.7370 computers cannot be connected to the internet, a fact of life which creates a huge challenge in teaching programming techniques, according to supervising instructor Jon Gripshover.

Meskan also met with RocketSpace personnel who appeared interested in the fact that he was getting out of prison.

RocketSpace employs former San Quentin prisoners Kenyatta Leal and Vinh Nguyen.

Leal was praised for "keeping everything running smoothly," one of the RocketSpace



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Chris Redlitz addresses business executives, community members, and media outlets

executives said.

"If you treat a man as he is, he will remain as he is," Leal told the graduating class and audience. "But, if you treat a man as he can and should be, he will become as he can and should be."

RocketSpace is an incubator workspace for startup companies. It also assists larger companies that are looking at smaller companies for ideas.

The chief of Workforce Development for California's prison industries, Milo Fitch, said, "These programs give us the kind of outcome that we want as a society. Most prisoners are looking for a way out. People who take advantage of these programs find that they can fit in with mainstream culture."

California has about 100 different businesses in its prisons that employ about 27,000 inmates.

"The heart of the business is the offender who never comes back to prison," said Charles Pattillo, general manager of California Prison Industry Authority. "Our programs have one of the lowest recidivism rates in the country, which is about 7.3 percent."

Pattillo pointed out that the graduating class saves California taxpayers about \$520,000 per year.

He credited Code.7370 to Chris Redlitz and Beverly

Parenti.

"It's surreal seeing Kenyatta here, not in blue," Redlitz said. "We first met in a broom closet in the chapel, and he was serving a life sentence. There were a lot of naysayers, but the co-operation between this public/private partnership should be a model for the country." Referring to the graduates, he joked, "This is not fake news. These are real stories."

Pattillo added, "When they get out of prison, we don't want to ever see them again. No one wants to see them come back to prison. We want them to get out

and make us proud."

Stockton Mayor Michael Tubbs said he was impressed by the opportunity for the inmates to learn skills so that when they return to their communities they could fit in.

"It's a challenge for me to provide opportunities for folks before they get to prison," Tubbs said. "I'm not surprised by the coding skills of people in San Quentin."

In addition, in attendance was entrepreneur Divine, who created BLAK card (Building Leverage Acquiring Knowledge).

Devine, an ex-offender and former drug dealer, said before meeting Redlitz and Parenti, he had only an eighth-grade education.

It was the third visit to San Quentin for vocalist Antoinette "Butterscotch" Clinton, a longtime fan of the Last Mile program, to support Redlitz and Parenti.

"I find myself getting emotional listening to the stories and through this program find a path that they are passionate about," Clinton said. "It makes me happy to know that the cycle can be broken."



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Jon Gripshover talks to students after the graduation



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Graduate Jad Salem



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Graduate Chung Kao



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Graduate Cordiare McDonald

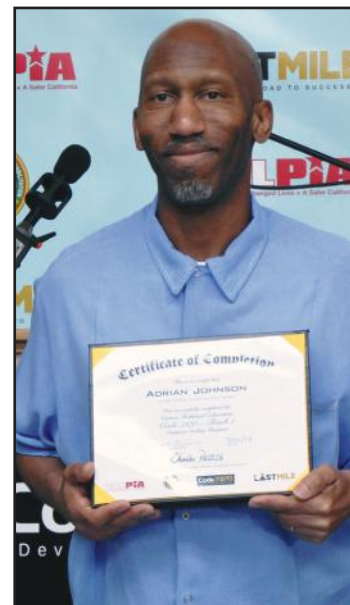


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Graduate Adrian Johnson



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Graduate John Levin

Titans of CNC Academy opens

Titan

Continued from Page 1

After being released, he faced a problem many offenders returning to the community face—finding employment.

His first gig was as a machinist paid \$9 an hour. It was not enough to support his family. Motivated by a serious work ethic, he developed new machining techniques for the shop. His pay quickly shot up to \$14 an hour; a meager raise compared to the increase in company profits generated by his new techniques. Gilroy's ingenuity inspired him to start his own company in 2005.

He attributes his success in building a multi-million dollar company to his faith in God. He combined innovative machining techniques with the ability to communicate to both government and corporate America an understanding of the challenges parolees face in finding employment.

Gilroy noticed that a lot of machining jobs were being outsourced to other countries.

He knew that part of his plan—helping incarcerated people develop well-paying jobs skills—would bring jobs back to America.

Titan America in Rocklin teamed up with California prison officials and industry experts to create Titans of CNC Academy. Its graduates can earn from \$25 to \$40 per hour. "You can earn even more if you're a top-notch programmer," Gilroy said.

Titans of CNC Academy lessons are available online for free through a reality show on MAVTV called TITAN—American Built, which features programs about businesses that help to revive American manufacturing. The software is free to any school that wants it.

Prison administrators say they want parolees to have viable work skills so they won't return to a life of crime.

The plan's architect, Michael Valdez, said the strategy is working.



Titans of CNC-Academy's Main floor at San Quentin's Main

Titans of CNC Academy is part of the state's Career Technical Education (CTE) program. Valdez is its vice principal and statewide manager.

"It's not cheap; we had to upgrade from the 1940s technology. All of the trades have been upgraded. The funding came from federal grants. Those grants, along with departmental savings, allow

us to pay for the upgrades," Valdez said.

Recidivism rates are falling for CTE participants, according to Valdez. He cites a drop from about 70 percent in 2012 to about 45 percent today.

"When the investment began, there were 181 programs that provided training to 5,500 inmates. Today, 304 programs provide training to 9,000

inmates. But, we need to do more," Valdez said. "There are 129,000 men and women in California prisons."

"It is important for us to be creative to get folks access to CTE training near their exit so the skills are viable," Valdez said. "That's not to say longer-term inmates should not get the training, too. Longer-term inmates could learn the skills so,

that the 'each-one-teach-one' method takes place."

Carlos Smith, 49, has been at San Quentin since 2014. He is serving a life sentence.

"I'm taking this course because I'll need a trade to show the board that I am employable. But more important, this state-of-the-art training gives me a usable trade that I can take to the streets. This new stuff gives



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Lucas "Luke" Colondres studying the Autodesk program on his computer



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Titan Gilroy instructing SQ vocational students in the academy's classroom

doors to inmates at San Quentin



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Maintenance Vocational Building



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Machine Shop instructor Jason Johnson



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

A vocational student setting up a work piece for machining

me the advantage that I need to be successful. It also makes me feel like I'm giving back to the community, instead of tearing it down. Titan has a beautiful spirit. He comes from the same cloth as we do, being an ex-convict. If he can do it, I know that I can, too."

With 22 years of machining experience, local Bay Area resident Jason Johnson will be

teaching the class.

"I think it's great. It's offering the guys a trade and learning a trade," Johnson said. "They will be getting back into society to make the most of the time they've spent in prison."

On the first day of class, a top software designer helped get things underway as Gilroy and Johnson walked around helping the students learn a

machining program. Students used touch screen laptop computers to manipulate drawings from 2-D to 3-D as the Titans of CNC Academy film crew documented the events for its online classes.

Fernando Lopez, 36, has been incarcerated four years and will be released shortly.

"This class is the opportunity for me to do something better

when I get out," Lopez said.

The students learn how to make the part with the correct dimensions and various patterns.

Philip Senegal, 49, is getting instruction from Gilroy on how to use the program.

"I have no computer skills at all," Senegal said. He has been incarcerated 28 years. "This is interesting and challenging."

Daniel Lucas "Luke" Colondres, 30, has been incarcerated 6 years.

"This is a job opportunity on the streets, and it means doing something constructive with my time while incarcerated," Colondres said. "When I get on the streets, I want to step right into a job, so I don't have to struggle."

