

San Quentin News

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Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Riders Pablo Sandoval and Valentino on Frisian horses

CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION DRAWS FRISIAN HORSES AND LOW RIDERS

In the wake of mass deportations, San Quentin residents celebrated Cinco de Mayo, displaying various art forms of Mexican and Aztec culture.

On May 5th, 1862 in the state of Puebla, Mexico, at the military forts of Loreto and Guadalupe, Mexican soldiers defeated the French army, led by General Ignacio Zaragoza.

The victory was followed by then Mexican President Benito Juarez declaring Cinco de Mayo a holiday in the Mexican state of Puebla, according to Wikipedia.

“When I think about Cinco de Mayo, I think

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair

about family,” said resident Carlos Drouaillet. “It had a big impact on my family because there was opposition on each side of our birthplaces.”

Born in France in 1954, he grew up in the state of Veracruz Mexico, northeast of Puebla. His wife was born in Puebla in 1957; he stated that there was a chance their ancestors fought against each other during the war.

To kick off the festivities on the prison’s Lower Yard attendees sang Mexico’s National Anthem in unison, as the SQ Veteran’s Group displayed the United States, Californian, and Mexican flags.

Resident Arturo Melendez hosted the celebration; he spoke about the difficulties of celebrating the holiday behind bars. He stated that, gangs once used Indigenous cultural symbols to validate their identity.

See HOLIDAY on pg 4

Program provides safe space to discuss shame and trauma

By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

A new 26-week self-help program has been established at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, designed to help those convicted of a sex offense to understand why they committed the crime.

The program’s name, B.R.A.V.E., stands for Bridging, Responsibility, Accountability and Vulnerability through Empathy. It began in January 2025 with 38 participants in attendance, which included volunteers and administrative and medical officials.

The program gives participants a safe place to understand the trauma they have caused without fear and stigma. This environment will encourage participants to freely discuss the shame and guilt they feel about the bad decisions they made.

“Only an incarcerated sex offender truly understands another incarcerated sex offender, who is trying to prove to our victims and our communities that we are doing the work,” said B.R.A.V.E. co-founder and SQ resident Louis Light.

According to the curriculum, B.R.A.V.E. provides beginner-level philosophies and teachings that help participants grasp full accountability of the harm they created.

The program is in accord with CDCR’s Department Operations Manual and is classified as a “Sexual Harm” group. Therefore, it is a “Special Service Group” with a very specific purpose.

The co-founders believe sincere

See BRAVE on pg 4

Normalization takes shape at San Quentin

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair

An effort to transform a previously notorious environment into a more humane environment has induced San Quentin residents to discuss what is, and what is not, normalized incarceration.

Some residents offer different opinions ranging from civilized living quarters, staff and residents’ relations, educational opportunities, and de-humanized treatment.

“I think the word normalization is being misconstrued to mean normalizing prison,” said SQ resident Steve Brooks. “What I understand it to mean is reducing the shock value society will have on those about to return to society.”

The age-old-policy of double bunk beds is a hot-button-issue, and resident Justin Wharton is not a fan.

Wharton said that living in such a small space does not allow much privacy and it’s not conducive to a normal life.

American Correctional Association recommends 92 square feet when two people occupy a cell; at SQ two people share 46 square feet.

See NORMAL on pg 7

Healing circle highlights reconciliation and accountability



Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Survivors, administrators, and residents walk a lap to acknowledge victims and survivors of crime

By Michael Callahan
Staff Writer

A Day of Healing was celebrated at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center’s Lower Yard in April. The day is part of Crime Victims’ Rights Week, and for the last three years community members and victims’ rights organizations

have come to discuss the effects crime has had in their lives.

“It was really hard to hear actual victims talk about how they lost loved ones in their life. I know I am responsible for causing someone else harm and I feel horrible because I took someone’s life,” resident Michael Thompson said.

Prior to the event, 33 residents, guests and

administrators gathered for a healing circle, meditation, reflection, healing, and discussions on accountability. The circle was a safe space for survivors and residents to express themselves and work toward resolution, reconciliation, and emotional restoration.

“Forgiving myself helped me to move forward and take responsibility for my crime. Events like this show how healing is possible for victims and offenders,” Thompson said.

Mick Gardner, co-founder of No More Tears, a San Quentin program that focuses on areas such as victim impact, co-facilitated the healing circle. Gardner talked about the importance of recognizing harm done in communities and the ways in which the event translated to honoring survivors and victims.

“This is very important to us. I started [working for CDCR] when it was really tough on crime, however I have evolved a lot,” Warden Chance Andes said. “Since getting to SQ, I have never seen such accountability.”

At the start of the healing circle residents were asked if you could speak to someone impacted in your past what would you say. Several residents spoke about being in denial and said that given the chance to speak to their victims, they would apologize and take accountability for their actions. Others talked about how they understand the impact their crime had on victims.

“[The] healing circle was a profound moment

See VICTIMS on pg 4



SUBSTANCE TREATMENT CEREMONY

More than 150 residents recognized

— STORY ON PAGE 5



FIRST EVER CROSS-FIT

Residents and staff compete in fitness challenge

— STORY ON PAGE 11

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LGBTQIA+

Glimmer of hope for marginalized transgender community

Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Transgender residents host panel discussion, storytelling, and powerful performances

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chair

San Quentin Rehabilitation Center held its first Transgender Visibility Night on April 1, giving a glimpse of hope to the community.

SQ residents gathered in Chapel B to celebrate their true identities with members and supporters of the transgender and gender non-conforming community.

“Thirty-four years of incarceration, this is the first time I was allowed to feel love and inclusivity,” said Taina Ortiz, a trans woman housed at SQ. “The other institutions I’ve been at don’t let you do this kind of thing, where we can be ourselves without any retribution.”

Transgender communities are exposed to numerous adversities, which both compromises and threatens their quality of life. The community has been faced

with premature death and dehumanizing abuse that is substantially higher than for cisgendered people, according to the event’s program.

David Greenwald, from the news publication *Davis Vanguard*, called the event a beacon of hope in a dark place.

This event was organized by an incarcerated transgender woman, Angie Gordon. Gordon has expressed concerns about how people like her have been disproportionately impacted by crime, and how visibility of the community is critical to staying safe.

“Because you can’t help somebody that you can’t see,” Gordon said.

The event was a celebration of identities and struggles inside prison settings. It re-conceived visibility as resilience for love, healing, and inclusivity for thousands of incarcerated members of this community.

“I think that this is a real step forward where people are able to talk about the complexities of existence in prison, a system [that] doesn’t recognize individual issues,” said Cynthia Rodriguez, vice-chair of the Board of Directors for *Davis Vanguard*. “People in prison are more than their offenses. These are all brave, thoughtful individuals.”

A panel discussion was held with candid storytelling and powerful performances, and music from an incarcerated band “The 115’s.”

One of the event’s participants shared that they felt a relieving of pressure now that they can be themselves, adding that being in the open has brought them a sense of peace and tranquility.

Dr. April Carrillo, a queer criminologist from the University of South Dakota and part of the San Quentin administration, chimed in via Skype as a facilitator and consultant.

She asked the panel about the difficulties in maintaining a romantic relationship while incarcerated. According to the California Code of Regulation Title 15, it is prohibited for incarcerated people to have an ‘intimate relationship’ with other residents.

This topic hit home to some of the transgender women who are afraid to be denied parole after getting a disciplinary infraction for being perceived as too friendly with others. One of the panelists expressed disappointment because an officer disciplined a friend for hugging someone on the prison yard.

“We were there to share a message of resiliency in the face of setback,” Gordon told attendees. “Trump is a punch in the face, for many out there but especially for the trans community. But punches in the face are going to happen; it’s what you do with those moments, right?”

Celebration of Native American culture and traditions

Above left: Sacred Staff that was carried in 1977 walk from the Bay-Area to Washington D.C. to raise support for religious freedoms Right: Dance Busell

Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Drum ceremony

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chair

San Quentin’s incarcerated Native Americans gathered with family and guests to celebrate the riches of their culture in a traditional Powwow.

According to Gregory “White Eagle” Coates, a San Quentin Rehabilitation Center resident, the first Powwow inside San Quentin took place in 1978. As one of the eldest, he felt blessed to continue with this tradition.

Jerry “Running Deer” Ysla, representing the Achacjemen Nation, brought plenty of humor through his storytelling, a tradition dating back millennia. The laughter and shouts echoed inside San Quentin’s Chapel B.

Ron Self, San Quentin’s sponsor for Native American events and the creator of Veterans Healing Veterans, said, “This event is about

history and culture and if you don’t write it down it’s forgotten. If it was not for the San Quentin administration, we wouldn’t be here this day. To be allowed to supervise you guys with a statewide clearance this is a trust. I am the only staff here among the incarcerated.”

Self, a former lifer who served 23 years of a 33-years-to-life sentence, said he felt grateful to the administration for trusting him.

Incarcerated persons conducted the traditional ceremonial dance around the drums while family and guests danced in circle to the drumbeats. Coates danced in

full regalia, honoring all the ancestors who have fought to keep alive these traditions and way of life.

“It is really beautiful and powerful to see people do what they have done for thousands years, even within the confinement of prison,” said Elsie DuBray, who visited San Quentin for the first time. “Our culture and identity is not only for people who are on the outside, it is something that not even prison can take away.”

In North American indigenous cultures, the New Year has traditionally fallen at the end of January or the first part of February, based on the constellations and moon phases, according to a Manataka American Indian Council report.

The style and types of dances at a Powwow came from the traditions of the Great Plains. Among other incarcerated Native Americans, Maxx Robison, one of the group members who performed during the event, said he felt connected to his culture like never before. According to Robison, the Powwow gave his family a chance to see him do something positive.

Henry Frank, the communication director for Williams James Association, recalled the impact that a visit from a formerly incarcerated person had on him during one of the events at the chapel. He said he understood the importance of Powwows and that connecting with ancestral roots would give a person hope and purpose in life.

“Today, April 19, makes it 12 years since I paroled as a lifer with a 29-years-to-life sentence. I remember being in blue at the Powwow and what it meant to me. During my incarceration, when I attended Powwows I felt like I was being seen,” said Frank.

San Quentin News

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The *San Quentin News* strives to include our readers’ voices in every issue. We invite prison residents, staff, and volunteers to submit their original articles, letters to the editor, and art for potential publication. Submissions should be clear, concise (350 words or less), true, and of interest to our incarcerated community.

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EDITORIAL

Letters to the editor reflect impact of San Quentin News

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Editor-in-Chief

Letters to the editor do not go unread when they arrive at San Quentin News. The letters are forwarded to us by San Quentin’s public information officer after they are inspected. Later, I am handed a bag that sometimes contains 50 to 100 pieces of mail from prisons and jails around the country—mostly from California.

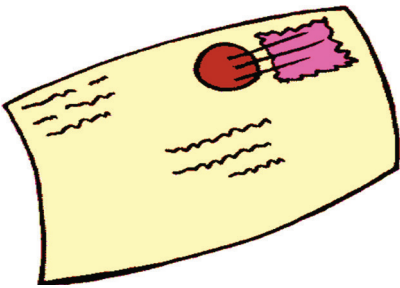
Sometimes, the volume of mail overwhelms the newsroom, but there is no better way to measure the impact *San Quentin News* has on incarcerated readers. For more than a decade, the staff and I have accepted the responsibly to handle the mail with care.

It has always been my firm position that anyone who reads *San Quentin News* is a customer, whether or not they pay for the newspaper. I, too, am a consumer of news. I enjoy the interexchange of information of all media.

So, when someone undertakes to spend time and effort to write, that action merits a reply, whenever possible. Some letters deserve a public response, like Jared’s when he wrote from Pleasant Valley State Prison.

“I find your profiles of incarcerated men who have been or will be released following countless years behind bars (quite literally in San Quentin) the most inspiring and impactful journalism that you can do,” Jared wrote on March 28, 2025. “All incarcerated people have a difficult journey ahead of them, so to read about those who have come out the other side of it and how they went about it gives those of us still inside, who are beginning a long sentence, a blueprint on how it can be done.”

This has been the mission of *San Quentin News*. The mainstream



corporate and commercial media’s forte is to report on crime and punishment. None of that is news to a prisoner because most of hear such stories all day long. It is the reason newspapers report on incarceration, rehabilitation, and successful reentry to society.

Recently, Eric wrote from Pelican Bay State Prison and casually referred to himself as “a first-term know-nothing” who “relies on the *San Quentin News* to learn about our shared system.”

We share many things, including sentiments, in this “system.” It is a truth underscored by Kevin B. who was interviewed for a May 4, 2025 story that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*. He spent nearly two decades on Death Row here at San Quentin and is now becoming accustomed to serving his sentence at California State Prison Solano, where he described younger inmates as “undisciplined” with no interest in improving themselves. “If this is our future, it’s terrible,” he said.

What Eric, Jared, and Kevin B. seemingly have in common is the insight and wisdom that will help them endure their carceral sojourn so they, too, will one day emerge on the other side of the prison gate, hopefully better than when they arrived.

I am not certain how or why so many in the generations after me became

so lost. I could make excuses for them and point to the environment, schools, drugs, and other systemic social ills that have fostered the collapse of youth on the wrong side of history. These are real issues, but life is about choices.

How many times have we watched older prisoners cultivate and accelerate the demise of young, impressionable inmates?

Over the years, I have learned just how important bad examples of those who choose to fail in prison can be. They are some of the best contrasts for the young and “first term know-nothings.” Walking disasters are a testament to what *not* to be or *not* to emulate. I would never tell a young man to do something I would not tell my son to do.

For those entering this “shared system,” I will pass on a word I was admonished to embrace by many prisoners whose arrival behind bars preceded mine by decades: Respect. First, have it for yourself. Then give it to everyone else, staff included. Do not expect reciprocation.

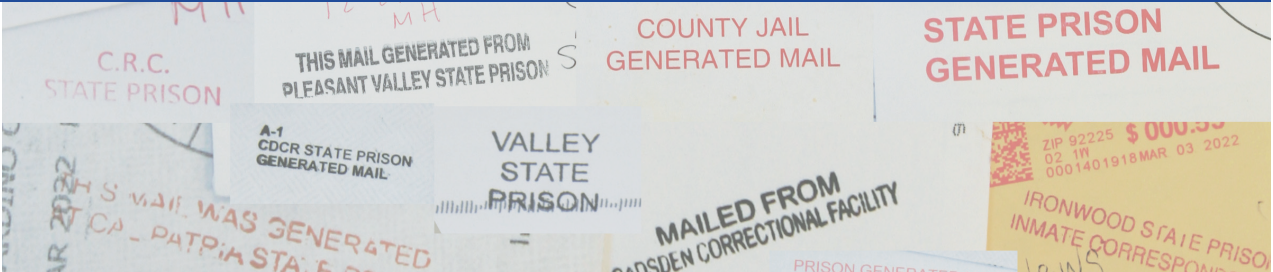
Time will pass with or without you, but stay your course. Follow your own path, and be your own man. Read books, write letters, study the law, and always use your time wisely — especially during long periods of isolation due to lockdowns or some other unforeseeable event.

