

San Quentin News

EST. 1940

PRODUCED BY THE INCARCERATED

ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE

VOL. 2025 NO. 10

OCTOBER 2025 — ISSUE 185

SANQUENTINNEWS.COM

SAN QUENTIN, CALIFORNIA 94964

POPULATION 2,596



Educational training on how to use NARCAN for overdoses

Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Overdose Awareness

Educational training on life-saving methods critical for incarcerated individuals

By Jerry Maleek Gearin Journalism Guild Chair &
Benjamin Greenspon Journalism Guild Writer

Overdose deaths from illicit drug use have been a growing problem throughout California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; therefore, overdose awareness was brought to San Quentin residents.

Bay Area volunteers and re-entry services gathered for the inaugural Overdose Awareness event on SQ's Lower Yard to bring awareness and educational training on life-saving methods.

San Quentin's Warden C. Andes spoke to residents about his 24-year career and said that he has seen it all. It used to be meth and marijuana, but now things are more dangerous with spice and fentanyl making overdoses common.

"We...have a serious spice problem at San Quentin," said Andes. "Addicts are addicts, but dealers are victimizers. It's a team effort; we need to find a way to make addicts feel safe to

talk about it."

Spice is synthetic designer drug that mimics THC, the active ingredient in marijuana. Its consumption has health risks such as elevated heart rate, high blood pressure, seizures, and vomiting.

The drug also induces acute psychotic episodes of intense hallucinations, severe agitation, disorganized thoughts, and paranoid delusions, according to the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The event was inspired by the overdose death of SQ resident Colby Phillips' son in 2024. Phillips and SQ librarian Cordez Tarantino created an overdose planning committee when putting the occasion together.

"Our message was about drug avoidance and

See OVERDOSE on pg 4



Resident learns how to perform CPR

See CERT on pg 4

Parole Board Executive members discuss procedures

By Bostyon Johnson
Managing Editor

Executive team members of the Board of Parole Hearings visited San Quentin during Mental Wellness Week. The visit gave residents a chance to ask questions about changing laws, parole denials, and rehabilitative efforts.

Executive officer Scott Wyckoff, one of four team members to participate in the panel discussion gave two reasons for his visit. First, he said he wanted to ensure residents that he would relay the concerns of residents to commissioners and second, for those having to go through the parole suitability process, he wanted to leave them with a little hope.

"The people coming before the board have mental health issues and the fact that they are dealing with them and are able to recognize their triggers is going to help our commissioners be more confident in the decision to find somebody suitable," said Wyckoff. "... hopefully for the people who put in the hard work and transform themselves, they get to go home."

Other panel members included, Chief Counsel Jessica Blonien, Chief Deputy of Program Operations Tara M. Doetsch, and Chief Psychologist Jasmine A. Tehrani.

When the floor opened for questions, resident Steve W. asked about the California Static Risk Assessment interview saying, "the language in my CSRA was harsh" and asked if he was less transparent during the psychologist interview, would that affect his chance of a parole grant.

According to the California Code of Regulations Title 15, the California Static Risk Assessment uses static indicators of a person

See BOARD on pg 4

Day of Peace showcases music, harmony, humanity

By Bostyon Johnson
Managing Editor

Resident Michael Endres said he remembers the day in 2006 when a race riot between Black and Mexican San Quentin residents resulted in a six-month lockdown. "When that incident took place, I didn't hear anything about any tension." A year later, in an effort to curb violence in the institution, residents created the Day of Peace committee.

The historic event has evolved into a platform where incarcerated individuals share lived experiences, express the benefits of programming, and discuss scheduling conflicts that prevent people from attending self-help programs at San Quentin.

To commemorate the tradition of maintaining peace in prison, San Quentin's administration brought in musicians and



Lucy and the Long Hauls performs for hundreds of residents

Photo by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

See PEACE on pg 7

AB 1140 SINGLE CELL

Bill proposes four prisons for pilot program of single-cell living for 10% of residents

— STORY ON PAGE 5



GPS TRACKING DEVICES

Biotech bracelet tracking device is more aesthetically pleasing

— STORY ON PAGE 5



SCREEN TIME

Tablets and screen time detrimental to physical and mental health

— STORY ON PAGE 6



MISSION STATEMENT

San Quentin News reports on rehabilitative efforts to advance social justice and to improve public safety.