-Juan Haines

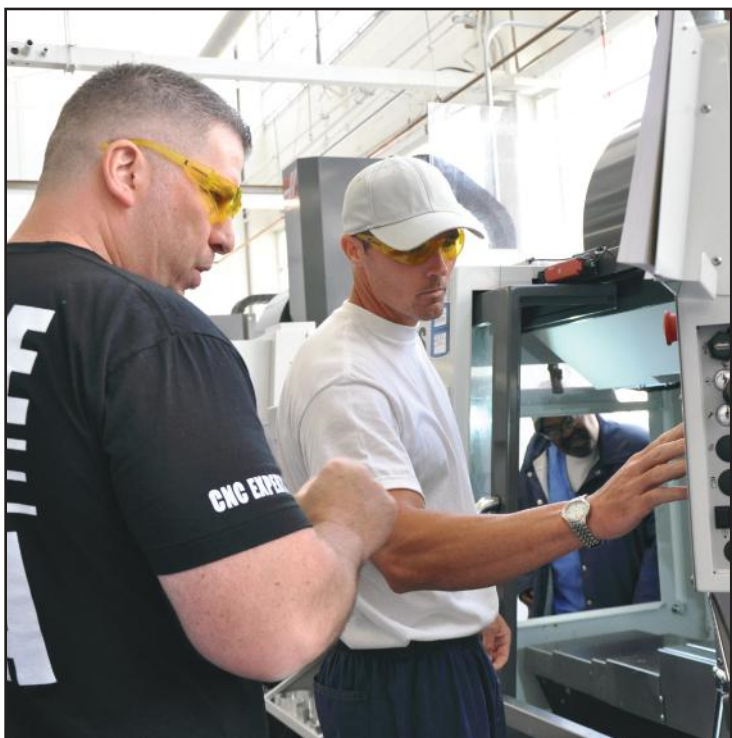


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

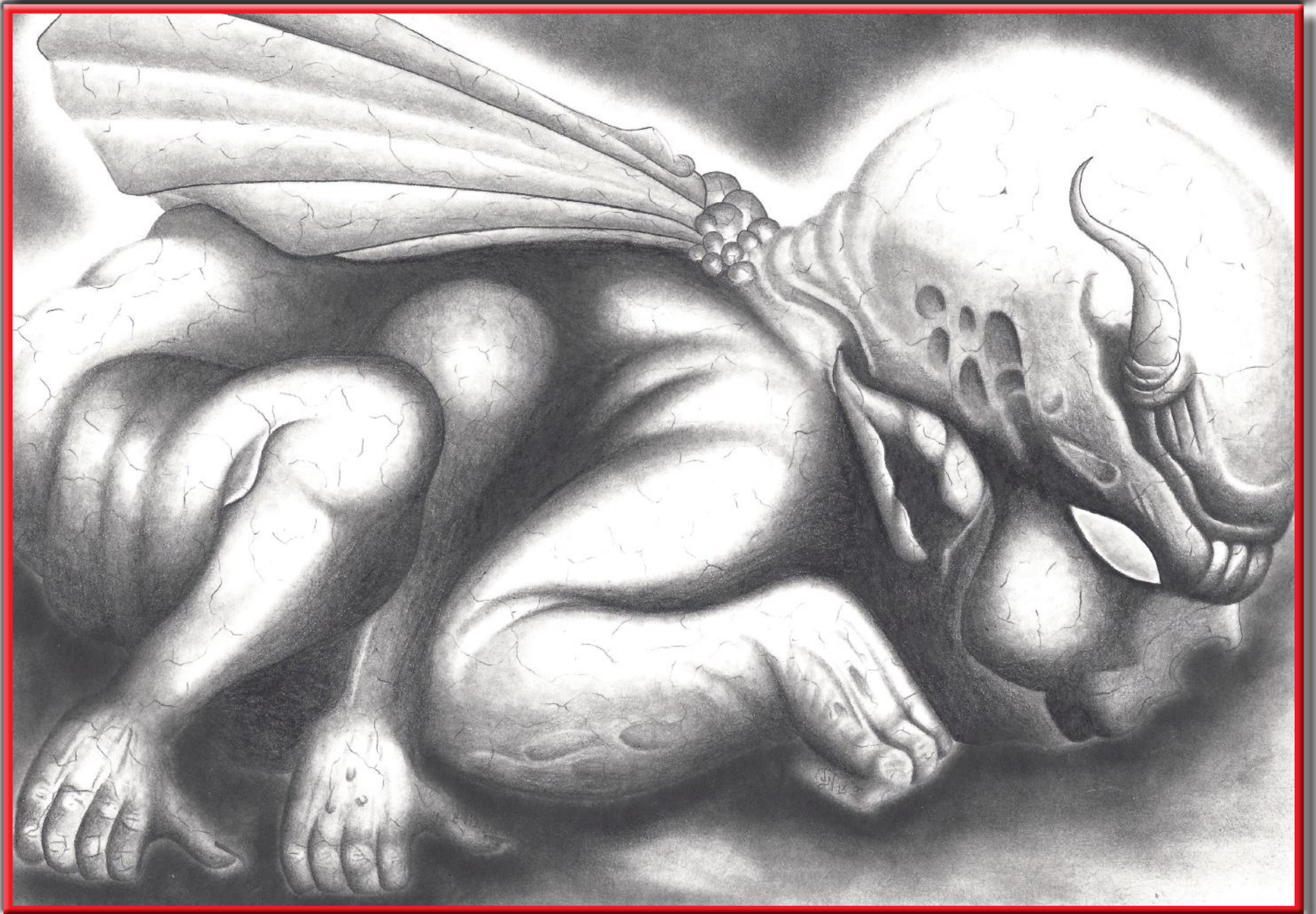
Titan Gilroy overseeing a student as he operates a CNC machine



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Students waiting with anticipation for final product from the new machine

Arts & Entertainment



Artwork titled Meth Monster done with pencil

Drawing by James Norton

Attention All Artists:

We are taking submissions of artwork to be placed in the *San Quentin News*. This includes, drawings, paintings, sketches, etc. Reminder, we will not take any artwork with explicit content. Please bring your artwork down to *San Quentin News* in Education on the Lower Yard. If you cannot come, send your artwork via U Save 'EM with your information. If you're sending your work from another institution, please mail it to: San Quentin News, 1 Main Street, San Quentin, CA 94964



Photo by Bo Kovitz

Bo Kovitz's cat Ziggy with the SQ News and Trump doll



Courtesy of Bev Shelby

Bev Shelby's cat Finn perusing the *San Quentin News*

Snippets

Panda are by far the most expensive animals to keep in America, five times more than the elephant which is the second most expensive.

Aichmophobia is the fear of needles or pointed objects

Oenology (pronounced *EE-nawl-oh-gee*) is the study and science of wine making.

Pope Clement VII was pope from 1523 until he ate a poisonous deathcap mushroom in 1534 and died.

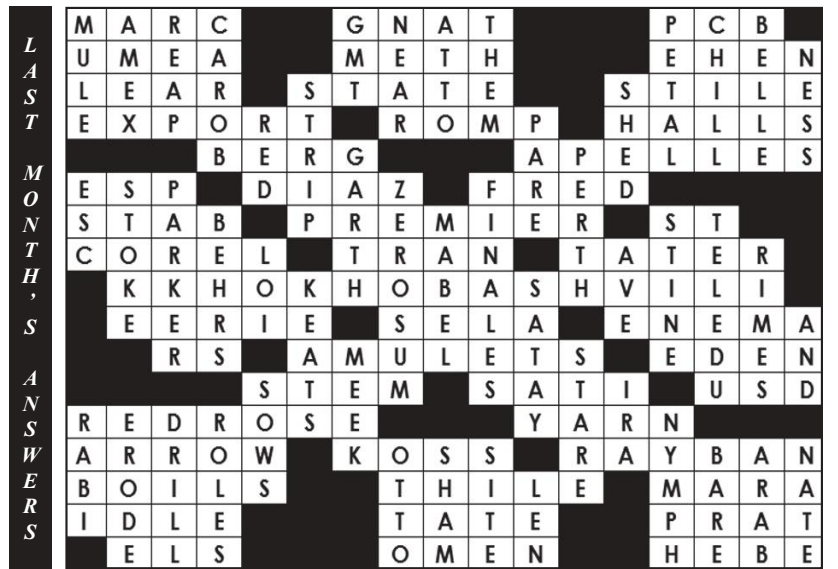
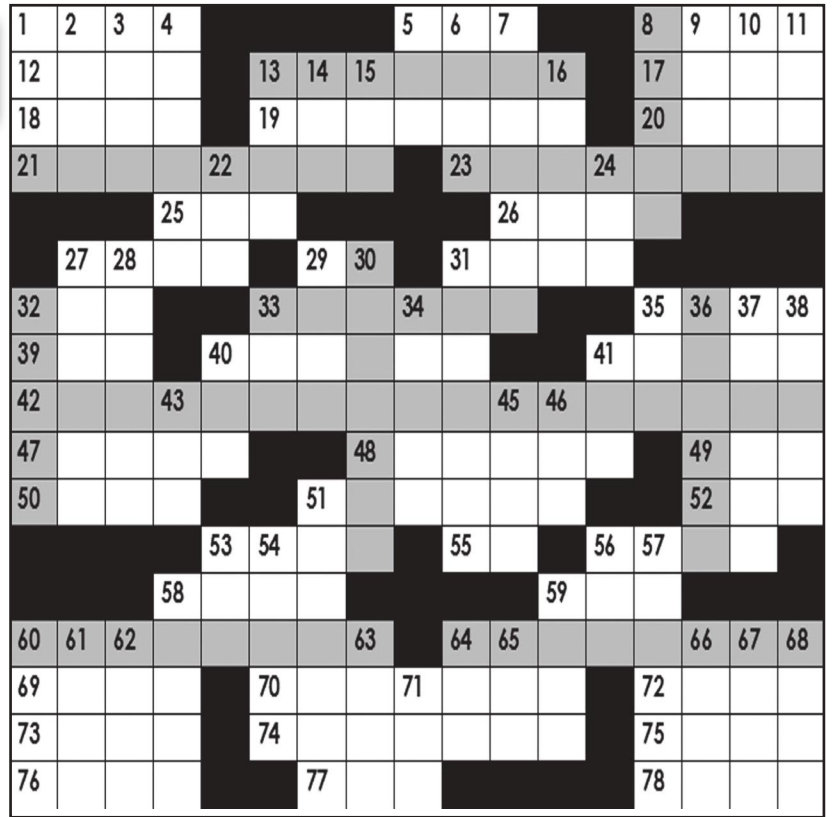
Lincoln held a liquor license and even operated several taverns.

Yodels require breaks between high and low notes and it's the epiglottis, a human physiological feature, which allows for emphasizing the breaks.

WORDCROSS PUZZLE

By Jonathan Chiu / Edited by Jan Perry

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Across</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SNL Trump impersonator Baldwin 5. Dog's org. (Abbrev.) 8. A type of Japanese noodles 12. Oldest capitol of Japan 13. Weekend radio game show about the meaning of words 17. Dried grape (ML) 18. L-shaped pipes 19. Northern kingdom in GOT's Westeros 20. Strong wind 21. Variety show _____, <i>Don't Tell Me</i> 23. Internet speakers' conferences that's also broadcasts on the radio 25. Daily record 26. Chow time offering 27. No worries 29. Oil spill company (Init.) 31. Subdue 32. MGM's lion 33. Host Rachel of 42 Across 35. White guy (Slang) 39. Type of alphabet or beer (Abbrev.) 40. City in N Ohio, on Lake Erie 41. Diem that makes the most of your day 42. Network and news variety show hosted by 33 Across and Steve Inskeep 47. Classroom necessities 48. Synonym for 1 Down 49. Diagnostic category in a medical system (Abbrev.) 50. A son of Zeus and Hera 51. Kathy Bates and James Caan movie 52. Locale in Honshu SW of Hiroshima 53. Suffer 55. Mercedes 2-door model 56. Rudolph of <i>Bridesmaids</i> 58. State of mind 59. Precedes the fan or the ground running. 60. Robert Hurlwich hosts this storytelling show 64. Terry Gross' radio show 69. What you run on someone (2 words) 70. Actor Lawrence 72. Within (Med) 73. Artificial likeness (Abbrev.) 74. <i>A Seat at the Table</i> artist 75. Refuse 76. Contradict 77. Quagmire 78. On the lee side of the ship | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once more 2. Best picture nominee _____ <i>Land</i> 3. Locale in Italy near the of Gulf di Genova 4. Stana Katic TV detective series 5. A type of bible (Abbrev.) 6. Monetary unit of Myanmar 7. Brand name of coolers 8. Host Peter of 21 Across 9. Proceeds history or surgery 10. Defraud 11. European beers inclu 39 Across 13. Going alone 14. A type of sushi tuna 15. Nonetheless 16. Locale NE of Dusseldorf near the German/Netherlands border 22. Surprise 24. _____ Kwon Do 27. Ironman's girl 28. Rough and husky 29. A measurement in nuclear physics 30. A _____ <i>Home Companion</i> 31. Prickling and stinging feelings 32. Host Hunt of <i>City Arts & Lectures</i> 33. Type of pop music in radio (Abbrev.) 34. Parts of a fork 35. Cereal grass 36. <i>Talk of the Nation Science</i> _____ 37. Results in skeptical doubt 38. Mt. range west of Newcastle in Hunter Range 40. Precedes Alamos or Angeles 41. British detectives dept. (Abbrev.) 43. Lincoln car model 45. TV show <i>My Name is</i> _____ 46. Home improv. projects (Abbrev.) 51. Congressional _____ honor 53. Scooby or Scrappy 54. Chocolate caramel candies 56. Wrong (Prefix) 57. Goddess of wisdom 58. Fragrant breath 59. Alessia Cara song 60. Bug killer 61. Wiley Coyote's company 62. Joey's catchphrase "How you _____" 63. Body humor that results in a sour disposition 64. The end (Fr) 65. Govt. guideline (Abbrev.) 66. Wets Indian shrub 67. No value 68. A character 71. CNN commentator _____ Jones |
|---|---|



Correction to last month's puzzle for following Down clue 9: Part of 62 Across not 61 Across

Sudoku Corner

Last Issue's Sudoku Solutions

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

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

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

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

The Month of April

- April is the first of four months in a year with only 30 days. In 2017, April has five Sundays and five Saturdays.
- April Fools' Day is on Saturday, April 1; Earth Day is on Saturday, April 22; Holocaust Remembrance Day is on Monday, April 24; and Administrative Professionals Day is on Wednesday, April 26.
- For Christians, Palm Sunday is on April 9; Holy Thursday is on April 13; Good Friday is on April 14; Holy Saturday is on April 15; and Easter Sunday is on April 16. In 2017, Eastern Orthodox Easter is also on Sunday, April 16.
- For Canadian Nationals, Easter Monday is on April 17.
- According to the World Almanac, April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, National Humor Month, and Stress Awareness Month
- There are two astrological signs in April: Aries, the sign of the Ram (March 21 to April 19) and Taurus, the sign of the Bull (April 20 to May 20).
- According to the Jewelry Industry Council, the April birthstone is the diamond.