Hang in there, juxtapose the contrast of success and failure, and keep the following poem in mind:

Without the cold and desolation of winter

There could not be the warmth and splendor of spring
Hardships have tempered and strengthened me,
And turned my mind to steel.
--Ho Chi Minh

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Reader shares praise and constructive criticism

Dear San Quentin News staff,

To begin, I want to express my appreciation for all that you do at SQN. I look forward to reading every issue you put out each and every month because it always contains informative articles about various justice-related news that has the ability to lift my spirits while giving me hope for a better future inside and—God willing—outside of prison.

In particular, I find your profiles of incarcerated men who have been or will be released following countless years behind bars (quite literally in San Quentin) the most inspiring and impactful journalism that you can do. All incarcerated people have a difficult journey ahead of them, so to read about those who have come out the other side of it and how they went about it gives those of us still inside, who are beginning a long sentence, a blueprint on how it can be done. I encourage you to include more profiles of incarcerated men that highlight the benefits of their participation in positive programming.

Also, I’m grateful for your inclusion of CCWF’s *Paper Trail* with every issue of SQN. I find it fascinating and enlightening to read about incarceration from a woman’s perspective. I hope that it remains a permanent insert included with every SQN issue, and I wish for its continued success.

And now, I must share some constructive criticism. I say “must” because I feel that it’s necessary for the staff at SQN to hear it so that they can produce their best work.

I’ve been noticing quite a lot of compositional errors from some of your writers, such as misplaced or missing punctuation marks, sentence fragments used as complete sentences, inconsistent verb tenses within a sentence, incorrect capitalization of proper nouns, and errors with captioning photos. When I read these

articles and come across these errors, first of all, it makes the reading frustrating and difficult to follow, and secondly, I cringe internally with embarrassment because I can instantly recognize how SQN is depicted by the public as though it was obviously written by inadequately educated people in prison who don’t have a proofreader.

We as incarcerated people have many obstacles to overcome, especially the character defects that got us in here, yet one of the negative aspersions we have the power to dispel about people in prison is that we can do something well, specifically in the journalism field, and thus requires the ability to follow the rules of English composition.

I hope that in the future your writers will put more time and effort into editing, revising, and proofreading their pieces before submitting them for publication—not only for the sake of taking pride in their work, but also for maintaining the reputation and preserving the legacy of California’s preeminent prison journalism publication, *San Quentin News*.

Besides this bit of criticism, keep up the good work.

—Jared Herdt
Pleasant Valley State Prison
Coalinga, CA 93210

Positive programming inspires reader

Dear San Quentin News staff,

My name is Arturo Morfin. I am serving LWOP here at KVSP and I would really like to receive the *San Quentin News* every issue as it comes out if possible. I do not have any money, but I need you to know that your newspaper is a positive hope for me. I attend Bakersfield College in pursuit of my major in Communications. I one day hope to be able to go to San Quentin and positively program there. At the moment there is nothing that can get

me home, but San Quentin would be the closest thing to home for me. I daydream of being on the Giant’s team and being around people who want to better their life in here. Thank you for your time, have a great day.

—Arturo Morfin
Kern Valley State Prison
Delano, CA 93216

Big fan of SQNews all the way from New York

Dear San Quentin News staff,

My name is Alfredo Arvelo, and I just want to say that I am a big fan of SQN. I have been incarcerated in a New York State Civil Commitment facility for 10 plus years and at time it feels hopeless. But after reading your newspaper I feel the light of hope coming back.

Your stories have given me some ideas to bring up at my facility. Thanks so much and keep up the good work.

—Alfredo Arvelo
STARC- Oakview
Mercy, NY 13403

Incarcerated Oregonians publication aims high

Dear San Quentin News staff,

We are a small group of writers in Oregon that publish a monthly newsletter and a quarterly magazine. Our newsletter has been in circulation for almost seven years and our magazine started last year. Our newsletter prints at our facility, while the magazine is published at every Oregon Prison.

We only recently learned of SQ News and we’ve become big fans. The work you do is truly impressive- a pinnacle at which we aim. Good luck and thank you for setting the bar.

—Phillip Luna
Eastern Oregon Correctional Institute
Pendleton, OR 97801

HOLIDAY

Continued from page 1

Resident's reconnect with their heritage and roots on Cinco De Mayo



Old Illusions car club brought in three classic cars

As a result CDCR banned cultural symbols and if an incarcerated person had similar tattoos there were consequences.

“I feel we [Mexican People] have come a long way from before, it was hard to express our culture openly, it’s amazing,” said SQ resident Olegario Ambriz.

Next the resident Banda Esperanza performed three songs titled, El Rey, La Rubia Y Morenas Y Cielito Lindo, led by guitarist and vocalist Gerry S. Muratalla.

SQ’s Greater Good Band, led by resident John Zeretzke played a version of Carlos Santana’s Oye Como ba? The crowd clapped and sang with the band, as if Santana was performing live.

On the sideline of the facilities basketball court residents displayed Mexican and Aztec paintings hanging along side the fence, there were paintings of low riders and Aztecan Warriors on horseback jumping over a barbed wire fences.

Another painting depicted a Mexican soldier on horseback wielding a sword striking a French soldier; in another painting there was complete layout from the battle scene at Puebla.

In the middle of the court three vintage cars representing the “Old Illusion” car club based in

Northern Calif, the club consisted of classic cars that were built prior to 1954.

Jesse Torres owner of a two tone beige and black 1928, 2-door Ford. He said, fixing, driving, and partaking in a lot of cars shows is the best part of building these cars.

Nancy Torres the wife of Jesse, said that the cars has brought joy and compassion to their marriage of 45 years, and that they agree and disagree but working together is what keeps them together.

Javier the owner of a 1936 two-tone burgundy and black Chevrolet Master deluxe sport, stated that the car was offered only in back in 1936, and then offered in another color, if you wanted the different color you paid extra.

He added that, building a custom car is life long work; “turning to drugs and alcohol in this business will not work for you,” he said.

Curtis Reynolds is the owner of the 1937, black Chevrolet Master deluxe-coupe with a rumble seat.

“The seat is what makes the car rare, it’s gangster as (expletive),” said Reynolds “I have been working on this (expletive) all my life, it’s a stress reliever and I have a very supportive wife.”

Despite the display of vintage cars, residents

formed a quarter mile line to receive Mexican style candy.

The candies are sweet, spicy, with fruits flavors, which are Mexican traditional treats served in people’s homes and restaurants, said Cristina Brown of Bridges of Hope Calif. She stated that her organization bridges the gap between incarcerated families such as parents and children.

Abby Salim the co-founder of Empowering Women impacted by incarceration, greeted residents with a big smile as she gave people traditional Mexican candy. She said that her organization connects women with resources upon re-entering society.

“It goes to show that two different organizations can work together to serve our people,” Brown said.

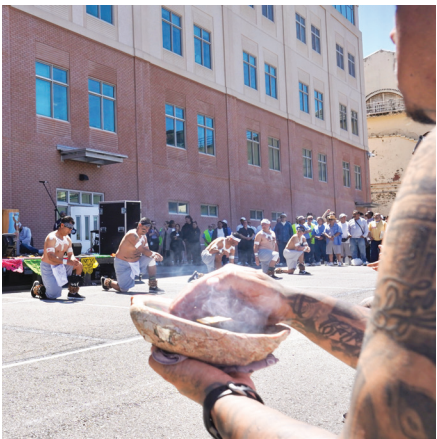
Marty a Native Healer was introduced to bless the Aztec Cuauhoceloti [Warrior] dancers.

“I acknowledge the indigenous people of this land. As we celebrate Cinco de Mayo, said the Native Healer.”

The incarcerated performers showed poise as they made their way in front of a huge crowd, one kick to the left then slide followed by a bounce, and then one kick to the right and slide followed by a bounce.



San Quentin's Unico Elemento residents' Hispanic band



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Aztec dancers perform

As the Aztec dancers finished their routine, the crowd became astound to witness dancing horses, a traditional Cinco de Mayo celebration.

The crowd formed a huge oval shape circle; to make way for two Frisian bred horses, rider Pablo Sandoval was on the bigger black horse, who mane was almost as long as the horse’s height.

Valentino was riding a smaller but faster reddish brown horse. Under the guidance of the riders, the horses danced moving to the left and then to the right and then backwards. It was though the horses were performing a Texas 2-step.

Every time the horses made a dashing move the crowd erupted with applause, and cheers in closing out the day’s celebration.

“Cinco de Mayo is an opportunity for me to reconnect with the heritage and never forget my roots,” said resident Carlos Ramirez.

In 1862 the U.S began celebrating Cinco de Mayo in the city of Columbia California, today other Countries such as: Cape Town South Africa, Lagos Nigeria, and Osaka Japan, and including the United Kingdom recognizes the holiday, according to Wikipedia.



Marty blows into a conch shell to start ceremony



Sylvia Amador and residents dance to "Folklorico" the Spanish version of the line dance



Californians for Safety and Justice Executive Director Tinisch Hollins



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Mick Gardner with residents and Warden Chance Andes

Residents provide healing space for survivors of crime

VICTIMS

Continued from page 1

of peace and accountability on a collective level. I have been a part of healing circles before but there was a great serenity and respect. Victims and survivors shared experiences and a commonality of traumas,” resident Clinton Lorenzo Moore said.

Californians for Safety and Justice Executive Director Tinisch Hollins talked about her experience coming into San Quentin 20 years ago, while acknowledging her reason for having attended this late April event.

“I share my story to empower people to know your

next decision can heal someone and can help prevent the next person from experiencing what I feel,” Hollins said.

Participants silently circled the Lower Yard’s baseball field to show solidarity for survivors and victims. Staff members and guests carried placards with messages in various languages made by residents, representing unity and togetherness, all for the same cause: To heal, not harm. Residents laid colored ribbons that represented the various crimes they committed on a paper canvas.

Outside guest Kisai Henriquez said she does social justice work with the youth outside the prison. “I realize how much your inner child needs space to breathe and

healing. Often we perpetuate harm because we do not get to do [cognitive behavior] work and the youth are looking for guidance and protection.”

She said society needs more spaces for healing and how she believes it can happen anywhere. “You can cultivate a space that is nurturing, healing, and sows seeds for change,” Henriquez said.

Resident Aaron Morton said he was nervous to be in a space where he had to be vulnerable. He said he drew inspiration from formerly incarcerated Floyd Collins and Sol Mercado who attended and spoke.

“I felt relief and accepted. I realized how wrong it was for me to commit murder and I have to be accountable for that,” Morton said.

Self-help program allows sex offenders to discuss accountability through empathy

BRAVE

Continued from page 1

participation, and complete understanding may help offenders acquire strategies to cope with character defects and make amends with their communities inside and outside of prison.

“Accountability and a second chance at doing the very hard work assists our participants in realizing that by making a decision to join B.R.A.V.E., they can meet their past head on and come out of the darkness of shame,” said SQ program facilitator Robert Esquivel.

The program has three absolute truth elements in its guidelines for success: all program participants are equally respected, everyone is capable of change, and nothing is static because change is possible.

“The miracle is seeing other men come to this group crying and breaking down not because they are weak, but because they never had an avenue to work on their crimes,” Esquivel said.

This group also allows participants a way to express their own trauma of adverse childhood experiences, moving toward healing for those who were abused.

B.R.A.V.E. co-founder and SQ resident Anthony

M. Carvalho said this year B.R.A.V.E. has also created a Sex Addicts Anonymous 12-step-program to serve both the incarcerated Spanish and English communities.

He added that, in the foreseeable future, B.R.A.V.E. is looking to expand to other correctional jurisdictions, which also includes a correspondence course. The program also focuses on after-care and support such as re-entry housing.

B.R.A.V.E. has a partnership with YIMBY, a Limited Liability Corporation. The goal is to improve the lives of the marginalized communities that include people who have committed sexual offenses.

YIMBY and B.R.A.V.E. will offer treatment upon a resident’s release. Carvalho said that an important ingredient in fighting recidivism is to focus on monetary funding for the housing of sex offenders once released.

“I have been working with YIMBY and they are investing up to \$2 million for initial housing for sex offenders,” Carvalho said. “This shows the seriousness of B.R.A.V.E. and its commitment toward helping one of the largest populations in CDCR.”

The program’s start-up includes volunteers from SQRC’s Mental Health and Medical Department including

retired nurses, marriage and family therapists, retired probation officers, and SQRC administration.

SQRC’s Community Resources Manager M. Barragan approved the program’s inception while the prison’s medical personnel Doctor E. Tootell and Doctor E. Anderson edited the curriculum’s content.

“The work Light and Carvalho have done should not go unnoticed,” said Dr. E. Anderson. “To give people the chance to have a voice ... and help communities heal ... is quite amazing.”

According to Doctor Tootell, she acknowledged that groups like SAA and B.R.A.V.E. are the most important groups to come to CDCR in years.

As testament of hard work and understanding the “why” in offending, the Board of Parole Hearings has recognized co-founder Light’s work. In March of this year, Light received a parole date after two previous parole denials and 30 years of incarceration.



GRADUATIONS

Conflict resolution and effective communication program graduates 20



Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Outside and inside team members of the Transformative Mediation program

**By Bostyon Johnson
Managing Editor**

On May 1, San Quentin Rehabilitation Center honored 19 incarcerated individuals for completing the voluntary 150-hour Transformative Mediation program. The curriculum focuses

on effective communication, active listening, and healing. Residents learn tools for mediating and resolving conflict among residents in the prison community, and some have used the tools they learned to rebuild family relationships. Rochelle Edwards, executive director at the

Transformative Mediation Institute, has worked in prisons more than two decades. She said she wanted to develop a program to assist incarcerated residents with conflict resolution both inside and outside of prison walls. “This group began because I saw—over my 25 years—a lot of conflicts between

groups, and most of the guys were already addressing the conflict,” Edwards said. Edwards, for accepting and supporting the program, acknowledged San Quentin’s Warden C. Andes and Chief Deputy Warden (A) E. Patao. “You set the tone for what is possible here, and I really want to acknowledge

you,” said Edwards. The Veterans Group of San Quentin initiated the celebration by presenting the color guard and performing the national anthem. The graduates followed behind, marching in unison holding large walking sticks that represented the strength of connectivity, rooted within the group. The song This Little Light of Mine rang throughout Chapel A as the graduates stomped their feet and pounded walking sticks in a marching formation. “With each beat, we become stronger, more rooted, and connected to each other,” said three-time Grammy Award winner Melody Gamore who facilitated the procession. “That rhythm is a conduit of freedom.” Family, friends, administrative staff, and other residents were waiting in the pews to see the graduates wearing smiles as bright as their red caps and gowns. Resident alumni, Michael Callahan and Jareal Nelson, discussed restorative

justice, nonviolence, and effective communication as the components of the program, touting a success rate of 75-80% among the mediations held in San Quentin Rehabilitation Center. Graduate Hamisi Spears said being a part of Transformative Mediation program has not only helped him resolve conflicts in prison, but it has allowed him to revive his relationship with his estranged daughter. He said that when his daughter was five years old she said she hated him. The graduation was his second time seeing her since that day. Many family members gave remarks about the transformation they have seen in their incarcerated loved ones. Graduate Michael Walker’s wife talked about how different her telephone conversations have been with him. “I am very proud of my husband, Michael Walker, because I hear him on the phone all the time saying, ‘yes I’m here and I’m listening,’” Walker’s wife said.