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San Quentin News is produced by a diverse team of incarcerated journalists who write, edit, design, and coordinate the distribution of the newspaper throughout California prisons and beyond. We are supported by professional journalists volunteers and prison administrators. Funding for the newspaper is through grants and generous donations from the outside community. To make a tax-deductible donation, please visit our website:

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PROFILE

Resident's long-time prison occupation provides opportunity for service and connection



Jaspar performs on the Lower Yard

By Steve Drown
Journalism Guild Writer

A random look throughout the prison system will come up with few, if any, men who are as dedicated to serving the population as Lee Jaspar. It is his stated belief that he serves the population to benefit others. “I believe that my primary job is to serve the population. By doing this, I am acknowledging those I have harmed,” said Jaspar. “This statement best presents the subject: the man, the convict, [and] his ‘gift’ to the population to assist others with their maturity and growth within this system.” Jaspar is accomplishing this by working with groups to serve and assist with many activities. One of the primary methods by which he is able to accomplish this is via his current job assignment within the Media Center. Jaspar has been in his current assignment for approximately 12 years



Jaspar plays guitar in Garden Chapel

— longer than any current employee within the media center — and mostly does editing and audio post-production for the broadcast division of the San Quentin media center. Jaspar was hired mainly because he knew how to program the Leightronix Nexis units utilized within this communication system. Jaspar has prior experience working with the Blind Project at the California Medical Facility for four years as a post-production engineer for audio projects and books. He had also been a teaching assistant for four years. In addition to his regular duties, Jaspar has been reading professionally and recording and playing music for the radio podcast program “Ear Hustle.” Jaspar is an accomplished musician. Jaspar has never sought to be recognized for his work. His amends aren’t a result of his work. “For me to accept any accolades for my work would invalidate my commitment to make

amends to the community. My highlight is my commitment to the community in the form of commitment to service.” Jaspar believes that it is his involvement with various groups and assignments that actually has taught him the most. “It does not have anything to do with the list of all that I have done or learned. It does have to do with what I got from each and every one of them,” Jaspar said. Jaspar makes himself available to do service with both staff and residents. He said, “There is no limit to what I will do” He wants to assist in the rehabilitation of others. “Hundreds of people, if not thousands, are going to read this article and, if it affects and/or assists just one person, I’ve been a success.” Jaspar has been incarcerated 29 years. His commitment and dedication is not something normally seen in others with similar periods of incarceration. Jaspar said, “Serving others is really how I take care of myself.”



San Quentin housing units

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Editor-in-Chief

Curtis Lee Ervin had not seen the moon in four decades. In November 1986 he was arrested, and from 1991 until about a year ago he lived inside San Quentin’s East Block, on Death Row. He was never supposed to see the moon again. East Block is where California once held more than 700 condemned male prisoners. Many of them call it “The Row.” Today the building is empty, and approximately 80 of those prisoners from The Row are housed at California Health Care Facility in Stockton, Calif. Ervin said his death sentence was recently vacated by the Alameda County Superior Court. He was resentenced for manslaughter and paroled on August 25. “It’s been a long time coming,” said Ervin, a 72-year-old African American. “I saw the moon for the first time in 38 years.” On The Row, Ervin was confined to his cell about 18 to 20 hours each day. He was never allowed to mingle with prisoners in the general population, and anytime he left East Block he was handcuffed, shackled with a waist chain, and escorted by a correctional officer. From all appearances, Ervin is in good physical shape, notwithstanding having a herniated disk in his back. He wears eyeglasses, has a full head of gray hair and a neatly shaped gray beard, and stands five-feet, nine inches. He’s also a practiced jazz guitar player. Ervin mentioned a 20-year-old story about the judge in his case, published in *The New York Times*. All though