San Quentin News would like to know:

What prison are you at and how do you receive the *San Quentin News*? _____

Does your library provide you with a copy of the *San Quentin News*? _____

Do all facilities/yards at your prison receive the *San Quentin News*? _____

What stories did you like the most and why? _____

What story did you like the least and why? _____

What kind of story would you like to read? _____

Mail to: San Quentin News
1 Main Street
San Quentin, CA 94964

Perfil de la nueva editora en Español

Español

Por **Lucía de la Fuente**
Editora En Español

Mi nombre es Lucía de la Fuente, estudio un doctorado en Antropología y Justicia Social con una visa de estudiante extranjero, soy profesora de un programa para la prevención de la violencia y soy una editora voluntaria del departamento de español en el periódico *San Quentin News*. También soy hermana, hija y mujer y si de algo sé, es de migración. Como migrante, emigrante e inmigrante, he vivido las bondades que el salir de mi país me ha traído, pero también las injusticias, el dolor y la nostalgia que eso conlleva. Ser inmigrante es algo que me define; y es vivir en una eterna contradicción. Constantemente miro hacia el futuro, buscando uno mejor para mí y para quienes me rodean, pero también miro hacia atrás, para recordar de dónde vengo, lo que he vivido y lo que mi familia y mis antepasados han tenido que recorrer, para que yo hoy pueda estar aquí. Conuerdo con quienes dicen que “ser inmigrante te orilla a ser presa de la injusticia” y que estamos expuestos a recibirla. Pero he de aceptar

que nosotros también la provocamos y que cometemos actos injustos. El sistema socioeconómico y político en el que vivimos, no fue diseñado para que nosotros existamos; los que tenemos que salir y los que tenemos que llegar. Los que nos fuimos y los que nos vinimos. Pero la culpa no es únicamente del sistema; también es nuestra. En el empedrado camino de la inmigración, lastimamos a otros. Nos dolemos y hacemos doler. Ésto no es definitivo. Podemos cambiar; y si no es a través de lo que el sistema nos ofrece, será, entonces, a través del trabajo con y por nuestra comunidad. Eso es lo que hago. Desde hace más de cuatro años, trabajo en grupos de prevención de la violencia y justicia restaurativa, en las cárceles de California; porque puedo y debo, como migrante, apoyar a quienes dentro del sistema se asumen sin oportunidades. Sanar dentro del paradigma de nuestra cultura como inmigrantes y en nuestro propio idioma, el español. Y hoy, escribiendo estas letras, pienso en las razones por las cuales me fui de mi país, las razones por las cuales trabajo con los presos del Área de la Bahía: porque todos merecemos una segunda oportunidad y porque todos podemos cambiar.

Más vivir y menos sobrevivir: la justicia que no entiende del perdón humano

La balanza y la espada que sostiene la mujer de los ojos vendados, representando la justicia moderna, simbolizan el equilibrio y la ejecución de las normas de carácter penal. Ésto quiere decir que, en teoría, la ley se aplica a todos por igual; pero en la práctica, no sucede lo mismo. Esta “mujer justiciera” procura las leyes, pero constantemente las aplica únicamente a ciertos sectores de la sociedad: en las cárceles hay más morenos y pobres, que pieles claras con dinero.

En Estados Unidos, dos tercios de los prisioneros son africanos y afroamericanos, asiáticos y asiático-americanos, hispanos, nativos y nativo-polinesios e indígenas. Sólo en California, según el Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), el 60% de los presos no son anglosajones; y la comunidad hispana por sí sola, representa el 42%. *The New Observer* publicó en marzo del 2016, que un hombre afroamericano es enviado a prisión a una tasa 6 veces mayor que un anglosajón; y el último reporte del California Sentencing Institute, indica que la tasa de encarcelamiento estatal en California es de 449.9 hispanos por cada 1,000 arrestos —esta tasa supera la de 434 personas (independientemente de su raza) por cada 1,000 arrestos en el Estado.

Estas cifras muestran que la justicia no es ciega y que la mujer de la balanza, en realidad, no tiene los ojos vendados; pero ¿a qué responde ésto? La justicia

moderna, especialmente en Estados Unidos, fue construida en los principios de la “justicia distributiva” del filósofo estadounidense John Rawls, en la década de los años setenta. La justicia distributiva, además de promover la protección de los bienes materiales y privados, especifica que las riquezas se distribuyen acorde a las habilidades de la persona y que “algunas personas nacen sin talento”. Por ello, según Rawls, no todos pueden prosperar económicamente. A la pobreza entonces, se le suma el color de la piel; y ambas, en conjunto, son la razón por la cual la “mujer justiciera” castiga más a los pobres y a los morenos.

Dentro de este mismo sistema criminal de justicia, cuando una persona viola una norma o comete un crimen, se dice que se crea una deuda social, y por ello la persona debe de ser castigada: saldar sus deudas con la sociedad. El principal problema es que, el estar en la cárcel o el ser castigado, no mejora, no cambia, ni alivia el dolor de las personas que fueron ofendidas. Es decir, se centra en la ofensa y no en la persona (ni en el ofendido, ni en el ofensor). Más aún, el sistema criminal de justicia se enfoca en (1) quién incumplió la ley, (2) qué ley fue la que se violó y (3) qué castigo merece el criminal o el transgresor, acorde a las normas establecidas.

Siendo realistas, no vamos a cambiar al enorme, monstruoso y gigante sistema “justiciero”

de la noche a la mañana. En la inmediatez, no vamos a forjar la producción de leyes enfocadas en el ser humano: aun así, hay algo que se puede hacer, practicar la justicia restaurativa.

Un día más...una noche más. Otra vez sentada en el suelo de mi habitación, mirando ininterrumpidamente la pared. Con los ojos clavados en ese pedazo de cemento pintado de color durazno, me he preguntado cientos de veces “¿qué he hecho mal?”. He ideado miles de formas para vengarme de aquellos quienes me han lastimado. Tengo infinitos planes de cómo hacerles daño y de cómo hacerles sentir lo que a mí, en su momento, me sembraron en la piel. Pero noche tras noche, ahogada en soledad y ardiendo en ira, la misma pregunta me viene a la cabeza “¿y qué dirán de mí a los que yo lastimé?”. No tengo respuesta. Quiero que les duela a los demás, pero ahí afuera hay otros doliendo por lo que yo he hecho. “¿A eso le llamas justicia, Lucía? ¿A querer vengarte sin que se venguen de ti?”. Me siento atrapada. Aunque lleve a cabo mis idioticos planes, la culpa y la vergüenza van a terminar por consumirme. Entonces es cuando recuerdo aquellas palabras que huelen a esperanza: aprender a perdonar. ¿Perdonar a quién? ¿Perdonar qué? Me puse a pensar...

La tercera parte de este artículo será publicada en el siguiente número de *San Quentin News*.

—Lucía de la Fuente

La tasa de concesión de libertad condicional continua incrementando

En California existen aproximadamente 35,000 presos con sentencias indeterminadas.

Por **Wayne Boatwright**
Managing Editor

California esta experimentando un aumento en el número de presos que reciben su libertad condicional, informó un Reporte de la Universidad de Stanford.

La tasa de concesión de libertad condicional incrementó de un 8 a un 25 por ciento entre los años 2008 y 2015.

“El Comité de Audiencias (Board Parole Hearing), ha sido percibida como un medio para controlar la población en las prisiones estatales”, según el Federal Sentencing Reporter (Standford Report)

Sin embargo, no siempre ha sido así. Entre los años 1980 y 2008, la tasa de concesión de libertad condicional para los presos con sentencia de vida era prácticamente cero. En California la dependencia en sentencias indeterminadas es muy marcada que difiere significativamente en relación a otros estados.

En California existen aproximadamente 35,000 presos con sentencias indeterminadas. Esta cantidad representa un 30 por ciento de la población total. Utah se encuentra en segundo lugar con un 29.2 por ciento y Nevada en tercer lugar con 21.5 por ciento. En tanto Texas cuenta con un poco menos de 9,000 presos con sentencias indeterminadas, equivalente a un 7 por ciento del total de presos.

Los autores del Standford Report reconocen que “el número es enorme y no solo representa un gran porcentaje de los presos con sentencias indeterminadas en California, sino en toda la Nación”.

Las decisiones para el desarrollo de la concesión de libertad condicional se deben a las cortes, las legislaciones y al Gobernador Jerry Brown.

La Corte Suprema de California expidió dos leyes en el 2008 (In re Lawrence and In re Shaputis) en las que se especifica que a un preso no se le puede negar su libertad

condicional basado únicamente en la seriedad y atrocidad de su crimen. La evaluación se debe basar en “la peligrosidad que representa” el preso.

Estas leyes fueron compensadas con la aprobación de la Proposición 9, Marcy’s Law, en Noviembre del 2008. Previo al 2008, el período máximo de negación por parte del Comité de Audiencias era de un año. Sin embargo, con la aprobación de la Marcy’s Law, este período de negación puede extenderse hasta 15 años. Esta negación sólo puede ser menor “si se encuentra evidencia convincente que un período de encarcelación mas extenso es innecesario tomando en consideración la seguridad pública”.