12-step program addresses trauma and improves emotional awareness

**By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair**

At an Emotional Awareness Therapy graduation a former Death Row resident spoke about what the program has done for him.

Steven Crittenden previously spent 35 years isolated in California’s Condemned Unit. He fought back tears as he expressed the love and support he received from the program. “If the E.A.T. family had not been there for me,” Crittenden said. “I probably would not be here today; the program has taught me that I am not my crime.”

The program held its second annual graduation in San Quentin’s Protestant Chapel to recognize 44 residents for their accomplishments. The program is based on a 12-step process that the founder and SQ resident Harry Goodall Jr. wants to bring the world.

The event kicked off with a meditation practice led by Goodall. He asked the attendees to close their eyes, instructing them take three deep breaths, inhaling through their noses and exhaling through their mouths. He told the audience to repeat after him, “I accept all of the light and dark. I am worthy of the attention of others.” The founder added that E.A.T. helps participants find coping skills to deal with their emotions, as a way to remove themselves from the chaos within their bodies. The program’s chairperson and graduate Eric Allen hosted the event. He greeted

everybody and thanked Goodall, who mentored him through the process of emotional awareness. Allen stated that he has plans to give back to those who have a desire to join the program. He showed appreciation for the group’s sponsor, A. Torres, and San Quentin’s administration. He asked San Quentin Warden C. Andes to speak; the Warden spoke about how significant it is to be aware of one’s emotions. “To be aware of our emotions is an important thing. I had to learn a lot myself,” Andes said. “I commend you all for the accountability. I appreciate that. Your family and friends are proud of you.”

Next Allen introduced graduate Alex Monette, who spoke about his journey and what he has learned through the program. “I use to think I was tough, until I unlocked what was once buried,” Monette said. “If we can invest in our emotional education, we can prevent victims from being created.” E.A.T. graduate Estrella “Star” Redondo said that this is her second time participating in the program; she was asked to come back. “Before I was not able to internalize the trauma in my childhood. Now I am able to understand, which has helped me identify my problems,” Redondo said. The program’s sponsor Francie Lehmer showed appreciation for Goodall and the graduates. She told the audience that what she has learned from the program



Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Forty-four residents recognized for completion of the six-month and year-long courses

applies to her everyday life. “I am proud of you for the hard and painful work you endured. Anybody can benefit from this program,” Lehmer said. “May you all be free from suffering, and facilitate for life.” SQ resident graduate Aaron Moton performed a dance routine of modern Hip-Hop. He did a back flip and the audience responded with oohs and ahs. “Dancing for me is a coping skill. It brings me peace and joy,” Moton said. “I have been dancing since I was five years old.” Patrick Scott from the non-profit organization 100 years was in attendance. He said that his group goes into Bay Area Juvenile Halls to mentor at-risk youth. The group’s name was chosen from time served in prison by him and

two other colleagues. “Every room you walk in, you must have emotional awareness,” said Scott. “You must be aware of your surroundings wherever you are.” A video presentation was narrated by the program’s founder. The film identified the accomplishment of the graduates’ emotional awareness to live violence free. “Healing is complicated, because most have lived with trauma,” Goodall narrated. “You no longer have to hold on to that trauma that you have held on to for so long.” Another graduate, Abdiel Guerrero, told attendees that his thoughts were mostly negative and/or criminal. He added that by taking those negative thoughts, people could shift them to more

positive actions. Alison Hunter, a member of E.A.T.’s board, said that she is a writer, an editor, a visual artist, and jokingly the inventor of liquid soap. She added that, the group offers a second chance, just “not the second chance people think.” She was referring to a moment in time, and that a second will not be lost in time for anyone who is graduating. Hunter said that she experienced the loss of her mother and her dog; a friend called her when she was mourning, but she did not answer. “I did not have anything to give anybody,” Hunter said. “The hard work you put in will pay off in a moment’s time.” The time had come to present the graduates with certificates

of achievement. Goodall, Torres, and Lehmer took to the stage in acknowledgment of the 44 graduates. Each certificate described viable coping skills the group teaches its members in order for them to combat domestic violence, alcohol addiction, cognitive distortions, and trauma. All in attendance were served pepperoni and cheese pizza, tortilla chips, raspberry muffins, and Gatorade as people mingled with family and friends “This graduation was not about the food. It’s about the men who dedicated themselves for six months to a year addressing trauma, learning coping skills and the ability to grow as an individual,” Allen said.

Cognitive behavioral and life skills courses aid substance use treatment

**By Eric Allen
Staff Writer**

Rehabilitation and personal growth was on full display as the Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment program graduated 166 students from their Life Skills and Cognitive Behavior Intervention course at San Quentin inside Chapel B. The program’s long-term goal is to reduce the recidivism rate within California prison system and to provide a comprehensive approach to substance use treatment in a timely and effective evidence-based approach.

During the 28-week course, participants are required to finish a 14-week living in balance module and a CBI module. The five core concepts include getting motivated to change, understanding and reducing angry feelings, understanding victim impact, thinking for change, and parenting inside and out. The I.S.U.D.T. program is sponsored by Center Point, Inc. The organization’s mission is to provide support services, education, training, health care, and counseling. Participants can become certified peer counselors

once they complete the curriculum. Ken Osako joined the program in 2017 and through rigorous academic training has become a paid certified counselor. “The starting pay normally begins at 45 cents per hour, and after one year you can receive a pay increase until you reach your max of \$2 per hour,” said Osako. “This class allows me to heal from all the trauma I been through. It also helped me help other people through their struggles”. There are two classes offered to the incarcerated students:

CBI and CBI-Life Skills. Volunteer Dennis Farez, who assists residents in obtaining a California ID when they leave SQ, joined the program in 2017. Farez emceed the event and welcomed all 166 students to the stage to receive their certificates accompanied by prison staff, including Warden C. Andes who spoke about the diversity of the program and the importance of staying drug and alcohol free. “How many of you have substance involved in your commitment offence? So this is a huge step for you, not only to start a program but to have

dedication and commitment,” said Andes. “Addressing some of the things that got you here, that’s what rehabilitation is all about.” Miguel Munoz Huerta participated in both courses. He said his “aha” moment was during his transition to the next phase of the class, after his initial rejection due to personal reasons. He still decided to attend. “I joined Life Skills because I just wanted some time off my sentence. I did not want to be in substance use classes because I felt I didn’t have a drug problem,” said Munoz Huerta. “But along the way

I was able to adopt the things I was learning; they were actually skills that are relevant to my life.” Graduate Jose Diaz finished both classes but struggled the whole way through. Spending two and half years inside the program created many challenges internally and externally for him. “It was challenging for me ‘cause I wasn’t good with dealing with people—everybody was strange at first. But the program helped me get out of my shell, grow, learn skills while maintaining positivity,” said Diaz.

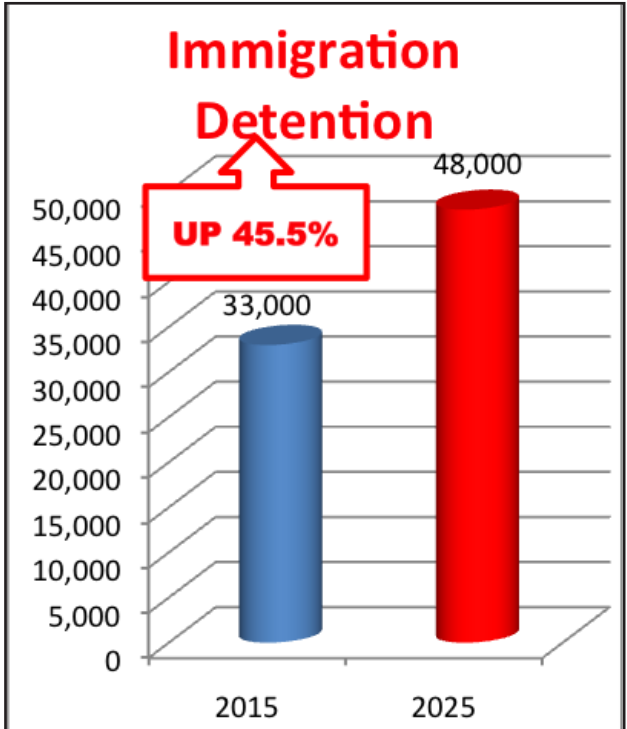
PPI report looks optimistic over 10-year period

**By C. K. Gerhartsreiter
Staff Writer**

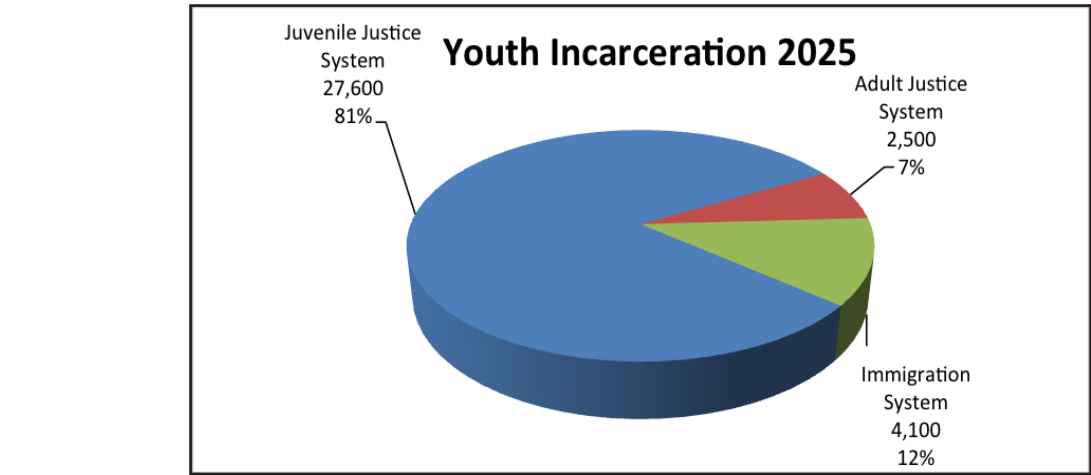
In April 2025, the Prison Policy Initiative again published its annual graphics-heavy analysis of the nation’s prison system called “The Whole Pie.” PPI did its usual detailed job of assembling data from the country’s disparate systems of confinement.

The word “*still*” appeared quite often. The U.S. *still* incarcerated more than any other nation did. Incarcerated populations *still* hovered near 2 million. Racial statistics *still* incarcerate more Black persons (1,096 per 100,000) than White persons (214 per 100,000). *Still*, the report has mostly optimistic data.

“Given the increasing politicization of criminal legal system facts in recent years, it bears repeating that we do



Immigration detentions rose by 15,000 or 45.5%. “The average daily population of 43,759 in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention comes from ICE’s Detention Management spreadsheet, reporting current detention and Alternatives to Detention data as of February 23, 2025,” according to the report.



Mass incarceration and class incarceration

**By Tyrone Jones
Journalism Guild Writer**

As law makers and working class people become aware of tough on crime campaigns, the term “mass incarceration” has been uttered by criminal justice reformers.

The question remains: does mass incarceration truly reflect the population numbers of the masses? For example, Latinos represent 46% of California’s incarcerated population and Blacks represent 28%, despite Blacks representing 6% of California’s overall population, according to the Public Policy Institute of California.

Researchers Wendy Sawyer and Peter Wagner’s study “Mass Incarceration, The Whole Pie”, suggests that prison population numbers are more reflective of those living at or below the poverty line.

The study also showed that the criminal justice system penalizes poverty, starting with the cost of bail. The median felony bail bond amount is \$10,000 equivalent of eight months’ income for someone who is arrested. As a result, people with low incomes are more likely to face the harms of pretrial detention.

Poverty is not only a forecast for imprisonment, it is also often the outcome, as a criminal record and time spent in prison destroys wealth, creates debt, and extinguishes certain job opportunities, stated the study.

San Quentin resident Lee Sanchez, 37, said he was raised by a single parent and grew up in a neighborhood where criminality was normalized.

“When I was a kid, I saw my father work hard as a construction worker, but no matter how hard he worked, we were still dirt poor,” Sanchez said. “Dad ended up pivoting to a life of crime because he saw it as being more lucrative and a more coherent way to get us [siblings] out of poverty.”

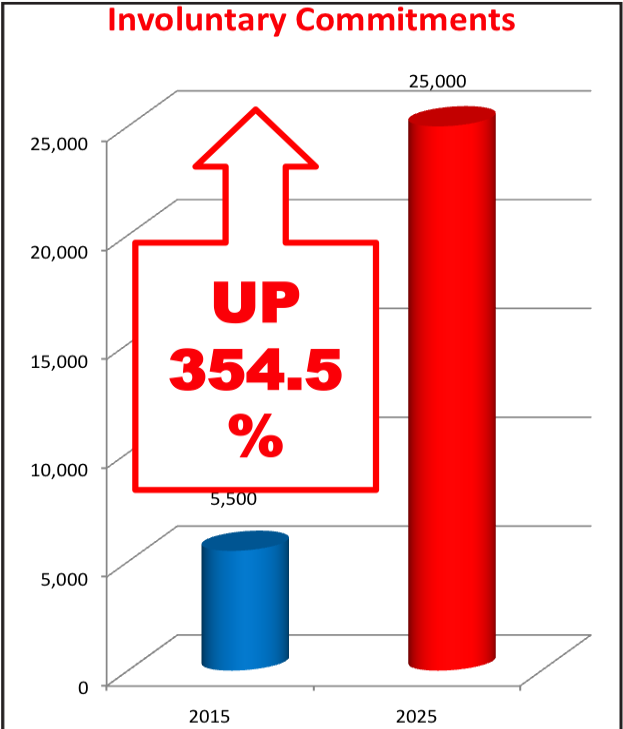
According to Sanchez his father was eventually arrested and sent to

have up-to-date crime statistics from the FBI that affirm that crime remains at historic lows. Preliminary data from the first half of 2024 shows that nationwide, the crime rate for all Index crimes likely hit its lowest point since 1961 last year,” said PPI’s report.