Former condemned prisoner
resentenced and paroled
Curtis Lee Ervin had not seen the
moon in nearly four decades

he did not elaborate, it may well have contributed to his change in fortune. Prosecutorial misconduct, involving race, had violated Ervin’s constitutional right to a fair trial, which led to the change in his sentence, he said. In 2020, the California Legislature passed the Racial Justice Act. Among its uses, the law provides post-conviction relief to a prisoner who is able to demonstrate racial bias on the part of an important participant in his or her arrest, trial (jurors included), conviction, sentence, and any other phase of the preceding. It was reported that Alameda County Deputy District Attorney John R. Quatman said he was called into Judge Stanley Golde’s chambers and advised to exclude Blacks and Jews from the jury in death penalty cases; “Especially Black women.” “[A] federal judge ordered then-District Attorney Pamela Price to review the capital convictions of 34 people after the discovery of index cards in the file of Ernest Dykes, a Black man sentenced to death in 1995, showing that prosecutors struck Black and Jewish jurors from his trial based on their race and religion,” according to the Death Penalty Information Center. “[No] Jew would vote to send a defendant to the gas chamber,” Quatman stated Judge Golde advised him. Quatman revealed these statements in a sworn declaration, *The Times* reported. Twenty years ago, there were 44 prisoners on The Row from Alameda County. Judge Golde had presided over more of those cases than any other judge. In 2019, Gov. Gavin Newsom placed a moratorium on the death penalty. By the end of 2024, Ervin and all the other condemned prisoners were removed from The Row. “It was a blessing,” said Ervin. “Especially after [President Bill] Clinton’s AEDPA” (Anti-terrorism and



CDCR photo

Effective Death Penalty Act). “Peoples’ time was running out.” “Ervin? I remember him,” the officer said. He used work in San Quentin’s transportation department. He recalled Ervin being a quiet and low-key individual. “I took him out on medical appointments.” Upon Ervin’s arrival at CHCF last year, hands uncuffed and shackles removed, he said, “It felt like a country club, and it still feels that way.” Society has changed over the last four decades, though, and Ervin experienced a glimpse of it when he returned to court for resentencing. He had to pass through the county jail system and said he was shocked to hear so many young Black men using the N-word. “Ninja, ninja, ninja” is how he described their conversations. “What the heck is this?” Ervin asked himself as he listened and viewed strange new customs by so many Black men. He put that madness aside and focused on a familiar sight in the night sky at CHCF. That’s when Curtis Lee Ervin saw the moon again.

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EST. 1940

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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

SQNews' Editorial Board's opinion on PROP 57

SQNews Editorial Board

In December 2016, San Quentin News published the front-page story “Proposition 57 passed...what now?” It took some time, but now that question has been answered by California’s Appellate Court.

Regulations on how the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation believed it could award credits to prisoners serving life sentences — with the possibility of parole — has been “Remanded with directions” back to the superior court. For many who are incarcerated, the July 28th ruling left them with a foreboding feeling; one of forlorn hope.

Proposition 57 was intended to enhance public safety by prioritizing rehabilitation over lengthy incarceration. The ballot initiative was passed by voters to reduce the state’s overcrowded prisons and cut the high costs associated with incarceration. The initiative’s language did not require legislative approval, so no anticipatory changes were made to the state’s Penal Code, which the Court of Appeal recognized.

The Court wrote, in part: “We hold that (1) Proposition 57 properly removed statutory restraints on the [CDCR’s] authority to award credits, allowing the regulations to supersede contrary statutes; and (2) the [CDCR] may use credits to advance indeterminately sentenced inmates’ minimum eligible parole dates, only if permitted by existing law because both the plain language and ballot materials of Proposition 57 are silent on this issue. The matter is remanded, and the trial court is directed to modify the writ of mandate and enter a modified judgment.”

One main focus of Prop. 57 was on nonviolent offenders. The initiative was to provide them with opportunities for

earlier parole consideration, if they were deemed fit. The CDCR is the organization tasked with the responsibility of safety and security over incarcerated individuals, in addition to its mission of rehabilitation. Therefore, it should have the authority and discretion to apply rehabilitative credits deemed. Of course, there is statutory law that precludes the CDCR from overstepping its authority.

“Credits could not be used to advance indeterminately-sentenced inmates’ (Lifers) minimum eligible parole dates, to the extent of any conflict with existing law, because Prop. 57 did not address that issue and therefore did not replace the existing law, Pen. Code, § 3046, subd. (a), requiring that such inmates serve any minimum term established pursuant to other law,” the Court wrote.

Propositions 57’s implementation by the CDCR’s Regulation and Policy Management Branch may seem by some as a half-hearted attempt to place accurate language in the California Code of Regulations (title 15), but the reality is administrative law does not supersede statutory law.