La tasa de concesión de libertad condicional continuó aumentando a pesar de la aprobación de la Marcy’s Law. En el 2011 la Suprema Corte de los Estados Unidos, Brown v. Plata, afirmó que la sobrepoblación en las prisiones de California infringe el

Artículo Octavo Constitucional, lo cual ha obligado al estado a tomar varias medidas para reducir la población en las prisiones.

El Gobernador Brown implementó una reforma del proceso de la Comisión de Audiencias (BPH), debido a que los presos con sentencias indefinidas constituyen una porción importante de la población en las prisiones. Brown seleccionó en el año 2011 a Jennifer Shaffer como una oficial ejecutiva del Panel del Comité de Audiencias (BPH). Shaffer ha supervisado los cambios administrativos y el nuevo entrenamiento profesional, que dio como resultado un incremento en el otorgamiento de libertad condicional en los presos de casi un 30 por ciento en el 2015. El Gobernador Brown rara vez anula las decisiones de elegibilidad. Desde el 2011, Brown ha revocado menos del 20 por ciento de las decisiones del Comité de Audiencias

(BPH).

El Stanford Report muestra un razonamiento estadístico en forma de Money Ball-style (al azar) para comprender como se toman las decisiones durante las audiencias. El próximo artículo presentará un modelo estadístico para predecir resultados en el Comité de Audiencias.

Este modelo está basado en el conocimiento —lo cual significa que cualquier información aumenta tu capacidad para predecir un resultado. Este conocimiento te ayudará a realizar predicciones más acertadas que simplemente confiar en tu compañero de celda. En el Stanford Report, el modelo estadístico tiene más de 150 diferentes factores y este modelo determina el valor que tiene cada factor en particular.

Una copia del Stanford Report esta disponible, solo para estudiantes del Proyecto Universitario de la Prisión (Prison University Project).

—Traducción por Marco Villa y Taré Beltranchuc

Atención Artistas:

Estamos aceptando sumisiones de trabajo artístico para ser colocados en las *San Quentin News*. Esto incluye, los dibujos, las pinturas, etc. En recordatorio, nosotros no tomaremos ningún trabajo artístico con contenido explícito. Traiga por favor su trabajo artístico a la oficina de *San Quentin News* en la Educación en la Yarda. Si usted no puede venir, puede mandar su trabajo artístico vía U Save 'EM con su información. Si usted re mandar su trabajo de otra institución, por favor envíalo a: *San Quentin News*, 1 Main Street, San Quentin, CA 94964

Parents awarded \$750,000 for wrongful death of prisoner

There was a documented serious mental illness in Duran's prison records

By Tommy Bryant
Journalism Guild Writer

The parents of an inmate were awarded \$750,000 for their son's wrongful death after he was pepper-sprayed by a correctional officer in 2013.

When inmate Joseph Damien Duran refused to release the feed port to his cell,

Officer Roy C. Chavez pepper-sprayed his face and neck. Duran was using a breathing tube in his throat at the time of the incident, according to an article by Sam Stanton and Denny Walsh of the *Sacramento Bee*.

The Amador County coroner's office initially classified Duran's death as a "suicide" at

Mule Creek State Prison near Sacramento, according to the *Bee*.

Duran's pepper-spray death was revealed to his parents four months later by a *Bee* reporter. His parents filed a federal civil rights lawsuit. They accused corrections officials of covering up the incident and failing to notify them of their

son's death. "The fact of the matter is the people involved in this were promoted..."

The "code of silence" concealing Duran's death at the prison was broken by psychologist Eric Reininga when he leaked confidential information to the *Bee*.

Several internal investigations at the prison were conducted to find out who had informed the *Bee*. Reininga was the only person to receive punishment in the case. Duran's parents thanked him for disclosing details of the death publicly. (Reininga has sued corrections officials claiming he was fired contrary to public policy protecting whistleblowers.)

"It's outrageous," said Stewart Katz, the attorney representing Duran's adoptive parents. "The fact of the matter is the people involved in this were promoted, and the one person who steps outside of the box to try and do something right winds up getting terminated."

The parties agreed to a settlement conference before U.S. Magistrate Judge Kendall Newman. "I don't think they've ever paid out

that much at that stage of the proceedings," Katz said.

The case prompted the reopening of a federal court hearing, which resulted in changed rules for using pepper spray on mentally ill inmates. There was a documented serious mental illness in Duran's prison records, the *Bee* says.

"The fact of the matter is the people involved in this were promoted..."

Joseph was adopted by the Durans at age 5. His biological parents were addicted to drugs at his birth. At age 15, mental illness, drug abuse and crime kept him locked up much of the time, according to the *Bee*.

The Durans received an apology from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for failing to send a formal notification of Joseph's death.

Steps for notifying next of kin were modified by the state after the settlement.

Daughter sues CDCR over father's negligent death

By Salvador Solorio
Journalism Guild Writer

Hugo "Yogi" Pinell's daughter is suing the California prison system, claiming her father was murdered because of negligent supervision, according to a Court-house News article by Nick Cahill.

Allegra Casimir-Taylor claims her father was "released into the general population despite the fact that they (prison officials) knew that he was targeted by other inmates. They were aware of multiple credible death threats against Pinell, including a threat issued by the Aryan Brotherhood," the article stated.

Pinell was killed five days after his release into the gen-

eral population at California State Prison- Sacramento after spending 43 years in the Security Housing Unit. Casimir-Taylor is suing the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in federal court.

At the age of 19, Pinell was convicted of rape and sentenced to life in 1965. He was a participant in the botched escape attempt at San Quentin in 1971 that left six people dead, including three prison employees and Black Panther Party activist and prisoner George Jackson.

A Marin County jury convicted Pinell of two counts of felony assault by a prisoner serving a life sentence. Pinell was given a third life sentence for slitting two officers' throats during the failed

prison escape.

Pinell's death incited a prison riot at the maximum-security prison. About 70 prisoners were involved with 29 sustaining injuries, according to the Courthouse News article, quoting prison officials.

An Oct. 28, 2016 hearing was scheduled at Sacramento County Superior Court for Jayson Weaver and Waylong Pitchford, who are accused of Pinell's murder.

Casimir-Taylor is suing the state for punitive and exemplary damages for failing to protect Pinell. She says the department of corrections knew Pinell was a target for assassination when they put him into the general population, according to the article.

Prisons testing new drug to combat opioid addictions

By David Eugene Archer Sr.
Journalism Guild Writer

Some U.S. prisons are testing a monthly injection that could help addicted prisoners stay off opioids, reported *The Associated Press*.

The drug named Vivitrol is injected in the buttocks and lasts for four weeks, the story said.

Each shot costs as much as \$1,000, the Nov. 20 *AP* story noted.

Experts do not agree on how well it works, but it eliminates daily doses of an alternative like methadone, according to the *AP*.

Advocates of Vivitrol in Illinois say it could save money when compared to \$25,000 a year to lock up a drug addict.

"It sounds good, and for some of us, it feels like the right thing to do," said Dr. Joshua Meador, a Vivitrol researcher.

The opioid epidemic affects more than 2 million Americans and an estimated 15 percent of the U.S. prison population. Many experts see prisons as a natural place to discover what works, reported the *AP*.

Christopher Wolf is a heroin addict who was ordered by a

judge into treatment using Vivitrol. Three months later, he is clean and said, "I don't have cravings. I see how much better life is. It gets better really fast."

Vivitrol targets receptors in the brain's reward system, blocking the high and extinguishing urges, according to the *AP*.

"The fact of the matter is the people involved in this were promoted..."

Researchers have recognized addiction as a relapsing brain disease with medication an important part of therapy, reported the story.

Joshua Meador, 28, an inmate in Illinois, said, "When I'm on Vivitrol, I can't get high." The drug has no street value or abuse potential, the story stated.

Dr. Joseph Garbely of Pennsylvania-based Caron Treatment Centers prefers Vivitrol for patients. He said that counseling, support groups and treatment for

problems like depression are crucial for them.

"The disease of addiction is a cunning, baffling and powerful one, and you need all hands on deck," Garbely said.

David Farabee of the University of California at Los Angeles said, "You couldn't design something better for the criminal justice system." He leads a Vivitrol study in a New Mexico jail. "There's been pushback with other medications, people saying, 'We're just changing one drug for another.' That argument goes out the window when you're talking about a blocker" like Vivitrol.

A National Institute on Drug Abuse study of about 300 prisoners – most heroin users on probation or parole – received Vivitrol or brief counseling and referral to a treatment program.

After six months, the Vivitrol group had a lower rate of relapse, 43 percent compared to 64 percent. However, when the injections stopped, many relapsed. A year later, relapse rates looked the same in both groups.

"It does suggest six months wasn't enough," said Lee, the lead author.

Parolees having trouble getting help with treatment programs

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

Drug offenders are having trouble getting services to help with their addictions once they get out of prison, a report by three newspapers concludes.

"The state has not yet invested enough money in treatment programs," according to a seven-month study conducted by the *Ventura County Star*, the *Redding Record Searchlight*, and the *Salinas Californian*.

"The state has not yet invested enough money in treatment programs"

The report concluded that thousands of addicts and mentally ill people have gone from incarceration to the streets, without a safety net to help them deal with substance abuse.

Since 2014, at least 13,500 inmates left California jails and prisons under Proposition 47, which reclassified simple drug possession as a misdemeanor rather than a felony.

"Proposition 47 was not a

cure-all," said Michael Romano, a Stanford law expert who helped draft the proposition. It succeeded in getting drug offenders out of overcrowded prisons and jails, but that's just "one piece in an extraordinarily complicated puzzle."

According to *Mother Jones* magazine, "It costs about \$20,000 to send someone through inpatient drug treatment, which typically lasts six months to a year. It costs three times more to keep him in jail or prison for a year. Under Proposition 47, the millions of dollars saved in prison costs were supposed to be earmarked for rehabilitation programs to help inmates restart their lives."

The study conducted by the journalists revealed that none of the earmarked money was spent on rehabilitation.

"People die waiting to get treatment," said David Ramage, an administrator at Impact Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center in Pasadena.

The lack of a suitable drug program has resulted in people choosing probation versus rehab – because the consequences for a misdemeanor offense may be a shorter ordeal and less restrictive. The longest-running drug court program in Los Angeles has seen enrollment drop from 80 people to just four, according to the reporters.

Hybrid novel discusses women's empowerment issues

Book Review

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

When Caitis (pronounced cats) Meissner ventured inside San Quentin last summer to meet with inmates taking a creative writing class, she talked about a new kind of writing, at least for me, called “hybrid literature”. I didn’t realize that Rosemary Jenkins previously had written in the same style. When I worked my way through Jenkins’ *Leticia in Her Wedding Dress and Other Poems* (2005) it surprised me

with its illustrations and bilingual advantage.