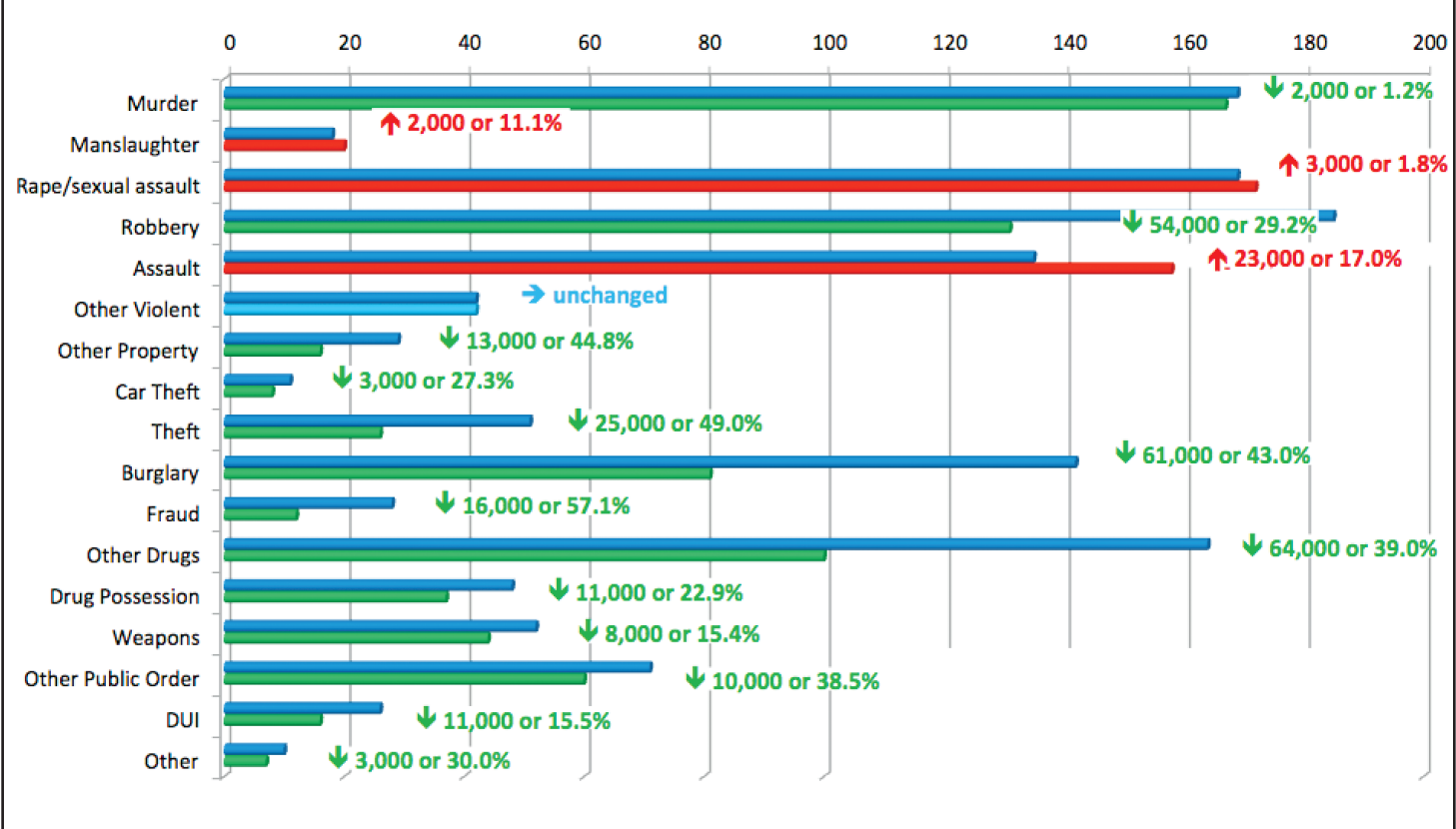
A search of *San Quentin News* archives found an April 2016 article written by then-Associate Editor Kevin D. Sawyer that discussed PPI’s “The Whole Pie” report that used data from 2015. A comparison over 10 years revealed that much has changed for the better.

Sawyer concluded his story by quoting the 2015 PPI report as having said the nation had “the dubious distinction of having the highest incarceration rate in the world.” With a current rate of 664 per 100,000, that quotation *still* applied today.

Graphs and captions by C.K. Gerhartsreiter



In 2015, such incarcerations amounted to 5,500. In 2025, they increased to 25,000. An added 19,500 involuntarily committed persons calculated to the astonishing number of 354.5%. No other category in PPI’s report showed similarly jarring figures. “At least 20 states and the federal government operate facilities for the purposes of detaining people convicted of sex-related crimes after their sentences are complete,” said the report.



From 2015 to 2025, violent crime decreased by 3.8% and murders decreased by 1.2%. Only a few single-digit comparisons showed up and most crime statistics showed far greater decreases.

Property crime statistics revealed double-digit drops. Robberies showed a decline of 54,000 over ten years, a decrease of 29.2%. The crime of burglary tumbled by 61,000 or 43%. Thefts went down by 25,000 or 49% and car thefts dropped by 3,000 or 27.3%. Other property crimes tumbled by 13,000 or 44.8%. The resulting state incarcerations for property crimes showed a decline of 118,000 or 45.2%. In local jails, convictions for property crimes fell by 22,000 or 84.6%.

Drug crimes have seen similarly large declines since 2015. Possession declined by 11,000 or 22.9%. Related drug crimes opaquely labeled as “Other” waned by 64,000 or 39%. Incarcerations for drugs in state prisons fell by 75,000 or 35.4%. In terms of convicted jail residents, drug arrests went down by 21,000 or 46.7%.

The same declining 10-year trend applied to public order crimes. Weapons convictions dropped by 8,000 or 15.4%. Driving under the influence went down by 10,000 or 38.5%. Other public order convictions dropped by 11,000 or 15.5%. Incarcerations for public order offenses fell by 29,000 or 19.5%. Jailed persons for public order offenses declined by 27,000 or 45.8%.

Assaults rose by 23,000 or 17%, to 158,000 from 135,000. Other violent crimes stayed unchanged at 42,000. Jail residents with violent convictions shrank by 20,000 or 47.6%. Other increases happened in crimes of manslaughter, which rose by 2,000 or 11.1%. Rape and sexual assault rose by 1.8%.

State Prisons	2015	2025	+ / -	Change
Violent	718,000	691,000	-27,000	↓ -3.8%
Property	261,000	143,000	-118,000	↓ -45.2%
Drug	212,000	137,000	-75,000	↓ -35.4%
Public Order	149,000	120,000	-29,000	↓ -19.5%
Murder	169	167	-2	↓ -1.2%
Manslaughter	18	20	2	↑ 11.1%
Rape/sexual assault	169	172	3	↑ 1.8%
Robbery	185	131	-54	↓ -29.2%
Assault	135	158	23	↑ 17.0%
Other Violent	42	42	0	→ 0.0%
Other Property	29	16	-13	↓ -44.8%
Car Theft	11	8	-3	↓ -27.3%
Theft	51	26	-25	↓ -49.0%
Burglary	142	81	-61	↓ -43.0%
Fraud	28	12	-16	↓ -57.1%
Other Drugs	164	100	-64	↓ -39.0%
Drug Possession	48	37	-11	↓ -22.9%
Weapons	52	44	-8	↓ -15.4%
Other Public Order	71	60	-11	↓ -15.5%
DUI	26	16	-10	↓ -38.5%
Other	10	7	-3	↓ -30.0%
Probation	3,900,000	2,900,000	-1,000,000	↓ -25.6%
Parole	850,000	671,000	-179,000	↓ -21.1%
Locked Up	2015	2025	+ / -	Change
Federal	211,000	203,000	-8,000	↓ -3.8%
State	1,359,000	1,098,000	-261,000	↓ -19.2%
Local	646,000	562,000	-84,000	↓ -13.0%
TOTAL	2,216,000	1,863,000	-353,000	↓ -15.9%

State Prisons	1,719	1,566	-153	-8.9%
Federal prisons	102	98	-4	-3.9%
Juvenile correctional facilities	2,259	1,277	-982	-43.5%
Local jails	3,283	3,116	-167	-5.1%
Indian Country jails	79	80	1	1.3%

Finally, the number of carceral institutions also went down. The 2015 report asked, “Do policymakers and the public have the focus to also confront the geographically and politically dispersed second largest slice of the pie: the 3,283 local jails?” They did. Local jails decreased by 5.1% to 3,116. In 2015, PPI reported 1,719 state prisons and its 2025 report listed 1,566 state prisons, a decline of 8.9%. Federal prisons declined from 102 to 98. Juvenile correctional facilities dropped by 43.5% from 2,259 to 1,277.

NORMAL More humane conditions can be new normal for incarcerated persons

A prison’s investment in staff and residents’ relations to humanize incarcerated people creates a safer and healthy prison environment, according to the 2024 reimagining SQ report.

Resident Troy Varnado said that friendly interactions between custody and volunteer staff are humanizing and that these interactions are a much-needed pro-social communication tool, particularly when people have been incarcerated for decades.

“It is harder to use force against an incarcerated person when staff humanize them and understand more about the stressors and mental health challenges they face,” said the report.

Resident and literacy mentor Brett Mohr said that when staff look at residents as people but are constrained by administrative rules and laws, this says de-humanization is the law.

“An adult of normal reasoning capacity that is at the mercy of another adult of similar capacity, as the case in any prison—by any standard, prison is never going to be normal,” Mohr said.

Another aspect of normalizing incarceration is through education: limitations on getting a quality education have been connected to criminal behavior in the settings of poverty, stated in the report.

SQ resident and college student Michael Edward Walker III said that to have an opportunity to get a higher level of academia is very necessary, and that education builds

character with every course taken and completed.

“The feeling of empowerment confirms my highest esteem, growth, and development,” Walker said. “When I walk into the classroom my incarceration ceases to exist because being a student normalizes incarceration.”

“Technology and education is different than it was three decades ago; those who have been in prison for a long time need to be exposed to technology in preparation for release,” Brooks said.

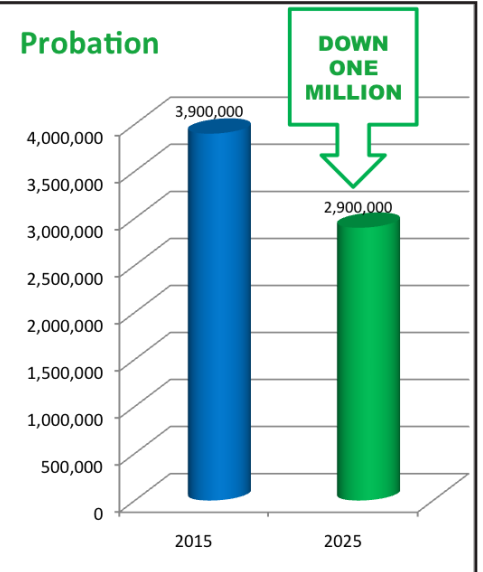
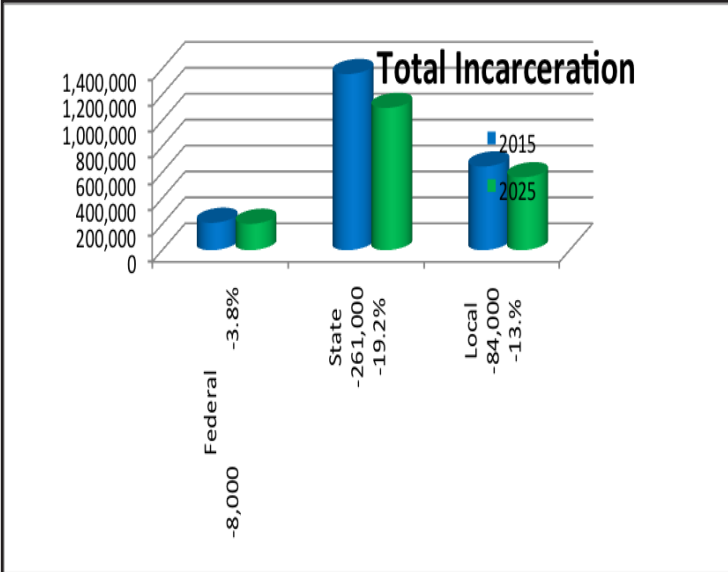
He said that he encountered a guy who has been in prison since before the invention of the microwave oven. The gentleman was unaware that if aluminum foil were placed in a microwave this would blow it out.

Another educational space is the prison library where a person can enjoy the liberties of reading, studying, and quiet activities, SQ resident Jessie Milo said.

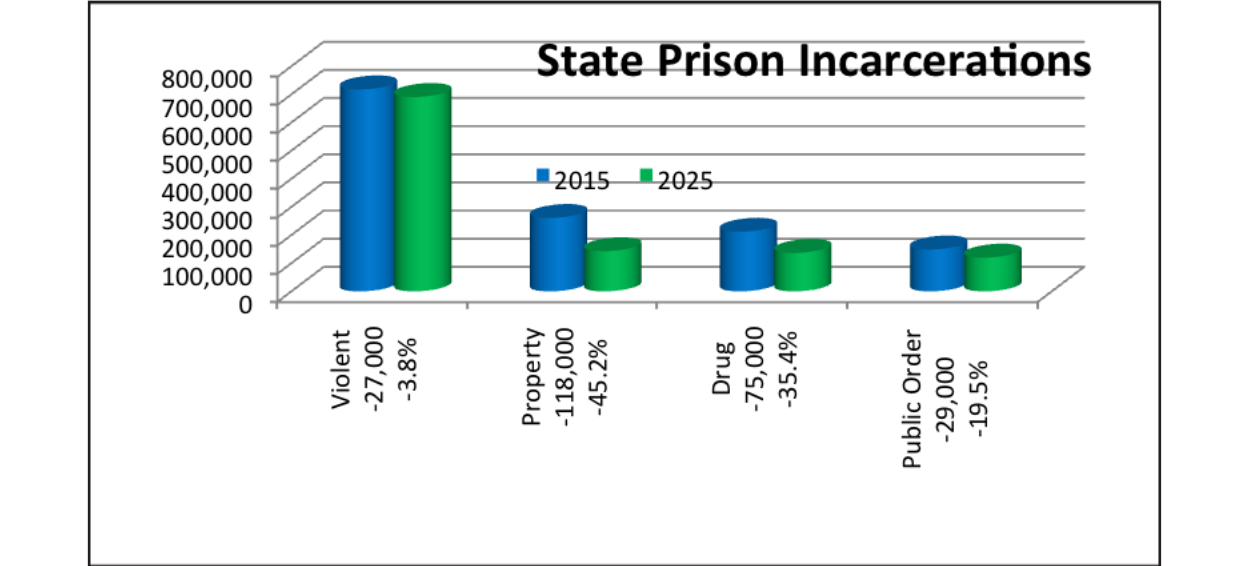
“The objective is to be more like a college campus,” Milo said. “The ability to dream is a normal thing. In prison a dream can be a negative thing because it has to be checked by the reality of your incarceration.”