There is no argument that Lifers and violent offenders benefit from behavior and work credit earning programs because they have an incentive to conduct themselves in a positive manner while in CDCR custody. Such incentives deter many from gangs, violence, and other unsavory behavior. Lifers reasoned suitable for early parole are vetted by the Board of Prison Hearings and at times by the Office of the Governor, as part of the system’s checks-and-balance for inmates’ rehabilitation and good behavior.

There were many Lifers who believed they would die in prison, but with criminal justice reform happening, they focused on their transformation to get out of prison, as opposed to maintaining a criminal

lifestyle. They should continue to do so, irrespective of this recent stumbling block.

Mike Romano, director of the Three Strikes Project at Stanford Law School, weighed in when San Quentin News published its 2016 story about Prop. 57. He did not offer specific details on how the new law would apply to any specific group of incarcerated people because at the time no one was certain. “In some ways it’s guess work,” he said. “We think there’s going to be two classes affected.”

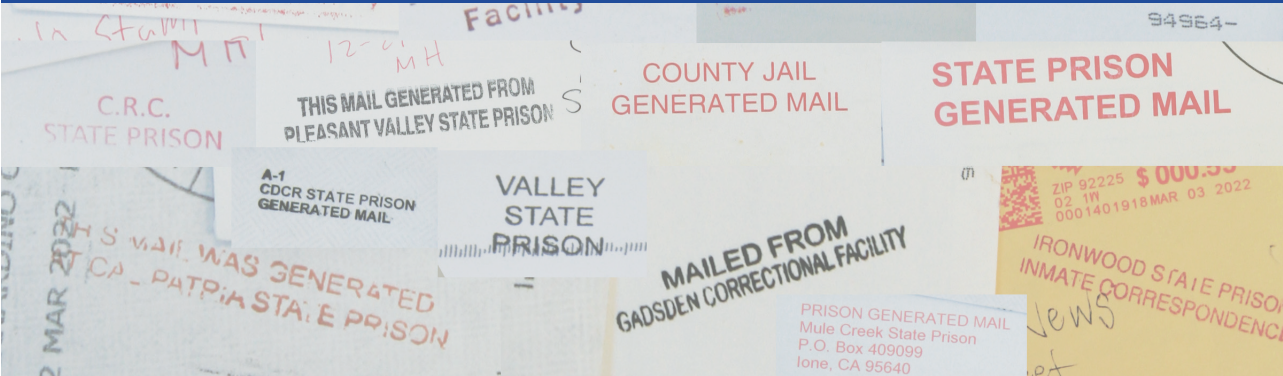
Romano also made remarks that foreshadowed the Appellate Court decision. Paraphrasing his words, San Quentin News wrote, Proposition 57 may follow the Penal Code, and for inmates that it will affect, they may have an opportunity for early parole. “It gives lawyers a lot of arguing to do,” said Romano.

In the end, though, it was the Criminal Justice Legal Foundation’s lawsuit against the CDCR which placed credits toward early release under court scrutiny to make ...the state prison system... follow the Penal Code. Apart from the law, it was the timeless tactic of exacting vengeance upon felons long after many have been rehabilitated.

It is doubtful the CJLF would seek justice for, and represent, model prisoners serving life sentences who are arbitrarily denied parole for any number of reasons such as “minimizing,” “not taking responsibility,” “need more groups,” “get more self-help,” or “posing an unreasonable risk to public safety,” in the absence of the “some evidence” standard.

That is the underlying foundation of tacit hypocrisy in an organization that uses the words criminal justice in its name. Touché to the CJLF on what may be a short-lived victory. Lifers are used to waiting, though. Many are tough, resilient, and anything but defeated; so as it has often been said. “Back to the drawing board.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR FROM INSIDE SQ



Dear SQNews,
Hi, my name is John Paul Andrews and I’m currently in reception at North Kern. It’s my first time in prison and it is something I’m adjusting to; currently it’s a 23-hour lock-down program and I’ve been going crazy with boredom. Then my cellie busted out a big stack of back issues of SQNEWS, and boy they helped! I have a few books, I have my BIBLE, but the SQNEWS fell like I had a connection to the world; the world outside and the world in which I’ll spend the next few years in prison. I loved the back issues I’ve read and re-read, but I’m wondering if I could get the latest editions while I’m here? I’ll more than likely ask again once I hit mainline too. Thank you and keep up the good work.