Meissner similarly uses unorthodox techniques in *Let It Die Hungry*. There are writing prompts throughout the novel with open spaces on some of the pages for the readers to write on. Close attention to its format shows an unusual style of the text being flush right on the right hand page. She intended to administer an exercise for the brain.

Meissner said much of her writing has been influenced by the work she does in New York’s women’s maximum-security prison, Bedford.

After reading several of her

poems, the class chimed in with comments.

Outside (a right-side) poem is about a woman, Sammie, who was released from prison after being incarcerated two and a half years. She won her appeal.

Meissner points out that their inside relationship had affected their outside relationship. Even talking to Sammie on the phone once she became a part of the “civilian” world, like her, shifted their relationship in peculiar ways.

59th Street on the One Train takes listeners on a crowded, sweaty, smelly subway ride. In that New York environment, what are the chances that two gay women would meet? This story is about empowerment and owning your identity.

At the end of the reading, the applause, all finger snaps, prompted Meissner to say, “Oh, finger snaps! How beat.” “Are you willing to go sad?”

Meissner asked the room of about two dozen men.

She read *The Abyss*.

Meissner said that she and her husband were out for a morning walk. They discovered the body of Omotayo floating down the Hudson River. She’d committed suicide, they’d later learn. Meissner said the poem was written to her.

To lighten the mood, Meissner said, “Women always want to hear poems involving sex or love.”

Locating Magic, another flush-right poem, sets the mood with low lights and music. However, it gets into real feelings that include the loneliness and depression that comes with looking for love and falling short of being satisfied.

Flipping through *Let it Die Hungry*, like any poetry anthology, I look at the titles. The one that drew me in, *greencards*, made sense for its

obvious political implications, that are relevant today—how the nation’s immigration policies are working out for people who cross borders.

The five-part poem, or story, or better said, prose takes readers on a personal journey about how and why the book earned the title, *Let it Die Hungry*. And, truth be told, I found this piece just like I said—the title drew me in

Meissner is more than just a storyteller and poet. Her artful and descriptive pages say something powerful about the legitimacy of literature from new perspectives. There’s even a kind of graphic novel feel in some parts. The conversations are genuine—giving readers a sense that *Let it Die Hungry* comes from a place of authority, like Meissner knows, through her experience, that she understands living and dying while at the same time wanting more out of life.

What are the most popular ways to eat an egg?

Asked On The Line

By Angelo Falcone
Journalism Guild Writer

It’s Easter and America’s love affair with eggs has many eating colored eggs. Egg production is a billion-dollar industry. According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, during one month in 2016, the United States egg production was 7.51 billion eggs by approximately 305 million hens.

Not only are eggs big business, they are a versatile source of food. During Easter, billions of eggs are boiled and decorated for Easter egg hunts.

“Asked On The Line” posed a question to the men on the mainline, “How do you like your eggs cooked? Of the 11 popular ways of eating eggs, which is your favorite? And what would you eat with them?”

D. Hill likes his eggs hard-boiled with French fries or potato wedges.

B. Dooley wants his eggs fried, sunny side up, with potato hash browns, bacon and onions.

M. Dickman likes his eggs fried, over easy, with cheese, bacon, and toast.

G. Mason prefers his eggs fried, over easy, with ham, sausage and cheese.

K. McBride chooses eggs cooked in any way except sunny side up, over hard, or dry scrambled and cooked with “everything and anything except liver.”

D. Stewart: “I always like to eat my eggs soft fried or over easy. I do not like them scrambled.”

B. Muro: “I like to eat eggs mixed with chorizo.”

N. Wimberly: “I like my eggs sunny side up. For me they taste the best this way.”

P. Feliciano: “I like to eat fried eggs with fried potatoes, chorizo and tomato sauce, with a glass of orange juice.”

P. Benitez: “My favorite

breakfast here is on Sunday because we have fried eggs.”

J. Velazquez: “I really like my eggs dry scrambled.”

A. Torres: “I like to eat my eggs over easy with sausage and toasted bread. I also like scrambled eggs with ham, onions, bell peppers and hot sauce.”

V. Nguyen: “I like them fried, sunny side up, because it’s raw on the top side and because it tastes good on toast.”

M. Saldana: “I love egg omelets!”

R. Malo: “I like egg omelets because they can be a complete meal. Omelets can have a lot of different things cooked into it.”

J. Ybarra: “I like fried eggs, over easy, but only in the morning.”

H. Robertson: “I really enjoy eating eggs soft scrambled with onions.”

D. Danny: “I like soft scrambled eggs hot off the grill with a side of hash browns.”

P. Ramirez: “I like to eat omelets with cheese, onions, spinach and tomatoes.”

J. Angulo: “I like to eat fried eggs for breakfast, boiled eggs for lunch and omelets for dinner.”

T. Sayres: “I like my eggs over easy with peppers and cheese.”

R. Zeigler: “I like my eggs scrambled, with bacon, grits and toast.”

D. Le’s favorite is an omelet with cheese.

H. Nguyen’s favorite is fried eggs, over medium, with beans and fish sauce.

A. Ross prefers eating eggs in a frittata with salsa.

M. Upton likes his eggs fried, over easy, with cheese.

B. Asey likes his eggs fried, over easy, with grits, toast, bacon, and a glass of orange juice. “Put salt and pepper with a little sugar on the grits.”

N. Bucci enjoys his eggs fried, over medium, with a side of bacon, toast and potatoes.

M. Walters likes his eggs fried, over easy, with a side of bacon.

GEO Group to open re-entry center in SF's Tenderloin District



Photo by hoodline.com

SoMa facility in San Francisco's Tenderloin district

By Mike Little
Journalism Guild Writer

The Geo Group, one of the largest prison companies in the United States, will open a third re-entry center in the Bay Area, reported *SF Weekly*.

The new San Francisco SoMa facility joins the Male Community Re-entry Program and will house up to 80 inmates who are close to the end of their sentences and will be released in the Bay Area.

They will be required to wear electronic ankle monitors at all times.

The Geo Group also runs two other re-entry facilities, the Taylor Street Center in San Francisco's Tenderloin district and the Oakland Center in Oakland.

Both facilities were reported

to have had abuse allegations of “sexual touching and voyeurism,” according to the *SF Weekly*.

“The vast majority of people in prison are going home, whether you like it or not”

Regardless of any claims against the Geo Group, it “won a five-year, nearly \$13 million state contract to run the re-entry center,” *SF Weekly* reported.

The facility will operate at least through June 2021. The state will pay the company \$48

to \$60 per inmate per day.

The contract requires the Geo Group to provide individual and group counseling, as well as substance abuse counseling. In addition, they are required to provide literacy, employment readiness, community survival skills, and housing assistance programs.

This new facility is part of a trend of private prisons diversifying into inmate re-entry service, even as scrutiny grows over of abuses in the private prisons sector, the article noted.

“The vast majority of people in prison are going home, whether you like it or not,” said Krissi Khokhobashvilli, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation spokesperson. “These facilities help ease that transition.”

Victims of sexual abuse speak words of forgiveness

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

Many incarcerated people believe sexual crimes committed against women and children warrant extreme punishments, but two survivors of childhood sexual abuse visited San Quentin State Prison and spoke of therapy as a better solution.

Chelsea Miller, who was molested as a child, and Keith DeBlasi, a sex trafficking victim, attended a Restorative Justice Symposium in the Catholic Chapel on March 3 and emphasized the need for healing for both the victim and the abuser to stop such crimes from occurring again.

“Ninety-five percent of the offenders are men, and 80 percent were victims themselves, and we aren’t helping them,” DeBlasi told an audience of about 150 incarcerated men and 30 community members. “Are we crazy or what?”

DeBlasi had been a teenager when his abuser lured him with

a meal at McDonald’s, introduced him to alcohol and pornography and manipulated him into having sex with another boy and men.

“I am a survivor of...sex violence against men and male victimization,” he said, adding that victims often self-harm or harm others until they are able to deal with their trauma.

DeBlasi used to investigate sex crimes as a Berkeley police officer, but he changed when he came to a Brother’s Keepers support group for suicide awareness and rape trauma at San Quentin. He said it was the first time he felt heard. He now sponsors the group in another prison.

“Man is characterized above all by what he does with what was done to him,” said DeBlasi, who also sponsors a group called Wisdom of the Victim: Creative Humanity Building in a World of Hurt.

The other guest speaker Miller also spoke about her struggle to overcome her past abuse

from her stepfather and his son.

“For many years after that, when I was no longer living with my abuser, I continued to be victimized in many situations that I walked right into,” Miller said. “It undermines your self-worth and your trust in your instincts.”

Miller, who mans a crisis hotline for Bay Area Against Rape and visits sexually assaulted women in the hospital, believes an offender can’t heal unless he can talk about it.

“I try in my work to think about perpetrators of violence as people with complicated stories,” Miller said. “If all we ever did was serve survivors and lock up everybody...there will always be another little girl getting hurt because we have not talked to this dude.”

Incarcerated restorative justice member Richard Richardson, who was at the event, said he was impressed by their talk. “For them to come in here and speak openly about their past, especially about rape — being



Courtesy of Keith DeBlasi and Chelsea Miller

Chelsea Miller and Keith DeBlasi in front of SQ

truthful and honest in front of a crowd, takes courage. Instead of revenge, they want the person to heal.”

Miller and DeBlasi still struggle to forgive their abusers. “He never went to prison, and he’s married and he has two horses, which is really offensive because I love horses,” said Miller about her abuser.

But they firmly believe that healing is important. “Every protective person I’ve ever known, they say I would kill that man for you,” she said. “I would be better served if everybody can build on the ability to tolerate. I need other people, his family and network, to say ‘I forgive you, and I see you and you can’t do this again.’”

Schools using Restorative Justice practices as a remedy to prison

By **Forrest Lee Jones**
Journalism Guild Writer

American schools and criminal justice systems are using Restorative Justice (RJ) more and more as a remedy to keep people from going to prison, reports Rebecca Beitsch of Pew Charitable Trusts.

Restorative Justice is a practice that originated in ancient cultures. Schools and courts are using it as an alternative to punishment. It’s designed to make offenders accountable for

their crimes and bring healing to those they victimize, the July 20 report stated.

Boulder, Colorado, District Attorney Stan Garnett used RJ in lieu of prosecuting two teens who stole a \$600 power saw from a McGuckin Hardware store. One teen agreed to Restorative Justice; the other decided to fight the charges, reported Beitsch.

The cooperating teen sat in a meeting with his parents and an employee from the hardware store, along with a facilitator,

and discussed the teen’s crime and its impact. The meeting resulted in a plan for the teen to make amends by getting good grades, meeting weekly with a counselor, and paying restitution for his part of the stolen saw.