Resident Abdiel Guerrero said that being dehumanized is when someone else is in control of your movement; therefore, this does not normalize incarceration.

Guerrero added that when a person is not able to go in and out of their cell at their leisure, and when someone else is dictating when a person can leave their cell, this is not normal beyond the walls.



Probationers dropped by an even million, to 2.9 million from 3.9 million, a decrease of 25.6%. Parolees dropped to 671,000 from 850,000, a decline of 21.1%. The last 10 years clearly saw decarcerational progress.



Diversions programs address systemic inequalities

**By Vincent E. O'Bannon
Staff Writer**

Diversionsary justice programs that avoid incarceration address systemic inequity and save taxpayers money, according to a March 11 article from the *Brookings Institute*.

Authors Howard Henderson and Mikayla Wallace found that imprisonment has little-to-no impact on the reduction of crime rates, and that outdated draconian sentences and mass incarceration should be viewed as a societal problem.

“The front-end of our justice system, where critical decisions by police, prosecutors, and judges shape lives, remains one of the most urgent yet neglected areas for reform,” the authors stated.

Front-end interventions decrease incarceration and racial disparities in prisons. These programs create alternatives to incarceration in the first place, as opposed to highly popular reentry programs that focus on post-incarceration alternatives, according to *Brookings*.

The *Brookings* article explained that “the focus on post-prison reentry programs overlook(s) the critical structural problems earlier in the [justice] system.”

The authors also noted that even as the American justice system burns through \$80 million annually on incarceration, advocates for reentry programs “remain stubbornly focused on reentry as their primary reform solution.”

The article called the reentry focus “tunnel vision” that reflects the heavily dominated tough-on-crime era of politics, explaining that “that era’s political doctrine... treated harsh punishment and mass incarceration as the key

answers to crime.”

Diversion programs such as San Francisco’s Interrupt, Predict, and Organize program, Houston’s Crisis Call Diversion Program, Indianapolis’s HIRE Program, Seattle’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program, and Milwaukee’s Justice Reinvestment Initiative have all demonstrated remarkable success across multiple intervention points, noted *Brookings*.

The diversionsary approaches implemented by these programs include pre-arrest diversion, prosecutor-led interventions; pre-trial diversions, paid employer apprenticeships, vocational training, mental health assistance, drug treatment, and job placement.

“Each of these approaches tackles problems at their onset, rather than waiting until prison gates close,” stated the article.

Employment-focused diversion programs reduce recidivism and address the underlying economic instability that contributes to involvement with the justice system, the article said. In addition, diversion programs save tax payers billions of dollars in criminal justice costs.

“Critics might argue these comprehensive reforms are too ambitious or politically challenging, but the evidence for front-end reform transcends political ideology,” stated the article.

“[They] align with conservative values and fiscal responsibility and government efficiency while addressing progressive priorities of equity-centered justice,” added the authors.

The *Brookings* authors concluded that true reform must ensure equal justice at every step, from the first interaction with law enforcement through successful community reintegration.

ESPAÑOL

Dia de Sanacion cuando el sobreviviente habla, los cambios suceden

Por César Martínez
Staff Writer

Este mes de abril se llevó acabo por tercer año consecutivo la celebración del Día a la Conciencia para los Sobrevivientes en el Centro de Rehabilitación de San Quentin.

Un grupo de diecisiete sobrevivientes conformado por mujeres y hombres, que se presentaron para dar testimonio de cómo la violencia ha perturbado la vida de cada una de estas personas.

“Yo comparto mi historia para empoderar a la gente — para que sepan que su siguiente decisión pueda ser la de sanar... previniendo que la siguiente persona pueda experimentar lo que yo siento. Gracias a ustedes por ser un ejemplo de sanación”, dijo directora ejecutiva de Seguridad y Justicia en California, Tanisha Hollins.

En el evento, los invitados acompañados de personas encarceladas y miembros de la administración de SQ, hicieron un círculo de sanación para después reunirse en campo y dar una vuelta con



Representantes SFDA (fiscalia) de la Unidad de Víctimas y Sobrevivientes

pancartas en español e inglés con mensajes como stop to violence (cese a la violencia), peace (paz), hope (esperanza), empathy (empatía), entre otros.

Los encarcelados tuvieron la oportunidad de hablar ante los invitados, sobre las experiencias del cambio a su comportamiento, pensamiento de negación, tomando responsabilidad de sus acciones pasadas y honrando a

sus sobreviertes por el impacto causado.

“No es de forzar el perdón, más bien es de informar de los traumas que pueden ayudar a moldear la manera en que pensamos. Reconociendo a los sobrevivientes, víctimas y otros grupos de recuperación presentes. Apoyando a la gente a ser completos otra vez”, dijo Kareema Baptist de la Unidad de Víctimas de



Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Julio Escobar invta a los hispanos a ser parte de la sanación

la Oficina de Fiscal de San Francisco.

El Director de SQ C. Andes., la Teniente G. Berry y el Segundo Jefe E. Patao., junto con la asesora Amanda Weitman y el invitado Mick Garden, quienes reconocieron el trabajo de concientización de los reos, por el impacto hacia sus víctimas y familiares.

“Mis enmiendas en vida — es de hacerme responsable en

este espacio al decir lo siento”, dijo el residente de SQ, Floyd Collins.

Garden comentó a todos los presentes, que hay que honrar y respetar a todos los que fueron dañados por la violencia, además hizo un llamado a unirse a la lucha y que no quede en palabras, también agregó diciendo “lo que tenemos hoy, podemos dárselo a otra gente en la

comunidad, quienes siguen destrozados en sus vidas”.

Sol Mercado habló, que durante su encarcelamiento aprendió herramientas de los cuales hizo que tuviera un compromiso ante la comunidad, y en el cual lo ha llevado a dar prueba de su enmienda.

“Al tratar mis traumas, he aprendido que mis detonantes son verdaderos. Hoy en la comunidad, educo a la gente sobre lo que es el trauma”, agregó Mercado.

Para algunos residentes de SQ, escuchar los dolorosos testimonios de los sobrevivientes, han permitido reflexionar sobre las decisiones que tomaron, y llegar hasta donde están el día de hoy.

“Es realmente duro escuchar de las verdaderas víctimas, acerca [del impacto] de los asesinatos ocurridos en sus vidas. Yo soy responsable por una y me siento horrible... los efectos son vastos, profundos y tristes”, dijo el reo Michael Thompson. “El perdonarme a mí mismo, me ayudo a seguir adelante y tomar responsabilidad de mi crimen”.

La riqueza cultural resaltó en San Quentin el 5 de Mayo

Por Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism Guild

San Quentin celebró el 5 de Mayo con música tradicional conocida como “zapateado”, espectáculo de carros, caballos, y con exhibiciones de arte. Una festividad que atrajo a una comunidad.

El evento comenzó con la participación de la Guardia de Color, donde los veteranos encarcelados marcharon con la bandera Americana, Mexicana y la del Estado de California.

“Esto es un privilegio y estoy asombrado en celebrar nuestra cultura abiertamente”, dijo el residente Arturo Meléndez. “Hubo un tiempo cuando ciertos tatuajes y arte de indígenas eran considerados un símbolo de pandillas, y lo peor eran las consecuencias”.

Meléndez reconoce la importancia de este día, cuando hay muchas deportaciones y odio contra los inmigrantes. El manifestó su agradecimiento con la administración.

Durante el evento el Director de SQ C. Andes, dio las gracias a todos los facilitadores por sus esfuerzos al preparar esta festividad. Los presentes dieron honor al

Himno Nacional Mexicano.

Empleados y voluntarios sirvieron aguas frescas de diferentes sabores: horchata, Jamaica y fresa, al igual que repartían dulces enchilados sabor a tamarindo de la marca “Pelon Mini” para los cientos de residentes que esperaban formados.

“Me emociona ver los colores, la cultura y a la raza gozándose juntos. Me gusta que podemos expresar nuestras culturas”, dijo la voluntaria Jenny Andrade de la organización Bridges of Hope.

El grupo de SQ Único Elemento presentó su música versátil, mientras dos caballos bailaban al ritmo de zapateado y el público disfrutaba de dicho espectáculo. Además, El Grupo Esperanza amenizó con su propio ritmo canciones reconocidas entre la comunidad.

El ambiente creció, gracias al baile cultural del grupo azteca Cuāuhcōtlōtli, y la participación de Marty Natividad (nativo americano), quien condujo la ceremonia tradicional con una concha de mar, quemado incienso y sacudiendo los cascabeles en los pies.

“Yo soy un nativo americano y líder espiritual en la prisión de Mule Creek”

dijo Natividad. “La esencia verdadera de ser un natal, es estar conectado con la madre naturaleza, la tierra, el viento, el fuego y el agua”.

En la cancha del baloncesto, los automóviles conocidos como Lowriders fueron exhibidos para que los residentes tuvieran la oportunidad de admirar los carros, y de tomarse fotos frente a éstas obras de arte, mientras los propietarios conversaban con el público.

Javier Flaco, dueño de uno de los lowrider modelo 1936 dos-ono Borgoño maestro de clase deportiva, destacó que fabricar su carro era un compromiso de por vida.

Curtis Reynolds del club Old Illusion, propietario de un Chevrolet Master 1937 de clase cupé, dos puertas y sillas de cuero, compartió su fascinación por los vehículos antiguos.

Según Reynolds, él también ha estado trabajando en este vehículo toda su vida, algo que le ayuda a aliviar su estrés, además de ser apoyado por su esposa.

Jesse Torres, un trabajador de Cal-Fire, compartió con los residentes su automóvil Ford 1928, dos puertas y agregó diciendo que la mejor parte es reparar, manejar y poder participar en los Carshows.

¿Qué tan efciente es la inteligencia Artificial como herramienta contra el crimen?

Por César Martínez
Staff Writer

El acelerado desarrollo de la Inteligencia Artificial “IA”, genera debate en su implementación contra el crimen. Resaltando la necesidad de regulaciones hacia la desigualdad racial, según el reporte de la Procuradora Especialista en formas contemporáneas del racismo, discriminación racial, xenofobia y de relación en intolerancia, Ashiwni K.P de las Naciones Unidas de Derechos Humanos NUDH.

De acuerdo a Ashiwni K.P., en su reporte explora cómo la tecnología puede perpetuar la discriminación. Comentó que, asumir que la IA es neutral y justa, crea interrogantes sobre temas en prejuicios raciales.

“El reciente desarrollo productivo de la IA, que se expande rápidamente en aplicaciones cibernéticas — ha aumentado el serio problema contra los derechos humanos, incluyendo preocupaciones sobre la discriminación racial”, dijo Ashiwni K.P.

Acorde al reporte de la Procuradora Especialista, los algoritmos trazados y

conectados entre lugares y eventos, con base en el historial de crimen sobre dichos lugares, sirven como herramienta para la predicción en el patrullaje de la fuerza policiaca, siendo un ejemplo de los avances tecnológicos.

“ La predicción de patrullaje, puede agravar su autenticidad en la sobre-vigilancia a las comunidades raciales y étnicas”, dijo Ashiwni K.P y agregó. “La razones oficiales de la ley tienen históricamente su atención en aquellos vecindarios que están sobrerrepresentados en los archivos policíacos. Incrementando su despliegue en las áreas en cuestión, basados en algoritmos que predicen estos futuros crímenes”.

En un artículo escrito por Ella Sherman de [Law.com](#), destacó el trabajo de Nancy La Vigne, Directora del Instituto Nacional de Justicia, explicando los resultados que su organización encontró en programas e investigaciones, sobre la aplicación de esta tecnología contra el crimen.

La Directora destacó los avances de la IA, en un

proyecto desarrollado por una universidad. Enfocado al tráfico humano, usando esta tecnología para emparejar fotos de hoteles y objetos en ellos con su ubicación geográfica.

“Nosotros apreciamos el reconocimiento a la Universidad de Virginia del Oeste por el desarrollo, al aprobar el concepto de identificación de traficantes de opioides — quienes están usando la red oscura “dark net” como mercado abierto”, dijo La Vigne.

En el artículo de Sherman, comentó que varios expertos en la industria están de acuerdo sobre la gran necesidad a la implementación de IA en el sistema criminal. Sin embargo para Ashiwni K.P esto no será posible, sin primerio instalar un manejo adecuado de balance y riesgo para todos los problemas en la sociedad.

“Poniendo los derechos humanos en el centro de cómo nosotros nos desarrollamos, usando y regulando la tecnología. Es absolutamente crítico para nuestra respuesta ante estos riesgos”, dijo el Jefe de NUDH Volker Türk.

Cambia tus pensamientos, cambias tus comportamiento

Por Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism Guild

La segunda graduación del programa Terapia sobre la Concientización Emocional E.A.T. por su siglas en inglés, fue fundado por Harry Goodall Jr. El programa comprende temas sobre la inteligencia emocional, con un modelo “Cambias los pensamientos, cambias el comportamiento, cambias el comportamiento, cambias los pensamientos.”

E.A.T. se enfoca en los comportamientos, pensamientos y las emociones de las personas. Según Goodall Jr. recalcó que éste enfoque ayuda a desarrollar herramientas y combatir el abuso doméstico, adición de alcoholismo, reconocimiento de pandillas,

traumas educativos, auto ayuda en la salud mental, creación de vías de comunicación, cultivar relaciones, identificar los defectos de carácter, factores causativos y meditación intensa.

Daniel Bustamante uno de los graduados del programa, compartió que el programa es de 12 meses y les ha enseñado cómo usar herramientas, que les ayude a reflexionar antes de reaccionar en cualquier situación. Él reconoció que los participantes también aprenden incluso teniendo un pasado asociado a pandillas o un simple estilo de vida criminal.

“Este programa para mí, incorporo muchas de las estrategias que había aprendido en otros programas. Lo que confirmó

que los 12 pasos que están usando aquí funcionan, no importan cuál es tu crimen”, dijo Juan Aguilar, otro residente y graduado del programa. “Aunque los 12 pasos de E.A.T., no son exactamente iguales a los de A.A. éstos se enfocan más en la salud emocional.”

C. Andes el director del Centro de Rehabilitación de San Quentin, compartió con la audiencia que tener consciencia sobre nuestras emociones es algo importante. Esto es algo que él ha aprendido en sí mismo. “Honro a todos usted por su responsabilidad. Agradezco de que sus familias y amistades estén orgullosos de ustedes”.

Steve Crittenden, un residente hablo de cómo él estuvo en el pabellón de la

muerte por 35 años y ahora que ya no está condenado a muerte, pudo venir a SQ y participar en el programa donde pudo sanar sus traumas dentro el programa de E.A.T.