John Paul Andrews
North Kern State Prison
Delano, CA.

Dear SQNews,
I am a newly incarcerated youth offender received into the custody of the secretary of the State California Department of corrections and Rehabilitation. As a young American who’s lived in California and at the moment is incarcerated I think San Quentin News is a great way to bring awareness and portentous insight to the general public and California incarcerated individuals. In response to a article written by C.K. Gerhartsreiter on issue 177 of the San Quentin Newspaper, I’d add that as an American citizen it’s easy to be sophomoric about the law because of sophistry rampant corruption within our court rooms and institutions as well as jails and prisons that our communities seem intolerant to fix because not enough people who claim to care are integrated in what is known as the justice system. But me and my peers feel this can change if

we are magnanimous when speaking up in our courtrooms, institutions with our laws and policies that often times are not followed by supervising authorities. So in retrospect we as a whole would be doing all ourselves a favor if whenever we encounter injustice we say something right then and there and record so our efforts never go unnoted or unnoticed. Thank you for all the content San Quentin NEWS continues to publish and God Bless.

Travis Mabson
North Kern State Prison
Delano, CA.

Dear SQNews,
I was a member of the San Quentin NEWS Journalism Guild in Folsom women’s Facility in 2022. They claimed to be in dire need for an article from the women participants. Not only was my “how to beat Qualified immunity article not published, but I also NEVER received my \$150.00 member Christmas box from the wonderful donator’s. Thank you San Quentin NEWS for your disappointment and less than appreciation for the women point-of-view.

Lisa Perez
Corona, CA.

Dear SQNews,
I’d like to thank you for all updated information that’s happening in the whole San Quentin institution people are coming in from the street and set up an events that helps people (residents) enjoy what they love to do. From writing to sports, music and events to get all people get together socializing. Enjoying a good day. I thought I write to say that I appreciate you. The whole crew who work with you to put together stories and make news. Also, by reading the Newspaper, people

gets an idea of what they’re going to do (a plan) for their future today.

R. Marinda
SQRC

Dear SQNews,
I’m writing to give my opinion about the two problems that we have in North Block first about the program that they have they lock the doors every hour we offer to behave our self’s better because it’s hard for us to come to school or programs on time if the doors are lock and second the problem with the pigeons they poop everywhere. It can contaminate food and water so we offer to clean the building once a week.

Cristofer Hernandez
Bw3887

Dear SQNews,
Is there an explanation as to why can-teen runs out of stock of products when 2nd or 3rd draw is shopping? It’s beyond me how this always occurs after 1st draw. Common sense would be to restock items that have been depleted to insure the two latter draws of needed are met. This incident has happened quite a few times in my case.

Why not overstock on item’s that sell like there’s no tomorrow, take backpacks for instance. The one in my possession has seen better days and is now in need of a dumpster. However, twice over in need of a replacement this item was denied me on account of it being sold out. In dire need of a new backpack this one attaches to my person is indeed an embarrassment. Bare this in mind that backpack is not only item’s that sell out of stock but also items that are edible. What’s up with that?

James Talivan
SQRC

EVENT

OVERDOSE

Inaugural event delivers message of drug avoidance and glimmer of hope

Continued from page 1



Family Bridges Housing provides information



Warden Chance Andes cuts Vincent Wiggins hair for him to donate



Marin County Department of Health provides swag



OMCP Mentor Micheal King speaks



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

From left outside guest speaker Hannah's husband, Hannah, CRM OT A. Torres, SQ librarian Cordez Tarantino, and



Amu Wynn speaks

trying to save a life, to not let the person close to you overdose,” said Tarantino. “We want people here (SQ) to know there is help.”

A painting of a person’s silhouette by resident Jesse Milo hung from an exercise yard fence. It had a white background and a black outline of a person kneeling in prayer.

The artwork depicted an angel’s wings that were spread across the length of the painting, with an illuminating halo above the head. On the edge of the image’s left hand it read “James,” the name of Phillips’ son.