“The whole encounter was very positive for him,” said Garnett. “He felt bad. He met with people from McGuckin. He moved on. He didn’t spend time in prison, and he didn’t spend time meeting other kids always coming in and out of the system.”

“The other kid whose parents

hired the lawyer for him, it took months to get it adjudicated,” Garnett said. “They spend all this time filing motions and arguing whether we violated the Fourth Amendment by searching the backpack instead of thinking, ‘Should I have stolen a power saw?’”

RJ is being used in many parts of the country, before and after prison— even in places like San Quentin State Prison. It is having a major effect on inmates’ lives.

“RJ has given me a different outlook on crime and punishment. It has taught me how to make healing and reparations to my victims,” said San Quentin inmate M. Krauter, serving 15 years-to-life for second-degree murder. “It has given me a different and better perspective on justice. It allows the offenders to retain their humanity in the eyes of society.”

Another RJ student is Joe

Hancock, serving 39 years for second-degree murder and assault with a firearm.

“I have learned the ripple effect that my crime has had on others through RJ; it created a great deal of depression and economic impact on my victim and first responders. It’s created a lot of fear in my neighbors, community and family. RJ has helped me connect emotionally with remorse and the choices I made to murder someone. This is important, because I now realize I must have an appreciation for the lives of others, as well as empathy. It’s opened up my responsibility to be accountable.”

Restorative Justice is replacing punishment in states that are working to reduce mass incarceration. West Virginia provided RJ funding for the juvenile justice system last year. Vermont and Colorado enacted laws creating governmental bodies to oversee and provide RJ services.

CDCR allocates more than \$14 million to boost rehab programs

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has awarded funding for more rehabilitation programs, reports Nuala Sawyer of the *San Francisco Examiner*.

The department has allocated \$14.5 million to boost innovative programs and increase volunteerism in prisons.

Now in its third funding cycle, the Innovative Grants Program will establish 43 programs at 20 adult institutions. The funds are allocated for programs that teach offender accountability, violence prevention and restorative justice skills. Grants have also been given to programs that teach communication and de-escalation skills, dog training, prison gardens, family reunification and computer coding, Sawyer reports.

“Positive programs help offenders learn important life skills, foster peaceful communication and self-reflection, and contribute to safer prison environments for inmates and staff,” said Jay Virbel, director of CDCR’s Division of Rehabilitative Programs. “Expanding programs to even more prisons and focusing on our long-term offender population will enable the state to see even more success in preparing offenders to return home.”

The money will be divided into three parts over a period of three years, for a total cost of \$9 million. The funds are designated for prisons that lack volunteers and nonprofit organizations that facilitate existing programs.

Additionally, \$5.5 million will be awarded for one-year programs that serve inmates with long-term non-life or life sentences.

Some of the recipients of the monies are Marin Shakespeare Company, GRIP (Guiding Rage Into Power), Buddhist Pathways Prison Project, Marley’s Mutts and Prison Yoga Project.

Some of the sponsors for these programs were asked their view on how additional funding for their programs will impact the prison system.

James Fox, sponsor of Prison Yoga Project at S.Q. since 2009, said, “If the mission of CDCR is rehabilitation, every penny spent on rehabilitation is money well spent and enhances the prospect for reducing recidivism and contributing to public safety.”

Fox’s goal is to establish yoga mindfulness in prisons everywhere.

GRIP sponsor Jacques Verduin said, “It opens up the

prisons to community organizations, and that’s important, because it brings resources to prisoners that they haven’t been privy to. It also demonstrates to the public the human side of prisoners who’re giving back to the community they once took from.”

GRIP is a one-year program comprising four elements: stopping violence, developing emotional intelligence, cultivating mindfulness, and understanding victim impact. Since inception five years ago, 69 graduates have been released, and none has returned to prison.

Four years ago a presentation was given by GRIP. A former inmate and a victim participant told of GRIP’s impact on their lives, before the Public Safety and Budget Committee. This provided an important impetus for establishing the funds, allocated in increments of \$2.5 million the first year, \$3 million the second year, and \$14.5 million the third year.

The funding has added 188 programs not previously offered. However, when the monies run out, it is expected the programs will continue financing those programs on their own dimes.

—Forrest Lee Jones

DVI’s dairy production provides marketable skills

By **Harry C. Goodall Jr.**
Journalism Guild Writer

Inmates at Deuel Vocational Institution (DVI) near Tracy handle every aspect of milk production from feeding cows, pasteurization and running the machines in the dairy.

The dairy was built in 1953 on 60 acres of dairy land adjacent to 540 acres of farmland at 23500 Kasson Road. It is still fully functioning.

The support staff of 75 inmates working as California Prison Industry Authority (PIA) employees helps manufacture 6,000 gallons of milk a day.

DVI has a herd of about 1,000 cows, 575 of them are milked twice a day at 3 a.m. and 3 p.m. The dairy produces one percent milk and chocolate milk in half-pint and half-gallon containers, plus larger 3- to 6-gallon bags for

use in prison kitchens.

“The average cow produces 10 gallons (each day),” said Darrol Vierra, PIA administrator.

The cost to run the state licensed dairy is about \$4 million annually, and it must remain a self-sufficient operation. The milk it produces has won ribbons at the state fair for quality, Vierra added.

Inmates who work at this facility receive training on dairy work, pasteurization and other marketable skills. “We do get some success stories,” said Vierra.

He reported that one inmate got a pasteurization job at another dairy, another got into breeding, and some got warehouse work as a result of their training and experience. Inmates can earn between 35 to 90 cents an hour, plus shorten their sentences by up to six weeks per year while working at the dairy.

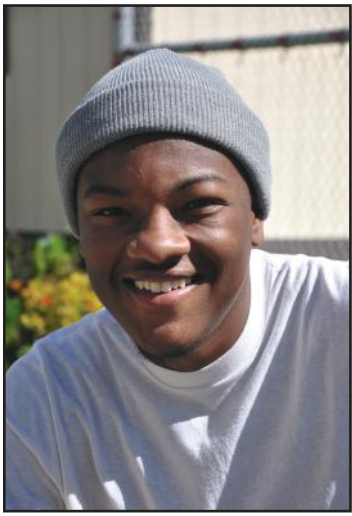


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

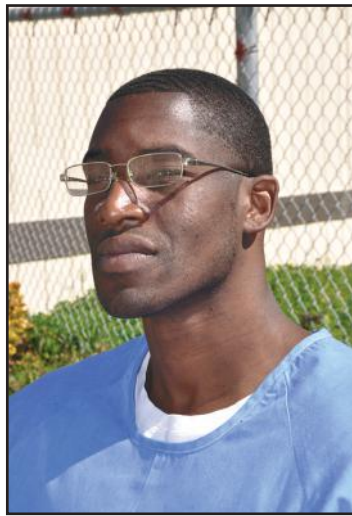


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

#3 Rank: D'Romeo Allen

#6 Rank: Marvin Cosby

#2 Rank: Andre Belion

Warriors' coach institutes no players left behind policy

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

On an chilly overcast day, 33 men tried out for the San Quentin Warriors, and none of them were cut from the team.

"I love that a lot of people come to try out," veteran Warrior Montrell "Mad Defense" Vines said. "I ain't seen this in three years."

Head Coach Rafael Cuevas and his staff ranked the players from one to 33. The first 12 players made the active roster. The next five made the practice team, and the rest comprised a farm club where they can work on fundamentals, improve and move up in ranking, possibly taking a spot on the active list.

"I'm going to work with whoever stays dedicated to making this team the best it can be," Cuevas said.

Tryout ages ranged from 18 to 50, including veteran players and a large group of youngsters who arrived at San Quentin to start serving their time at a lower-level prison. Many veterans said it was the largest group of players to try out for the team.

"This forces the veteran players to step their game up because the younger players are hungry," said lead Assistant Coach Aaron "Harun" Taylor.

Months before tryouts, Isaiah "Zay" Bandz, 19, could be found practicing layups or running laps in the rain.

"It comes from always playing people older than me and bigger than me," Bandz said. "I always had to work harder."

Bandz said he played for Berkeley High School in the AAU League. "Making the Warriors would be a dream come true," he said. "I grew up in the

Bay Area watching the Golden State Warriors. It would be a lifetime experience to play against them."

According to Coach Cuevas, Bandz would have made the Warriors, but was scheduled to be released.

Tryouts consisted of full-court scrimmage games.

Among the standouts was D'Romeo Allen, 20. He learned how to play basketball in the streets and sees making the team as rehabilitative.

"I'm going to work with whoever stays dedicated to making this team the best it can be"

"It would give me something to do that takes me away from being in prison," Allen said. "It would give me a sense of purpose."

After seeing Allen's performance, former Warrior Brad Shell, said, "Romeo did his thing. He might have stolen himself a spot."

Veteran player Greg Eskridge came to tryouts after taking a few years off from playing for the Warriors.

"I'm trying to see how much I have left in the tank," Eskridge said. "I'll let them do all the fancy stuff, and I'll do all the thinking. That might be a recipe for success."

Another newcomer who stood out was Cornell Shields, 30. He said he used to play with NBA Portland Trailblazers Damien

Lillard in their Brookfield neighborhood.

"He taught me a lot of things," Shields said. "I learned how to score and got a lot of my heart and intensity from him."

The added competition and availability of so much talent had an effect on the tryouts.

"Ain't anybody guaranteed a spot," Vines said. "Ain't any stars. We have to come out here and get it."

During the scrimmage games, veteran Tevin Fournette initiated the new recruits, going strong to the rack and dunking.

"I always want to encourage the younger players to come play," Fournette said. "They encourage me to go harder and play better."

Juanaeh Newton, 21, at 5-foot-3, scored six points in the paint, including a strong layup in the chest of a taller defender that evoked cheers from the sidelines. He says he used to play for the Oakland Tech Bulldogs.

"It would mean a lot to me to make the Warriors," Newton said. "I would bring teamwork."

Newton showed up late for tryouts. Afterward, Coach Cuevas told him, "You did good, but I didn't get to see enough of you. Keep coming out."

The top 21 Warriors are: 1. Allan McIntosh, 2. Andre Belion, 3. D'Romeo Allen, 4. Tevin Fournette, 5. Harry "ATL" Smith, 6. Marvin Cosby, 7. Jason Robinson, 8. Anthony Ammons, 9. Jason Jones, 10. Jonathan Cannon, 11. Lanzelle Green, 12. David Lee, 13. Donte Smith, 14. Aaron Sanders, 15. Brad Shells, 16. Cornell Shields, 17. Wilson Nguyen, 18. Montell "MD" Vines, 19. Deontae King, 20. Charles "Pookie" Sylvester and 21. Trevor Bird.