“Si la familia de E.A.T. no hubiera estado ahí para mí, probablemente yo no estaría aquí ahora”, dijo Crittenden durante su discurso. “El programa me ha enseñado de que yo no soy mi crimen”.

Además David Flores, Consejero de E.A.T. en el departamento de video dijo, “Lo que ésta graduación significa para mí, es la unidad de la comunidad. Lo que he visto aquí me ha impresionado mucho, es el apoyo de los graduados a los nuevos que están entrando al programa. Así que podemos hablar de un lugar de experiencia y apoyo solidario”.

Los 12 pasos del programa de Terapia sobre la Concientización Emocional

- 1.- Hago una decisión para poner atención a las señales de alerta sobre los que mi cuerpo y mi mente me dicen.
- 2.- Empiezo a confiar en mí mismo y a entender que soy digno de atención y amor.
- 3.- Hago una decisión para ayudar a otros y haciéndolo me ayudo a mí mismo, demostrando remordimiento por el daño causado.
- 4.- He llegado a reconocer que mi vida estaba yendo en la dirección incorrecta .
- 5.- Soy consciente que soy mi peor enemigo saboteando mi propio camino.
- 6.- En este proceso de sanación, eh aprendido a no cargan con resentimientos en mi mente o corazón.
- 7.- Me prometo a mí mismo a no reaccionar de manera impulsiva a las situaciones. Esto significa a responder pensando antes de actuar.
- 8.- Reconocer distorsiones cognitivas personales, eh aprendido a tratar mis traumas de la niñez.
- 9.- Pondré gran atención a mis pensamientos comprendiendo como éstos moldan mi vida.
- 10.- Soy deliberadamente consiente a desarrollar mejores habilidades en todos mis asuntos.
- 11.- Reconozco cual vital e importante es un sistema de apoyo.
- 12.- Con lo que he aprendido prometo transmitir este mensaje de sanación a otros empezando en casa.

SPORTS

San Quentin Giants lose to LA Love in nail-biter to open season

By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

All the traditional gallantry that came with America’s favorite pastime fully showed at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center as the SQ Giants hosted their rivals from Southern California.

On April 19, LA LOVE defeated the SQ Giants in a classic nail-biter that ended with a 2–1 score to start the 2025 baseball season.

The 8:30 a.m. start felt the nip of a cool morning breeze as the American flag swirled high above home plate. The competitors lined up on the first base and third base lines and the fans stood as the San Quentin Veterans Color Guard played the National Anthem.

Warden Chance Andes started the ceremony on the mound of San Quentin’s “Field of Dreams,” thanking everyone for showing up to this season’s opening day event.

“Baseball is what makes spring so special because it brings some normalcy to us all,” said Andes just before



Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

SQ Giants starting pitcher Vic Picazo at-bat

throwing the season’s first pitch right over home plate.

Prior to the event, a large entourage of LA LOVE players — sporting brand new uniforms — and their film documentary crew paraded down the hill onto the Lower Yard field for friendly competition.

LA LOVE’s Coach and film producer Brian Nichols said he felt inspired to make a documentary because he wanted to make known all the fun rivalry he has experienced

over the years playing baseball at San Quentin.

“We are going to do our best to beat you guys,” said Nichols. “You might have the better record, but we came here to win.”

Steve Reichardt, the SQ Giants’ volunteer coach, thanked LA LOVE for coming, then jokingly said, “Sorry you had to come all this way for us to kick your butt again.” Reichardt added, “Seriously though, I want you all to know outside this game,

these guys here today came because they love you.”

After a scoreless two innings, LA LOVE drew first blood in the top of the third as Hudson Nichols, the son of Brian Nichols, smashed a double in the center field gap. SQ Giants pitcher Vic Picazo walked the bases loaded and walked in the opponent’s first run of the season.

The home team avoided more damage in the third inning as Picazo struck out the side with the bases still loaded.

“I love playing here because theses guys play the right way,” said LA LOVE’s Justin Halpern, writer and producer of ABC’s “Abbot Elementary.” The Emmy, Golden Globe, and Critic’s Choice award winner added, “I also want to encourage humanity towards everybody including the incarcerated.”

SQ Giant Carrington Russelle hit a double that led to an error, which allowed Patrick Poteat to score to tie the game 1-1 in the bottom of the third.

The Bee Gee’s song “Staying Alive” was bumping through the loudspeakers as the crowd cheered on San Quentin Coach Reichardt who danced along the sidelines to celebrate the tied ballgame.

During the bottom of the fifth, LA LOVE brought in pitcher Hudson Nichols. He threw heat estimated in the mid-80s.

The game remained tied as Picazo matched Hudson Nichols pitch-for-pitch to keep both teams’ bats silent until the top of the seventh inning, when LA LOVE loaded the

bases for a potential winning rally. SQ Giants’ right fielder Poteat ran down a pop fly to end the inning.

Picazo left the game as he tired, which allowed LA LOVE an opportunity to steal the victory.

In the top of the eighth, a series of walks and a hit batsman by San Quentin’s relief pitcher let LA LOVE take the lead 2-1, the game’s final score.

After the game, the teams circled-up on the mound for the traditional celebratory prayer.

LA LOVE’s center fielder, Jeff E. said coming in here to give the residents an opportunity to feel normal in a not-so-normal situation felt amazing. He’s played on San Quentin’s Field of Dreams since 2018.

Resident Angelo Mecchi, the SQ Giants assistant coach, said he loved opening day because it brought back childhood memories, “For me baseball is pure innocence and takes me back to a time when nothing was wrong with the world.”

Baseball infielder overcomes traumatic brain injury

By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Sports Editor

Sports mimic the trials and tribulations of life: the victories and losses, the tragedies and redemptions, the falls from grace and the miraculous comebacks. Life and sports stories are as complex as a Shakespearean play.

No matter the complexity, seldom does a piece of sporting equipment have such a profound effect on a person’s own tragedy, his fall from grace and his comeback. Yet, that was the case in the life of SQ Giant utility infielder Carlos “Los” Valdez.

Valdez overcame hatred for law enforcement and for the people who attacked him with a brick. At 16-years old, Valdez suffered brain damage from that attack and had to be stabilized by a medical device known as a Halo.

“At the age of 16, I suffered a brain injury, resulting in my need for emergency brain surgery,” said Valdez. “After my life-saving surgery, I had to learn to walk, speak and regain my strength and mobility, or at least try. That was demoralizing and very difficult.”

Valdez admits he was too young and immature to forgive the tactics used by local law enforcement.

“My attitude towards the system changed while I recovered in the hospital,” said Valdez. “A gang detective asked me about the incident and said he knew who threw the brick at me, but, ‘I deserved what happened to me because I was a gang member.’ My attempt to peacefully break-up a fight would never be viewed as a heartfelt gesture, because I was affiliated.”

Valdez could not process anger properly while healing from traumatic brain injury and nine months after his surgery, he attended a party where, a fight broke out with someone wielding an aluminum baseball bat. Valdez confiscated the bat and struck his victim four times, killing him.

“I had hardly scratched the surface of my medical

rehabilitation from a serious injury,” said Valdez. “I now realize I could not process grief or anger properly. I was 17 acting like a 10-year-old because my brain did not heal instantaneously.”

After years of court deliberation, Valdez was tried as an adult and sentenced to twenty-five years to life plus thirty-eight years.

“Spending more than half my life incarcerated, I’ve made some bad choices. Because of those immature decisions, I spent seven years in Ad-Seg,” said Valdez. “Being in the hole for years during my time in county jail and prisons affected my perceptions of reality. I lost hope and believed that a false sense of masculinity was going to cause me to live my life in a miserable and regretful way.”

During his last stint in Administrative Segregation, Valdez realized that he had to take control of his life.

“I can choose to make the best of each day and not allow my circumstances to define me as a person,” said Valdez.

Valdez then transferred to San Quentin Rehabilitation Center.

“San Quentin Rehabilitation Center has helped my overall healing and rehabilitation by providing numerous programs,” said Valdez. “I’m now convinced the work for me must be lifelong so can I fully enrich my self and society.”

For his hard work at SQRC, Valdez received a sponsorship to be resentenced after contacting Santa Clara’s District Attorney.

“Staff, incarcerated residents, and volunteers helped align my direction over the years,” said Valdez. “I’ve matured a lot. My journey was not child’s play, because if I stayed immature, I could have gotten hurt or killed.”

It’s ironic that a baseball bat took his freedom and also helped restore his humanity as he grew up in prison.

“When I got to SQRC, I came out to play baseball for exercise,” said Valdez.

SQ Giant pitcher Patrick Poteat spoke about Valdez’s integrity.

“He is a great athlete-- very humble,” said Poteat. “Los became a great asset to our team and is now poised to become a better teammate, unless he is granted the release he deserves. We hope he hits a home run in court.”

Valdez is now happily married, and has a beautiful family with two kids. He also acknowledges that he has received support for a ‘best chance scenario,’ to be successful when he paroles to his father’s home.

Valdez believes the court’s decision to accept his application to be resentenced stemmed from his permanent brain damage. His counsel is asking the juvenile courts to transfer the proceedings back to its jurisdiction.

“My legal team believes I should have been tried in the Juvenile Courts instead of being transferred over to the Adult Criminal Court system,” said Valdez. “As a victim of a violent crime myself, I lost my adolescence and years of memories from my own life. My counsel and mentors believe that I was inappropriately, and illegally tried as an adult.”

Valdez is excited to have a chance to, “Go to bat one more time, this time with a clearer head and more insight.”

“At my new hearing I’ll be able to recall details and information about my traumatic healing,” said Valdez. “I have gained insight about traumatic brain injuries and can now relate to most victims of the life changing injury. I hope to be able to present these facts to the court.”

Still, Valdez believes his transformation will never make him worthy enough to go home, because his victim will never be able to go home. However, if given the opportunity, he plans to contribute to society by serving youth in diversion and sharing his journey with victims of traumatic brain injury.

“We really hope Los goes home so he can continue recuperating from the permanence of his own injuries,” said SQ Giant pitcher, Robert Nash.

"Sandlot" style softball game ends with fellowship circle on addiction

By Martin Keith DeWitt
Journalism Guild Writer

A softball game by two coed teams on the San Quentin Rehabilitation Center’s Lower Yard brought unity and fellowship to everyone involved.

The San Quentin Hardtimers softball team, scheduled to play against the Lost Dreams Awaken team April 13, encountered an unexpected circumstance that dictated a different outcome.

“I was surprised by the courtyard with all of the greenery,” said Katrina L., a first-time visitor to the rehabilitation center, “my brother was a temporary resident here.”

Six of LDA’s male players could not attend, so the team played with eight female and two male players.

To have a fair and competitive game, the teams decided to select rosters “sandlot” style with two captains taking turns selecting players for an equal distribution of talent.

“Without the volunteers and umpires giving their time, these games don’t happen,” said Hardtimers manager Rick Diaz, 46. “All of the work done to build rosters and get clearances approved is something that can’t be under estimated.”

The captains, Nate Venegas, 48, and Jay Uhler, 51, took turns selecting players until they exhausted their options. A spirited competition began immediately. Both teams scored runs with multiple lead changes during the seven-inning game. In the end, the team captained by Venegas prevailed over Uhler’s team

by a score of 13-8.

Zack Miller, Katrina L.’s brother, wore on the back of his jersey a “G” commitment number from a 2008 stay at San Quentin. Miller said he did two stints in reception at San Quentin, the second for a parole violation, before rehabilitating for thirty days in ICDTP, an outside drug treatment program affiliated with Contra Costa County. He returned as a volunteer with the LDA softball squad to take part in the competition and fellowship with the residents of his former place of incarceration.

Several members of LDA spoke in the post-game fellowship circle about their addictions and length of their sobriety. They also concluded that visiting San Quentin Rehabilitation Center provided a reward in itself.

Basketball season opens with SQ Warriors and Kings double header

The 2025 San Quentin basketball season started in San Quentin Rehabilitation Center’s gym with a doubleheader featuring the San Quentin Warriors and San Quentin Kings taking on outside teams.

The Warriors, an under-40 team, and the Kings, a 40-and-over team, started a campaign that would span the summer, providing exercise, growth, and everything from mental health to spirituality for residents.

“I’m very overjoyed with the support we’ve gotten from our sponsors,” said San Quentin Warriors head coach Jerry “JB” Brown, 58. “We’ve got a full schedule and it’s gonna be an awesome experience.”

The season, which began April 12, would last until late autumn, offering an opportunity for residents to combine teamwork through fellowship as a means of furthering their individual rehabilitation goals, while playing a game they all love, said the players.

Kingdom, a faith-based organization founded by

Cornell Swain of the First Baptist Church of Vallejo, committed to bringing in teams to play basketball and provide fellowship to the basketball program.

Prison Sports Ministries’ Green Team will join Kingdom as the main opponents throughout the season, on par with the Bittermen, Town Boogie, and the Outsiders.

The Warriors have new players expected to play on a highly competitive level with speed and defense, according to Coach Brown. The return of Stan “LS” Tillman, after a two-year hiatus, promised to provide stability and leadership.

“When comparing the new players with last year’s team, it’s gonna be similar,” said Donell “Sonic” Pimpton, 30, a holdover from last year’s Warriors team.

The Kings, too, have high expectations, according to Coach Demond “Oola” Lewis, 51.

Lewis said the Kings found themselves in the same situation as last year, with new players taking the place

of residents no longer part of the program.

He said the team would add to the legacy of SQ basketball by creating more paths for the future of the program.

“Using a motion offense and veteran leadership, the team has grown closer and more cohesive,” Lewis emphasized. “I do expect an undefeated season as we build character and community through sports.”

The players said they looked forward to the Golden State Warriors’ annual visit, which has highlighted past seasons.

The coaches said the national legacy of SQ basketball came from the continued support from their outside opponents returning yearly to SQRC. The coaches admired the outside volunteers’ appreciation for SQ basketball’s high level of competition and life skills programming, which they called unmatched on basketball courts and gyms outside the institution.

—Martin Keith DeWitt
Journalism Guild Writer

Juvenile corrections officers indicted for staging brawls

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair

A counselor, a referee, and a fight club — juvenile correctional officers have been indicted for staging gladiator-type brawls amongst youth offenders.

From December 2023 to January 2024, 69 fights involving 143 juvenile detainees took place at Los Padrinos Juvenile Detention Center in Downey, California. The boys’ ages ranged from 12 to 18, according to the *Sacramento Bee*.

More than 29 officers have been charged with child abuse, endangerment, and conspiracy to commit battery. “Watching the video, the officers look more like referees or audience members at a prize fight, not adults charged with the care and supervision of young people,” said California Attorney General Rob Bonta. “Some officers are even seen laughing and shaking hands with the young people involved.”

A video of the gladiator fights disclosed an altercation where one youth fought eight one-on-one bouts and suffered a broken nose, noted the article.