People signed the wings of the painting with red and black pens in memory of loved ones and friends who died from an overdose. Some read: “In memory of my home girl Sonia Norwalk, R.I.P. Midget,” and “Ronald Randolph Sr. You are loved and missed.”

San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins stopped by and showed her support for bringing awareness to the growing problem of illicit drug use.

“We’re not on opposite sides; it’s all about creating safer communities, making everyone safe,” Jenkins said. “There is not enough... help on the county level. We need to mimic this (SQ) environment.”

Resident Edwin Tucker, who has been sober for approximately four years, said that while he was in the county jail he watched dozens of low-level offenders come and go.

Tucker added that there were no rehabilitation services offered in the jail, where it’s needed the most. The local jail systems have failed in overdose awareness and prevention.

“There are a lot of lost and broken people who need to know they are not alone,” Tucker said.

In light of the Overdose Awareness event, the Marin County Human Health Services

department gave first-hand CPR training to residents, which consisted of the correct application of chest compressions.

Residents lined up to learn the life-saving skill of CPR; they practiced on makeshift upper torsos while an electronic device monitored the exercise.

“You wanna go deep into the body; you may break someone’s ribs, but the main thing is to keep them alive,” said Lucia Ramirez of MCHHS.

Health Services conducted a Wheel of Fortune–type of quiz, where residents spun the wheel and answered the questions related to overdose prevention.

The Veterans Transition Center of California offered paroling veterans information on housing, clothing, food, and mental health resources.

A pamphlet distributed by SF Rams Peer Wellness Center stated that they offer healing circles and recovery support for parolees. Their organization is supported by the SF Department of Public Health.

Family Bridges Incorporated, a , a ,re-entry group of formerly incarcerated employees; they have hired over 30 previously incarcerated people who currently work for them.

“This is the most rewarding job I have ever had. I want you all to know that you have value and we can help when you parole,” said volunteer Heidi Wong. “We want you to become a part of our community. Just keep striving toward the best version of yourself.”

Family Bridges Housing and Community Services, provide information about support letters for parole hearings and their presence at resentencing hearings, according to the Family Bridges Incorporated flyer.

The theme of overdose prevention seemed to capture attendees’ attention because a lot of residents participated in the activities.

A contest sponsored by Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment, a SQ life skills program, held a cognitive behavioral questionnaire relating to drug addiction and addictive thinking patterns.

Residents formed teams and answered questions against the clock; the team that finished with the correct answers and best time were awarded a \$50 prize of sodas, candy bars, and potato chips.

“Be more vulnerable than you are used to being. Take a chance on yourself,” said resident Amu Wynn of the Offender Mentorship Certification Program at SQ.

Wynn thanked the OMCP and I.S.U.D.T. programs for the work they are doing, then he gave credit to all of the groups that are combating addiction. He spoke of this day being a time to create memories and hopefully, for someone, a new drug-free beginning.

In an effort to enjoy refreshment, residents formed a line approximately a quarter mile long throughout the yard to receive a wrist bracelet, a slice of pizza, and a bottle of spring water.

The event’s planning committee thanked, A. Torres, of the Office of SQ Resource team, Solitary Watch, SQNews Adviser Amanda Weitman, Kinders BBQ, and Family Bridges Inc.’s Anne Carda, who helped the committee to reach out to volunteers.

Gratitude was also extended to Dave Lewis, Director of CDCR programming; SFDA Brooke Jenkins; Marin Public Health services; and Prison 2 Employment, who contributed the art supplies.

RESOURCES

BOARD

Continued from page 1

that don’t change including gender, age, and offense history of the offender to predict recidivism.

The assessment produces a risk value; 1-Low Risk, 2-Moderate Risk, 3-High Risk Drug, 4-High Risk Property, and 5-High Risk Violence as predictions to the likelihood a person incur a felony arrest within a three-year period after released on parole.

Chief Psychologist Tehrani said that residents should be truthful in their CSRA interview and then use the CSRA report as a roadmap.

A resident, who is a part of the deaf community, said that he’s been denied parole nine times and credit those denials to the lack of communication of information from him and the interpreter, who presented the information to the commissioners.

Chief Counsel Jessica Blonien said if any resident feels that an attorney, translator, or interpreter is communicating information incorrectly, that resident should immediately stop the hearing.