Spring training brings new talent to the diamond

By **Marcus Henderson**
Journalism Guild Chairman

At least 40 men showed up for the San Quentin baseball spring training tryouts. The veteran players were in rare form, demonstrating their batting and fielding skills. They showed the newcomers the proper baseball mechanics while the outside volunteers and coaches scouted the talent for the 17-man roster.

"We're looking to improve our pitching staff," said Elliot Smith, sponsor and general manager. "We are looking for guys with good attitudes and willing to listen."

Last season the San Quentin All-Stars struggled from the mound, but the return of star pitcher Jeff "Dewey" Dumont after a two-year hiatus will add some stability. After the loss of pitchers John Appley and Isaiah Thompson-Bonilla in the midseason, Gary "Cool Aid" Townes stepped in to help the team to stay competitive. Now with five new recruits the team has more options to evaluate for the pitching position.

"We got some good-looking arms," said Mike Kremer, volunteer and assistant coach. "It shows that people have been working hard on the off season. The focus for this season is we win as a team, and we lose as a team."

Brendan Terrell, trying out for pitcher and shortstop, added, "I was up all night waiting to get out on the field — I'm juiced about this season. This program helps you get away from everything."

Terrell and a group of other players spent more than three months preparing the field, cleaning and cutting the grass.

As the men battle for different positions from the infield to the outfield, the players were still encouraging each other even after dropped balls, over-throws and strikeouts.

"I have never seen hardball played in prison," said Javier Wesson, trying out for centerfield.

"I was at High Desert State Prison. This is a positive program. It teaches you to be social. They say as criminals we had antisocial behavior. Since coming to San Quentin I've been able to step out of my comfort zone."

To test the baseball IQ of the new recruits, they were taken through drills called "situations," where the players are given scenarios to play out. Most of the new players struggle with making the proper plays, whereas the second-year players instinctively know what to do.

"Our goal is to have the guys improve from the beginning to the end of the season," Coach Smith said. "You can see that the young guys who came out last year, with a little experience, they are now more polished. We hope to see that same type of growth with these new guys."

The March 4 tryouts were a prelude to see if there were enough skilled players to return to two teams or stay with one.

Either way, with the competitive nature of the outside teams coming — teams like the Twins, Sonoma Stompers, Team Mexico, the Mission from San Francisco, as well as clubs from Southern California like the Los Angeles Loves and the Santa Monica Suns — the season aims to be an exciting one.

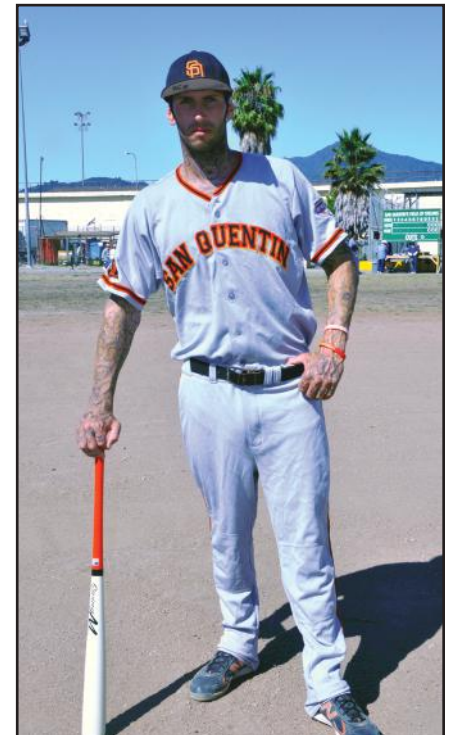


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Brendan Terrell

Oliver's duty to country trumps his childhood dreams

Paul Oliver grew up with dreams of playing in the NBA. When his father, a full-bird colonel, sent him to West Point Military Academy, he ran off.

"I didn't want to go to West Point because I wanted to be in the NBA," Oliver said. "I had a scholarship to the University of Washington. I wanted to be a Huskie, then get drafted."

Instead of going to college, Oliver enlisted in the Army on his own. He said he became an Army Ranger and went without playing basketball for more than 10 years.

"I was so distraught that I didn't even watch any games," Oliver said.

Oliver started playing basketball again once in a federal prison.

"In the federal pens, the best ballers played in competitions," Oliver said. "I saw that Rucker's like atmosphere and wanted to play."

One might wonder what Oliver's game was like when he was a young man after seeing what he's able to do at 60 years old.

In 2014 and 2015, he played for the San Quentin Warriors.

"I didn't have a lot of playing time," Oliver said. "I was just happy to sit there talking to Alvin Gentry."

Gentry came into the prison for the annual game against the Golden State

Warriors staff. Gentry coached Golden State in the second half, after Steve Kerr left.

In 2016, Oliver played with a bunch of younger men on an intramural team called the Bay Area Ballers. He often helped his team with double-doubles in scoring and rebounding. In a historic championship game, where the Bay Area Ballers only had three players in a full court game against The Franchise roster of five starters plus three subs, Oliver had 18 points, 12 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 blocks and a steal.

"Playing with the youngsters gave me the sense of being a leader, and it felt like I was back in the Rangers," Oliver said. "I

had a squad of good cats that had the fight in them to never give up."

This year, Oliver made the S.Q. Kings 40-and-over team.

"I tried out for the Kings to see if I could make the team," Oliver said. "I want to play against outside sponsor Ted Saltveit and his Bittermen team. I like to kick it with him."

These days, Oliver plays sports for a much different reason than making the NBA.

"I play sports to tire myself out so I can sleep at night," Oliver said. "Every soldier has demons chasing him."

—Rahsaan Thomas

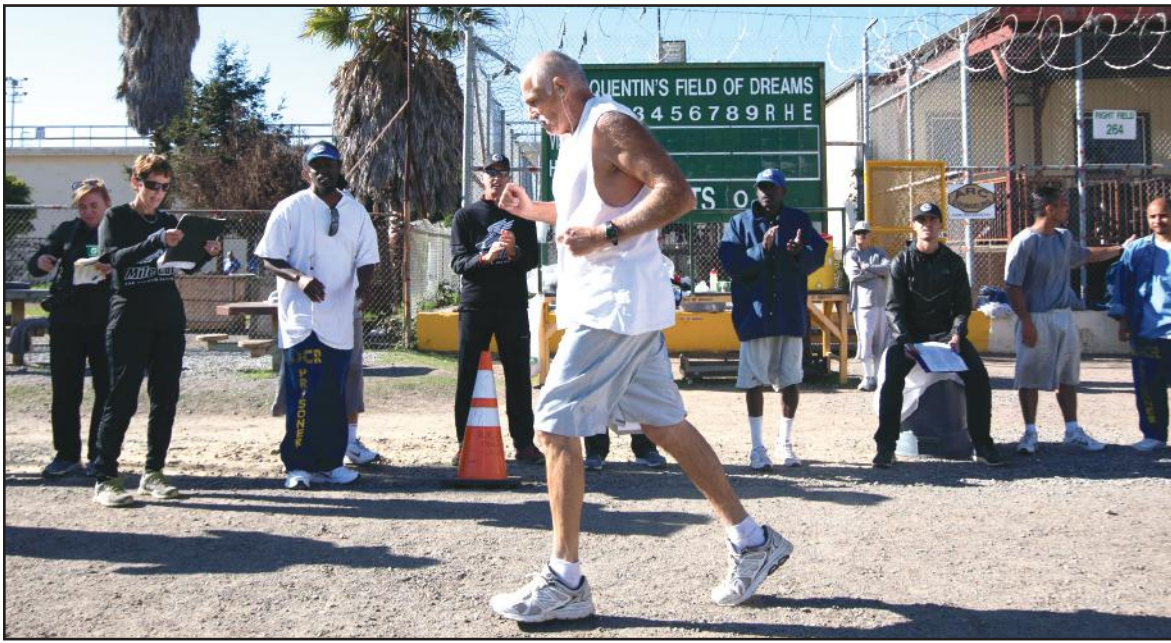


Photo by Roldan Lozada

Larry Ford breaking his own 60 and older 3 mile record



Photo by Roldan Lozada

Chris Skull rounding the track

Quarantine staggers 3-Mile Race, changing the results

Skull's first place was short lived; Taylor gains top spot on second day

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

With West Block locked down, this year's 1000 Mile Club three-mile race happened on two different days. Chris Skull took first place in the initial three-mile race with a time of 19:04. However, Markelle Taylor and Eddie Herena reclaimed their usual spots at first and second place in the makeup race held once West Block got off lockdown.

Usually Skull takes second behind Taylor, who holds the most 1000 Mile Club records for first place, or third behind Herena, who were both locked down due to a medical quarantine that made them miss the Feb. 24 race.

"I always hope that those guys will be out here," Skull said. "It's a lot more motivation when

the whole team is out here. But knowing me, I probably would have ran with them and given them a little competition. I was gonna gun Eddie down anyway."

After the race, volunteer Mark Stevens told Skull, "Your pacing was amazing." Later, Stevens said, "I really like coaching Chris."

Stevens, a recruit from the Tamalpa running club, counted Skull's laps and noticed he held about a 6:42 per mile pace.

Just as Skull had gotten used to winning, West Block came off lockdown and held the makeup race on March 3, where Taylor beat Skull's time, coming in at 17:21 and reclaiming first place. He missed beating the record he set last year, completing the 12 laps in 16:47.

"I was still feeling the effects of the cold I had on lockdown,"

Taylor said. "It goes to show you no matter what sickness you may have, never give up — keep pushing. I dedicate this one to my track family and all the people suffering from illness — never give up."

Herena took second with a time of 18:29, pushing Skull back into third place.

"I had an extra week to prepare," Herena said. "Which gave me an advantage."

Skull also ran in the second race and improved his time to 18:44, as many 1000 Club Mile members did.

"He (Skull) ran faster but still finished third," said sponsor Frank Ruona. "Having the competition spurred him to improve his performance."

Chris Schuhmacher ran in both races and improved from 20:06 to 20:02.

Larry Ford, 61, reran the race also, breaking his own 60-and-over record of last year 22:02 twice, first with a time of 21:42 then improving to 21:02.

"Running in the first race gave me a better idea of what pace I could run at today," Ford said. "I've been injured a while and didn't know what pace I could go at. Last week felt good, so I ran at a seven-minute-per-mile pace today."

New member Alvin Timbol ran with an MP3 player clipped to his waist while listening to "I love you, I hate you," by Gnash featuring Olivia O'Brien.

"The beats per minute help me with my pace when I run," Timbol said. "My heart is in tune with the beat."

Timbol completed the course in 24:33.

Mike Keyes, 69, ran faster as

the race went on. He finished the first mile with a time of 7:52, the next at 7:40 and the final mile at 7:17, for a total time of 22:52.