The detention center is overseen by the Los Angeles County Probation Department, which stated that it is in agreement with the investigation and charges.

Stacy Ford, president of the L.A. County Deputy

Probation Officers’ Union, represents the officers charged. “[We] will do everything in our power” to support them,” Ford said.

“Every American is innocent until proven guilty,” she added. “Our members are entitled to this same presumption of innocence and deserve to be treated with fairness and due process, just as they provide to those in their custody.”

Attorney Tom Yu denied the charges against his client, the Director of the Los Padrinos Detention Center. “My client didn’t set up any fights,” Yu said. “He didn’t know about any fights, so I’m not sure how they got him into this as an accomplice.”

Prior to the staged fights, an order was given to close the detention center in order to stop the smuggling of contraband and to halt retaliation for filed grievances by the youth. The facility remained open because the county did not have any juvenile detention alternatives, reported the *Bee*.

People who work in law enforcement have a sworn duty to cater to the safety of juvenile defenders.

“While these incidents are deeply troubling, we believe this marks an important step toward rebuilding trust and reinforcing our commitment to the meaningful changes we are proposing in our juvenile facilities,” the Los Angeles County Probation Department noted.

BOOK REVIEW

Life impacted by trauma and abuse leads to humor

By Michael Fangman
Journalism Guild Writer

From drug-addled, would-be college artist to unscrupulous ne’er-do-well, David Sedaris has made a successful career feasting on his own dysfunction. In this way, readers will welcome the insanely humorous *Happy Go Lucky* as another delicious slice of his often half-baked, not-so-humble pie.

An acerbic humorist who has entertained National Public Radio listeners for more than three decades, Sedaris is perhaps most widely known for his regular contributions to *New Yorker* magazine. One of his most famous essay collections, “The Santaland Diaries,” includes tales of David’s misadventures as an oft-disgruntled Macy’s Christmas elf.

“I could have you fired,” Sedaris says a customer once scolded him.

“I could have you killed,” the impish elf whispered in reply.

This younger, but equally mischievous David says he once hitchhiked cross-country with a quadriplegic female roommate posing as his pretend fiancé, panhandling together for money and a bucket of fired chicken along the way. Now, with *Happy Go Lucky*, Sedaris is older, often delivering essays focused around the experiences of a more mature, but altogether still damaged soul.

In “Father Time,” Sedaris

visits his 95-year-old father in a nursing home, alarmed to discover himself labeled as “Dave — the famous son.” Even more troubling is a medical staffer who mistakes the rather diminutive, soft-spoken, pasty-skinned, Caucasian writer for comedian Dave Chappell. Eager to avoid any awkwardness, Sedaris agrees to sign autographs and pose for selfies, wondering how long it will take after he drives away for the nurses to realize their mistake.

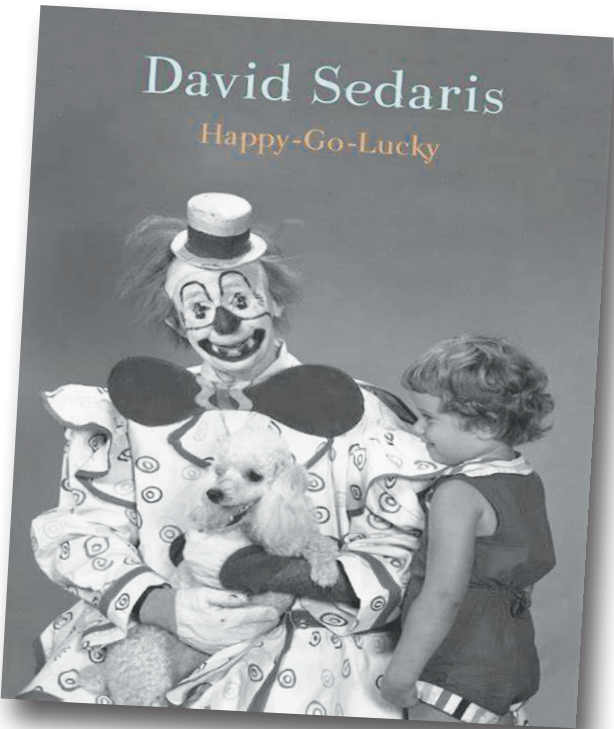
“A Speech to the Graduates” is a commencement address Sedaris could have easily delivered, one that includes the following rather sage advice:

“Choose one thing to be terribly, terribly offended by — this as opposed to the dozens or possibly hundreds that many of you are currently juggling.”

He also suggests writing thank-you notes to grandmothers who send money in cards:

“Then a few months down the line, you can write again, telling her that you just spent the last of the money she sent. ‘I was at Goodwill buying a dress I can wear for my job interview tomorrow,’ you could say. ‘The skid marks will hopefully come out after the first wash, and as for the underarm stains, I guess we’ll see. But as I was paying for it, I thought of how kind you’ve always been to me, and of how lucky I am to have you in my life.’”

Amidst this vast collection of humor is the stark reality of a life impacted by trauma and



abuse.

In a past offering, aptly entitled “Now We Are Five,” Sedaris recounted the impact of his youngest sister’s death by suicide.

Now, in *Go Lucky’s* “Unbuttoned,” the surviving siblings face the death of their domineering and emotionally abusive father, a man whose final words to David are, “You won.”

Sedaris writes, “As for my dad, I couldn’t tell if he meant ‘You won’ as in ‘You won the game of life,’ or ‘You won over me, your father, who told you — who assured you when you were small and then kept

reassuring you — that you were worthless.’ Whichever way he intended those two faint words, I will take them and, in doing so, throw down this lance I’ve been hoisting for these past sixty years. For I am old myself now, and it is so very, very heavy.”

In these words endures the true joy in feasting on *Happy Go Lucky*, an awareness that even the most eccentric humor offers a welcome distraction from our difficulties, and if we’re really lucky, a helping of healing and catharsis on the side.



Toxic masculinity is about more than male self-perception

By Antoine Brown
Contributing Writer

Before I joined KIDCAT, I knew little to nothing about Toxic Masculinity. The idea itself was absurd to me. Masculinity is not toxic, the people who display the toxic behavior are. At this time, I was still a little ignorant and ill informed. My opinion was of my own knowledge. Toxic masculinity is one of those phrases that for some triggers discomfort or even defensiveness, for others it sparks understanding and reflection my participation in groups such as “First Step” and JSLG I began to realize how it related go me as a “Black Man.” Through out my life I was both glorified and critiqued for being aggressive and emotionless two traits I believed a real man possessed. While toxic masculinity may seem like a buzz word its concept carries weight in shaping how we men perceive our selves, teat others and navigate the world.

At its core, toxic masculinity refers to the pressure on men to conform to out-dated and harmful ideas of what it means, “to be a man”. It is the belief that men must always be tough, emotionally stoic, dominant and most of all aggressive. The perception of vulnerability is a weakness people view showing emotions like sadness or fear as “feminine”. Toxic Masculinity also perpetuates the idea that men must avoid anything that has associated with female behavior. Whether it is crying, asking for help or changing your child’s diaper. For me they were all considered feminine traits. But it’s important to recognize that masculinity itself isn’t toxic during my time as KIDCAT member we’ve had many debates and discussions the subjects and I’ve come to realize now more than ever before, there

is nothing wrong with being strong assertive or protective. However, when those traits are enforced to the extreme and you suppress other healthy aspects of your personality the results can be damaging. For instance many men grow up hearing phrase like “man up” “boys don’t cry”, or don’t be a sissy”. While these words might seem harmless, they teach young men early on that their feelings do not matter. Experience with that type of criticism caused me to put up a front of power and dominance that resulted in me having violent and reckless behavior.

The effect of toxic masculinity is far reaching. My pride, ego, and belief that people only respect violence are major factors that led me to commit the crime that brought me to prison. When men are taught to bottle up their emotions, they often turn to unhealthy outlets. For me that was the streets, gang involvement. I robbed people, vandalized the community and participated in acts of violence. Studies have shown that men are more likely to die by suicide or struggled with substance abuse than women. Society and now social media’s pressure for men to have it together leaves little room for us to process our feelings or ask for help when needed.

Toxic masculinity can also affect how you interact with others in different spaces. It can breed an overly competitive nature, hyperactive aggression and unwillingness to compromise. It is not hard to imagine how this behavior can affect other relationships leading to controlling behavior, lacking communication of even violence. In the United States, men commit the majority of violent crimes. There are many factors to consider but it is undeniable how we adopt handling conflict with fist instead of words.

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 Street, San Quentin, CA 94964

PROFILE

Sleep deprivation researcher speaks at San Quentin

By C. K. Gerhartsreiter
Staff Writer

In Guantanamo Bay, the term “Frequent Flyer Program” has never referred to airline incentive programs.

At Gitmo, the term meant targeted sleep deprivation in which Guantanamo staff move detainees every three hours from one cell to another to disrupt their sleep, a so-called “enhanced interrogation technique.” One detainee endured 112 bed moved from May 7 to May 20, 2004, according to the case *Jawad v. Gates* found on LexisNexis.

“Human beings need sleep. We all know this. When we do not get enough sleep or when the sleep we get is repeatedly disrupted, our ability to function — to focus, to treat others appropriately, to respond effectively to life’s daily challenges — will be severely compromised,” said Sharon Dolovich, PhD, in her talk on “Sleep Deprivation in Prison.”

Dolovich, a professor of law at the UCLA School of Law, presented her research March 3 at San Quentin’s Mount Tamalpais College. She spoke in detail about her research, her findings, and their implications for prisons, punishment, law, and policy.

Her research revealed nothing like the extremes at Gitmo, but for many incarcerated persons, the accounts still sounded distressing. Dolovich listed noise, excessive light, extreme temperatures, and uncomfortable beds as the chief external causes of lack of sleep for incarcerated persons. She also spoke of

hunger, fear of violence, and daily humiliations, all of which disrupted restful nights.

“Residents are not the only ones unable to get enough sleep, Dolovich said. “Thanks to shiftwork and overtime (whether mandatory or voluntary), corrections officials, too, are chronically tired.”

“Many if not most people in a facility at any given time, staff included, are wrestling with the debilitating effects of persistent sleep deprivation,” she continued. “This shared state of impairment cannot help but impact the functioning of the institution and poison interpersonal interactions between and among residents and staff.” She said the same problem happened in jails.

The consequences of short sleep went further, taking the blame for serious medical conditions, from heart attacks to hypertension, cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, and stroke. Even increased risk for Alzheimer’s disease, insulin resistance, obesity, and Type 2 diabetes might arise from not sleeping well, according to the PowerPoint slides Dolovich showed the audience.

Dolovich said, “In prison, it is impossible to get at least seven hours of uninterrupted sleep,” to which the crowd reacted with nods of agreement. Dolovich then related some of the stories her study subjects had told her.

Resident John Levin later said, “I was intrigued by Professor Dolovich’s observation citing how those appearing in court

were prone to nod off or look disinterested due to the systemic lack of sleep they experienced in county jail. This could translate into negative perceptions by jurors, which could ultimately affect the verdict.”

Several MTC students voiced their sleep disruption experiences with anecdotes of officers bumping into dorm bunks, their bright-white LED flashlights aimed directly at sleepers’ faces and walkie-talkies broadcasting chatter at full volume at 2 a.m.

She said Eighth Amendment lawsuits over cruel and unusual punishment would not amount to a cure-all, but “if the goal is to change carceral practice, the litigation of sleep deprivation can help move the needle even when plaintiffs lose.” She recommended that “advocates should still bring these claims.”

The court dismissed *Jawad v. Gates*, the “Frequent Flyer” lawsuit.

Dolovich offered a list of policy fixes as remedies, such as real beds, decent mattresses, sufficient blankets, reasonable quality meals, air conditioning in summer and heat in winter, and staff training to respect sleep.

“No doubt, these proposals and others in a similar vein would be resisted by prison officials and policy makers,” she said.

“The state is obliged to reorient its policies. If it finds the costs too great to bear, the appropriate response — both morally and constitutionally — is to reduce the carceral footprint,” Dolovich concluded.

HEALTH

Cross-Fit event encourages healthy lifestyle

Make American Buff Again gymnasium promotes fitness and nutrition

By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

The chill of the morning air and the sound of loud music signaled the anticipation of the first cross-fit competition at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center. On April 17, the San Quentin Exercise Movement Class teamed up with Make America Buff Again Gymnasium to strengthen the health and fitness of incarcerated people.

In a collaborative effort, San Quentin Medical and Mental Health staff and the CrossFit gym owners came to show their support for the event. They all had a common goal of bringing the community of residents and staff together to encourage physical activity.

“I wanted to support an event that draws people in knowing its happening here at San Quentin. [The event] is important because it’s an equalizer that brings people together for a common theme,” said CrossFit Gym owner Craig Howard Diablo.

The event took place on the facility’s Lower Yard basketball court with the objective to promote EMC’s mission to create a healthy environment using cross-fit as a way to help people reach their full potential.

“We are dedicated to transforming lives through fitness,” said Derek Diaz, the MABA Lab founder, “It’s all about creating environments where people can achieve their personal best.”

The excitement increased as the participants gathered to count down in kicking off the event. “Five, four, three, two, one,” the crowd shouted.

Each member of a randomly selected four-person team started the competition from designated lanes that



Residents and medical staff participate in competition



Residents performing lunges and sprints

stretched 94 feet, the length of the basketball court.

The competition required participants to complete a circuit of six exercises that consisted of pushups, squats, lifting, lunges, and sprints.

Each team completed rotations up and down the court within 20 minutes, as if on a relay race.

In three heats of competition that included 96 participants, resident team members C. Jaime, I. Garcilazo, C. Dominguez won the contest with San Quentin staff member S. Munshi.

They outperformed all

23 teams by completing nine full circuits as the first San Quentin Cross-Fit Champions. The second place winners included the rehabilitation center’s physical education teacher, K. Bhatt.

Clinical pharmacist Dr. Paul Ganaden and residents David Richard, Jessy Zetino, and Alex Yohn had recently started to work at SQRC as Medical Recreation Aids and EMC instructors for the diabetic and geriatrics fitness programs.

According to Ganaden, EMC originated to encourage residents living with Type

2 diabetes to use physical fitness as a way to manage the disease.

“All the ideas, all the vision, all the excitement and all the planning for this event goes to these guys,” Ganaden said.

According to Richard, the EMC have the goal to promote both EMC and CrossFit as viable programs with a primary mission to encourage the entire San Quentin community to work toward a healthy lifestyle with physical fitness informed about the importance of nutrition.

The San Quentin resident MRA team said they would like to achieve certification as CrossFit instructors and to start a Level One cross-fit program at San Quentin, according to MRA Richard.

“We would love to help bring a Level One CrossFit program to San Quentin,” said Wes Piatt owner of Coast Range CrossFit.

Richard said fundraising had already begun. Sponsors such as Derek Diaz, the MABA Lab founder, Craig Howard, owner of Diablo CrossFit, and Piatt entered into discussions to donate funds and equipment for the program at San Quentin.

He added that they have plans to expand the program beyond persons living with Type 2 diabetes. Using CrossFit sports, exercise training, and instruction can achieve this through modules in improving everybody’s health at San Quentin.

San Quentin physical therapists Tianna Meriague and Michele Wilson acted as line judges at the event. They gave their support and encouraged the residents in the competition. The therapists said their goal remained to inspire movement and healthy living.

Eating habits and exercise regimen can combat diabetes

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair

An educated food plan and exercise regimen for incarcerated people may be the way to combat diabetes, instead of being medication dependent.

Type-2-diabetes is the most prevalent amongst people with bad eating habits, because of this, the body becomes resistant to insulin or the pancreas stops producing enough insulin, according to the *International Journal of Research*.

Complications related to diabetes include heart disease, mental illness, depression, anxiety disorders, and cognitive distortions.

There are more than 2,500 people incarcerated at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center. Three hundred ninety-two of them have been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, That’s 13% of the prison’s population, according to San Quentin medical staff.

In an effort to detect diabetes and or pre-diabetes, incarcerated people are given glucose blood tests to check their A1C levels.

A key factor in managing a person’s diabetes is nutritional education and awareness of what goes into the body, reported the *Journal*.

People with diabetes, as well as those without it, should read food and drink labels and check for serving size and nutritional facts.

Many items contain more than one serving per package; therefore, understanding the total grams of carbohydrates, saturated and trans fats will help manage the disease, according to a November 2023 information packet written by Cerner Multum Incorporated and provided to the author by a CDCR doctor.

SQ resident Jessy Zetino, 33, has been in prison for more than 11years. He has developed a passion to inform and assist incarcerated people by giving nutritional facts to those diagnosed with diabetes.

He’s currently writing a book, *The Psychology of Fitness and Nutrition*, that is relevant to prison life. It’s based on nutritional fitness.

Zetino said that carbs per serving size are very important, and should be 5% per portion. A high-fiber diet, such as beans, is healthy; they slow down the release of sugar. But a serving of milk has 11 grams of sugar that can

spike blood sugar.

The food that is served at San Quentin, starting with breakfast through lunch and dinner, is a steady diet of high levels of carbohydrates. The meals consist of bread, tortillas, potatoes, biscuits, dinner rolls, French toast, waffles and syrup, according to the weekly menu dated from February 17, 2025 to March 30, 2025.

Foods that are high in sugar or refined carbs should be avoided. That includes flour tortilla shells, bread, pasta, and snack foods with refined flour, noted the Cerner Multum report.

Diabetics should avoid canned fruits with syrup, canned and frozen vegetables, and pre-made or processed food; they are all high in fat, sodium, and added sugar.

It is recommended that a diabetic have a healthy meal plan. Try to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, bulk grains, fresh meats, and fresh dairy products.

Eat meals and snacks regularly; eat food high in fiber: fresh fruits vegetables, beans, and whole grains.

It is recommended that a person should consume of 4-6 ounces of lean protein per day, such as chicken, fish, and eggs, as well as healthy fats such as avocados and nuts.

A good meal plan will help you manage blood glucose levels. It is important to have healthy eating habits because your blood sugar levels are greatly affected by what you eat and drink.

A healthy food plan will lower your risk for heart disease, control your blood sugar levels, and help you body respond and be sensitive to hormone insulin.

Physical exercise will also help control the blood glucose levels; check the levels before and after you exercise. A high-carbohydrate snack should be kept handy to treat hypoglycemia (low blood sugar).

A diabetic should avoid injecting insulin in the parts of the body that are going to be used during exercise—for instance, your arms when you play tennis, and your legs when you jog, according to the Cerner Multum report.

Diabetes is a disease dubbed as a silent killer. More than 250 million people in the world have been affected by it. Without proper care and management, the number of diabetes patients are expected to increase to 430 million, according to the *International Journal of Research*.

Lifer with cancer self-advocates for treatment

By Armenia L. Cudjo III
Journalism Guild Writer

An incarcerated man diagnosed with bladder cancer has faced hurdles regarding treatment and follow-up care.

Tyrell Smith, a resident of San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, was first diagnosed with bladder cancer in June 2019 at Folsom State Prison.

Smith said that he has been living with his cancer for 72 months. He led his own campaign advocating for follow-up treatment for about four years. After filing a Grievance (CDCR 602),

Smith started receiving the care he’d been requesting for years.

“I was extremely concerned whether or not I was going to die,” Smith said. “In the beginning, I was not satisfied. I experienced extreme bias and incompetence from some medical staff.”

Smith shared that he compiled an enormous amount of legal documents and complaints to file for the medical care that he needed, while continuously suffering in pain. He has been seeing improvements since receiving follow-up care.

Smith noted that NFL

quarterback and four-time Super Bowl champion Terry Bradshaw was treated for bladder cancer, and was cured in nine months.

“This is an inspiration to me,” Smith shared.

He previously reflected back to his diagnosis, and came to the realization that he would not be living 72 months later if not for his decisive actions.

“I must say, cancer does not discriminate and must be fought by any means necessary,” Smith said. “While incarcerated it is important to advocate for myself.”

Feds take over CDCR's Mental Health services

By C. K. Gerhartsreiter
Staff Writer

Almost 20 years have passed since the federal takeover of California’s prison medical system, and federal takeovers continued March 19, as the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a lower court’s contempt ruling that initiated a takeover of the mental health delivery system of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

The ruling in *Coleman v. Newsom* upheld the June 25, 2024 ruling issued by Chief United States District Judge Kimberly J. Mueller, which addressed persistent

understaffing of mental health professionals at CDCR facilities. The ruling also involved a process nominating an outside professional to run the prisons’ mental health program as a court-appointed receiver, and resolved a dispute about fines totaling over \$110 million imposed against the CDCR.

“This class has been waiting for nearly three decades for the state to meet its constitutional obligations when it comes to the delivery of mental health care,” wrote Judge Mueller in her scathing ruling available on Lexis-Nexis.

The judge’s opinion showed a column graph

with the title “Population of Mentally Ill Inmates” that put the system-wide number of incarcerated persons with mental health issues at 34,079, which represented roughly a third of the entire population as of March 24, 2024.

A second column graph showed “Mental Health Staff Vacancy Rates” of 29%, which the judge said represented the unfilled authorized mental health staff positions for April 2024. According to *San Quentin News* calculations, the number amounted to 664 jobs of 2,254 authorized positions and 1,590 filled positions.

The court named a former head of the federal Bureau of Prisons as receiver of CDCR mental healthcare, wrote Don Thompson of the Associated Press. Judge Mueller identified Colette Peters, Oregon’s first female corrections director, as the nominated receiver. The article noted Peters has a reputation as a reformer. The AP added, “Appointing a receiver is a rare step taken when federal judges feel they have exhausted other options.”

According to the 9th circuit’s ruling on Lexis-Nexis, “The court affirmed the district court’s contempt order and rejection of the

State’s defenses but vacated the fines to the extent they exceeded the State’s monthly salary savings and remanded for additional findings and analysis on the calculation of fines.”

Americans with serious mental health conditions once found themselves cared for — or warehoused — at psychiatric asylums, wrote Sarah Stillman in her related article “Starved in Jail” in the April 21 issue of *The New Yorker*. LEXIS 6589

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy’s Community Mental Health Act emptied institutions across the country with a vision of a system of outpatient care.

Funding for Kennedy’s law never materialized and many of the ejected patients ended up on the streets, or in jails or prisons. The influx soon overwhelmed carceral institutions. Mental health care staffing could scarcely keep up.

The AP article predicted that the problem would soon worsen. Lawyers representing the interests of incarcerated persons in *Coleman v. Newsom* stated, “The November passage of a ballot measure increasing criminal penalties for some drug and theft crimes is likely to increase the prison population and worsen staffing shortages.”

GAMES

CROSSWORD CLASSIC

Created by Michael Fangman

“That’s Entertainment”

Edited by Jan Perry

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60						61	62					63		
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68				69									70	71
	72									73				

- Across
1. Guns N Roses once welcomed their fans here

5. Cyndi Lauper sang this film’s theme while its young stars hunted for One-eyed Willie’s treasure

11. Abu Dhabi is its capital (abbr.)

12. “Born Again” male twins?

13. 7 on a baseball scorecard (abbr.)

15. How Ozzy commutes?

18. Everyone seems to be using it. But watch out. It might take your job.

19. This kind of memory involves habitual repetition.

21. In cartoons, these two words often offer an invitation to dine at Joe’s

22. Not short

24. It’s urgent! Do it _____ (abbr.)

25. Not a yes, but... (2-words)

26. Often the first word at a Seder

27. You are likely to encounter one of these at a bar mitzvah, or on a D&D campaign perhaps

29. #2 requires this (abbr.)

31. Any of a complex of symptoms that can precede menstruation (abbr.)

32. Police investigators, literally (abbr.)

33. A scoreless tie

34. Saying this abbreviation for a hectare aloud may just make you laugh

35. A campfire’s remains

37. Egon famously warned his partners to never, ever, ever do this when busting ghosts

44. Decay, often from the inside

45. This can keep you cool, or if you can’t afford one, it might power your fan instead (abbr.)

46. Windows, El Capitan, Chrome e.g.

47. “It’s in the game...” is this gaming company’s advertising slogan (abbr.)

48. A commonly used, but derisive, term for a Democrat

50. This New England state boasts some of the nation’s earliest voters (abbr.)

51. The middle of the road (or a grouping of numbers for that matter)

54. Where you might find a filthy child taking a Sun, night bath (3-words)

57. Your German grandfather

59. In traditional representations of Christ’s crucifixion you will likely find these four letters

60. A clinic that makes a BLT amazing?

61. What you might have to do with an overgrown houseplant

63. These walkers roamed many a 1980s playroom as well as the planet Hoth

64. It’s usually found with some J

65. Haley Joel Osment saw them once

68. Not Jr.

69. You might find these roaming the American plains. If you do, just tell them to “Get along little...”

70. The radio arm of PBS, essentially

72. Iron Man or Hulk, but not Batman

73. It can be a difficult start to the work week.

Down

1. This park had a collection of raptors rather than swings

2. This airline has a hub at SFO (abbr.)

3. This sugary fluid attracts both bees and Roman Gods alike

4. Anaheim on baseball scoreboards

5. If Arnold hosted a competitive cooking show, he might yell this...

6. How a poet might begin an ode to a supportive undergarment

7. How Charlie Brown might write his own angry ode to missed footballs

8. What you might say about this collection of vowels...A...E...O...U...

9. Throwing an interception good way to win a game (2-words)

10. Poles often mark this ski race

12. This TX pitcher threw 100+ mph

14. A fancier word for “movies”

16. Emilio Estevez played this “man” early on in his career

17. A fanatic (often a religious one)

20. He’s given to the best 14-down

23. Usually the leader of the pack

28. This TV show started with a crash

30. This classical ballet step can also help your driving

35. An English “rear”

36. It’s Atomic # is 34 (abbr.)

38. A sea-inlet anywhere near Portland?

39. “_____ what? I don’t care!”

40. Most Star Wars fans will tell you he, and not Greedo, shot first.

41. Most people think this saucy treat is a vegetable, but it’s actually a fruit

42. This Ann was Ben Stiller’s mom

43. Hygienic and clean. Also a napkin

48. “Without his cane, he _____.”

49. Where you might find a pair?

52. A popular brand of soap

53. Mean to do something...

55. Where expert Microsoft Excel users go for online dating? (2-wrds/abbr.)

56. This U.S. Army Fort was recently renamed (yet again)

58. Edgar Allen and his family

62. A famous Gourmet

66. An indefinite and very long period

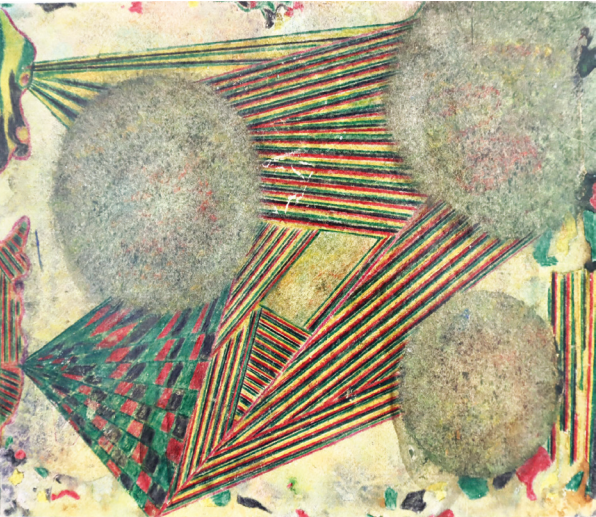
67. Not an amateur

71. Not Ma

ART

Resident's art is his life story

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism Guild



Talented incarcerated artist depicted their art in difference forms individuals in exploring beyond ones reach which is the universe.

Richard Sanders, a new SQ resident shares his art. “My art is my book and my life story.”

The artist loves to create abstract pieces, which he refers to as something that comes from his heart, mind, and soul since he was a child.

Sanders named, and dates his art . While he was thinking about his family he sketched out “*The Black Picasso*” a penciled and watered colored. The fruit to this art piece came after he have seen some of Picasso’s artwork which motivated him to be an attract artist.

Family is important to Sanders and he makes sure that he sends all favorite paintings and drawings, to his son.

He credited his motivation in part to the famous R&B /Soul singer Steven Wonder being that while he is listening to his tunes he sketched out *Intervisions*, another painting of his which is based on water color pencil chalk.

His mother was sick during the time that he was working on *Intervisions and being able to do his art gave him an out let* he was able to cope with life inside prison walls when he couldn’t be there for his mother. “The meaning of this painting is life,” said Sanders.

Giving context to *Intervision* he explained that at the upper left corner —there is a guy looking out at the universe, than there someone else who is blowing at the colors of the motherland.

Throughout his incarcerated he continues to improve his craft by moving up to Acrylics and other forms of art. Reflecting on his incarceration journey it has been a path to self-discovering and healing.

According to Sanders his goal is to give back to those he has hurt in the past. By donating and selling his pieces to vary charities or maybe someday to even open up his own charity for his community and family.

“You can create with your creative mind, and every person has it in them to be an abstract artist,” Sanders concluded.



SUDOKU

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SOLUTIONS

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CORRECTION

In the April 2025 issue we published an article titled “Prison politics and ethics problem” on the front page. The following quote was mistakenly contributed to resident Michael “Mikael” Walker II. “My friends and I stuck together despite the color of our skin,” he said. “I have never seen so much segregation until coming to California. As far as I can see, prison politics were designed to segregate people.” However, the source of the quote was a yard crew worker.

In the April 2025 issue on page 15 in the caption for the youth donations we stated Eric Bergen was a youth mentor, he is not.