"That's a sign of somebody who is fit," said volunteer Kevin Rumon.

Cardiologist, cardiac rehab specialist and long distance runner Ben Rosin, M.D., found that people who run marathons live on average 19 years longer than U.S. men who reached age 40 in 1975, according to a Newswire article.

Other top finishers included Oscar Aguilar at 20:32; Steve Reitz at 20:33 and Tommy Wickerd at 20:57.

The three-mile race was in preparation for running the marathon that is scheduled for Nov. 17. Filmmaker Christine Yoo plans to film the annual marathon for a documentary.

Commissioner's addiction won't affect Intramural League season

'I regret letting a lot of people down who counted on me. Now I'm clean'

Last year's San Quentin Intramural Basketball League ended in controversy after the commissioner missed several games due to disciplinary issues tied to drug addiction. Commissioner Ishmael Freelon promises the 2017 season, which starts April 23, will be much better.

"I had personal issues with drug addiction that interfered with running the league," Freelon said. "This year I'm clean, and I'm focused."

For most of the 2016 season, Freelon was confined to his cell on Sundays because he lost his weekend yard privileges after failing a urine analysis test.

"Drug addiction is an expression of someone having emotional pain that hasn't been dealt with," said Jacques Verduin, director and facilitator of a self-help program that takes participants on a healing journey deep inside themselves to come back out transformed and ready to serve others.

Robbie Robins, who is incarcerated and a state-certified drug counselor, said, "It's different for everybody, but they say a person will relapse seven times before he recovers."



Photo by Michael Nelson

Willie Thompson and Ishmael Freelon

Freelon said that while struggling through recovery, he missed many league games, including the 2016 Championship Finals. The finals ended in dispute after a disagreement about whether a game in the best-of-five series should count as a forfeit.

After hearing different versions of what happened, Freelon

declared the championship a draw between the Bay Area Ballers and The Franchise.

"I take full responsibility," Freelon said. "I was selfish, and I regret letting a lot of people down who counted on me to run the league, including my family."

The Intramural League gives the yard's basketball players a

venue to compete and, many say, something positive to do on Sundays. Men of all ages and skill levels form teams. Often teammates who play together on Saturdays with the San Quentin Warriors or Kings end up as competitors in the league on Sundays.

"All races play in this league," Freelon said. "We need this outlet. It's a life lesson. It builds up character."

Freelon, who is also the Kings assistant coach, organizes the Intramural League and refs some of the games. He gained organized basketball experience playing for Bell High School in Bell, Ca. The 57-year-old says serving 35 years in prison has taught him that "just because you lose a game doesn't mean you lose at life."

Following that motto, Freelon has picked himself up. He said he has been clean for eight months.

"One of the ways to tell if a person's recovery has stuck is: Are they being consistent?" Robins said. "Sometimes you can see that they are not the same person."

Freelon, who has gained his

normal weight back, says it is one day at a time.

Verduin says some ways to tell that a person has fully recovered from drug addiction include: the person has learned how to connect with himself and others; he has stared down his demons and made peace; and he looks you in the eye and is connected, present.

Being connected to basketball teams and held accountable by the teams may help Freelon stay drug free.

"One of the biggest things that helps is family. It's having a support system that keeps the person accountable," Robins said. "Next, the person has to be ready."

This year the commissioner wants the support of everyone to make the league better.

"I'll take all the input I can get on how we can do this better, because this is our league," said Freelon.

Teams will consist of 10-man rosters for full court games played on Sundays. Coaches should turn in their rosters to Thad Fleeton or Freelon by April 9.

—Rahsaan Thomas

César Chávez luchó para mejorar las condiciones de los campesinos

Chávez

Continued from Page 1

El trabajo en los cultivos concientizó a Chávez sobre las condiciones laborales de los campesinos. El trabajo en el campo era laborioso, de poca paga y peligroso. Los accidentes con las máquinas de cultivo y la exposición a los químicos para erradicar las plagas causaban lesiones, enfermedades y en ocasiones, hasta la muerte. Además, los campesinos carecían de las necesidades básicas, como agua potable y letrinas.

Después de trabajar por dos años bajo estas condiciones, Chávez decidió unirse a la Armada de los Estados Unidos, durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, con la esperanza de salir de la vida de trabajador agrícola. Al regresar a su vida como civil, Chávez describió su experiencia en la armada como "los dos peores años de mi vida". Posteriormente, contrajo matrimonio con Elena Fabela, procreando ocho hijos. Con el deseo de un día enviar a sus hijos a la universidad, Chávez y su familia se fueron a vivir a San José, California, con su hermano Richard, en un barrio conocido como "sal si puedes".

En San José, Chávez conoció a dos de sus mentores: Donald McDonnell, un sacerdote católico y Fred Ross, un líder comunitario. Chávez transportaba a McDonnell a los campos de cultivo para dar la misa a los campesinos. Chávez conocía mucho sobre las condiciones deplorables en las que vivían los campesinos, sin embargo su conocimiento acerca de la parte legal era limitado. Chávez recibió de parte del padre McDonnell varios libros sobre la justicia social. Estos libros fueron de gran ayuda para iniciar un movimiento pacífico en beneficio de los trabajadores. La biografía de Mahatma K. Ghandi (quien llevó a la India a su independencia del gobierno británico a través de medios totalmente pacíficos) fue una gran inspiración para Chávez. Una de las

cualidades más sobresalientes de Chávez fue el liderar con el ejemplo: realizando protestas o efectuando huelgas de hambre.

Con el paso del tiempo Chávez conoció a Fred Ross y lo acompañó a las reuniones de la CSO (Organización al Servicio de la Comunidad). La CSO trabajaba en zonas urbanas de California, ayudando a la gente pobre a registrarse para votar, tener acceso a un servicio médico y luchar en contra de la brutalidad policiaca y la discriminación racial. En poco tiempo, Chávez formó parte de la organización CSO trabajando tiempo completo. Al término de diez años, en 1958 ascendió a director nacional. Al paso de cuatro años como director de la CSO, Chávez renuncia a su puesto y dos semanas después comienza un sindicato (grupo de trabajadores que se organizan, combinando su dinero y poder) para los trabajadores agrícolas.

Los trabajadores sindicalizados tienen más poder que los trabajadores que no pertenecen a un sindicato. Como miembros de un sindicato, los trabajadores pueden reclamar ciertos derechos y beneficios. Cuando un sindicato no está satisfecho con las condiciones de trabajo puede declararse en huelga, rehusarse a trabajar y paralizar una industria hasta que se cumplan las demandas de los trabajadores. Aunque otros sindicatos habían fracasado hasta ese momento, Chávez tenía la convicción que un sindicato podría mejorar las vidas de los trabajadores agrícolas, por lo cual creó la famosa frase "sí se puede".

Al poco tiempo de vivir en San José, Chávez y su esposa Elena se fueron a vivir a Delano, California, donde empezó a sostener reuniones en las casas de los campesinos. Estas pláticas eran acerca de los problemas que existían en el trabajo agrícola, con el fin de crear un plan para formar un sindicato que peleara por los derechos de los trabajadores del campo.

Sus esfuerzos comenzaron a dar frutos en 1962 al fundar la Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores del Campo (The National Farm Workers



Courtesy of the César Chávez Foundation

Chávez durante una reunión con los campesinos agrícolas

Association) con la ayuda de Dolores Huerta, una activista joven que apoyaba la idea de Chávez. Con el tiempo, la asociación se convirtió en la Unión de Trabajadores del Campo (United Farm Workers) mejor conocida como la UFW. Este sindicato fue el primer movimiento organizado para obtener los derechos de los trabajadores agrícolas estadounidenses. Posteriormente, en 1965, Chávez brindó apoyo a un grupo de campesinos filipinos quienes se declararon en huelga exigiendo un aumento de sueldo. Una semana más tarde 1,200 familias se unieron a la huelga. El sindicato creó una bandera de color rojo con un águila en el centro, la cual levantaban con orgullo los trabajadores campesinos.

Chávez entendió que era necesario conseguir el apoyo más allá del área de Delano para que la lucha a favor de los trabajadores agrícolas

tuviera éxito. Los huelguistas se expandieron en varias ciudades por todos los Estados Unidos, informando a la gente sobre las condiciones laborales inhumanas en las que vivían los cosechadores de uvas. Los seguidores de Chávez solicitaron en estas ciudades abstenerse de comprar uvas como una manera de apoyar la causa. Chávez y sus seguidores tuvieron éxito al lograr un boicot (protesta en la que la gente se rehúsa a comprar un producto) que paralizó la comercialización de las uvas. La razón principal del boicot era exigir mejores salarios y condiciones laborales adecuadas. Este fue considerado una de las victorias más importantes del sector sindical en Estados Unidos.

Las iniciativas de Chávez a favor de los campesinos, lo llevaron a realizar una serie de huelgas de hambre. A través de estas acciones, Chávez no solo demostraba su forma pacífica de llevar a cabo sus

manifestaciones, si no también promovía la no violencia por parte de los trabajadores campesinos. En 1968, Chávez hizo su primera huelga de hambre en Delano, con una duración de 25 días. Durante esta huelga, Chávez recibió la visita de Robert F. Kennedy, candidato presidencial y hermano del Presidente de los Estados Unidos John F. Kennedy, quien apoyaba la causa y lucha de Chávez. En 1972, Chávez ayunó en oposición a una reciente legislación aprobada en Arizona, que prohibía los boicots y huelgas durante los días de cosecha. El último ayuno que realizó Chávez culminó en agosto de 1988 y tuvo una duración de 36 días. El motivo de este ayuno era dar a conocer al público los efectos dañinos que los pesticidas causaban a la salud de los campesinos y sus hijos.

A pesar de todos los obstáculos que Chávez encontró en su trayectoria como líder sindical, su esfuerzo y perseverancia lo llevaron a obtener grandes logros para la fuerza laboral. Chávez continuamente mencionó la frase "los ricos tienen dinero, pero los pobres tenemos tiempo", haciendo referencia que las metas no se lograrían de la noche a la mañana y que se requeriría mucha paciencia y disciplina. Chávez luchó incansablemente y logró mejorar las condiciones de los trabajadores agrícolas.

El 23 de abril de 1993, Cesar Chávez falleció a la edad de 66 años. A su funeral, en Delano, asistieron más de 50,000 campesinos y partidarios de la UFW para rendir homenaje al valiente y humilde hombre que trabajó arduamente por la dignidad de los trabajadores agrícolas. Fue el funeral más grande realizado para un líder laboral en los Estados Unidos.



Courtesy of the César Chávez Foundation

Infomando sobre los daños de los pesticidas



Courtesy of the César Chávez Foundation

Chávez se reúne con los Kennedy