“The attorney should be going through the CSRA interview and helping file objections for you,” said Blonien. “If you are in your hearing or your CSRA interview and you feel like they are not doing a good job as your interpreter, you should tell someone right away in that hearing because right there at that moment we can stop because what you have to say is really crucial for the hearing.”

Other residents raised questions about staff misconduct, how receiving a faulty disciplinary write up affects residents who have to address it with a commissioner.

Wyckoff said that commissioners are more concerned about the actions/response of the person answering questions about a disciplinary write up.

“There are ways to talk about that where you can have a little insight. Think about how you can address that [Rules Violation Report],” Wyckoff said. “How are you responding to situations? That is what the commissioners are looking at.”

Resident Josh asked if there was anything in place offering parole dates and rehabilitation credits back to people who lost it behind the legal challenges of Prop 57.

“Unfortunately there is nothing we can do about that. The legislature makes the laws about who gets dates and we interpret it with California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation case records,” said Blonien. “That would take legislative action.”

Wyckoff said it might raise a red flag for a commissioner during the parole hearing, but that’s an individual choice.

“The risk that goes along with that is, maybe you don’t tell the psychologist something and that may reflect differently when you change an answer during the actual hearing,” said Wyckoff.

Wyckoff said the commissioners wanted residents to know that they understand a little more about a person’s transformation, when they see a person

willing to ask for help.

“How are [commissioners] to learn about how you’re going to cope on the outside, if you don’t ask for help on the inside,” Wyckoff said.

Wyckoff went on to say that, he wanted to clear up the myth about people getting denied parole because they were getting mental health services. He said he heard that people are reluctant to participate in mental health programs because there is a false belief that it makes a person look bad or crazy at their parole hearing.

“There is no penalty for being in mental health services,” said Wyckoff. Adding that sometime people stop programming right before they go to board because they want to focus on their insight or they stop programming right after being found suitable.

Wyckoff said, “it is a red flag for commissioners if a person drops out of mental health services and encouraged resident to keep programming whether they receive a parole date or not.

“If you need help, get help. If you are getting help, keep getting help,” Wyckoff said.

In closing, Wyckoff said he appreciates the work and transformation that is going on in San Quentin.

“I can’t imagine what that must feel like and to the extent that we can make the process feel a little more safe for them, help them understand the expectations and hopefully for the people who put in the hard work and transform themselves, they get to go home,” he said.

More than two dozen residents gain advantage for post-release work

CERT

Continued from page 1

their full potential.”

The exam included sections on administrative responsibilities, behavioral foundations, interpersonal skills, recovery support, advocacy, community inclusion, resource linkage, and crisis management. Moore’s score sheet said he had passed them all.

The first group tested July 2; Moore tested in the second group the next day. The results took almost a month to arrive. Of the 27 residents who tested, 26 passed, and they received offers to join San Quentin’s PSSP team.

“I felt privileged to take a state examination in prison, especially a state examination that would qualify me for a job when I go home,” said Moore. “Best of all, I will be helping people.”

By prison standards, the job paid him well so far, Moore said. PSSP workers receive hourly wages of 45 cents at training, 75 cents after training, and then 95 cents after working for six months. Having passed the exam would soon raise his hourly pay to \$1.45.

Post-release jobs in the field, available for holders of the state certification, would pay annual salaries from \$45,000 at entry level. Raises would eventually take them up to \$85,000.

PSSP runs as a pilot program at every facility in the state and has funding for two years. Many San Quentin residents have called the program “the best program the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation offers.”

Moore said he expected that the job would also help him with the Board of Parole Hearings. “The board wants change and I am doing the five stages of change and participating in this program counts as one of them.”

Moore said he had worked hard to prepare. “We started seven months ago and we needed to do 60 hours in 17 core competencies. They tested us on the eight most important ones.”

“Peer Support Services is empowering and strengthens my recovery,” said Moore. “We help and give back and we empower ourselves and others in our altruistic ventures.”

Asked about what drew him to apply to the program, Moore answered, “By sharing our lived experience, we can help guys who struggle.”

"Scale of Impact" to "Economic Toll of Record Barriers"

SOURCE: reprint from LegiScanapp.legiplex.com

Specific Information
Updated AB1140- bill proposes four California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation prisons taking part in a pilot program where 10% of the incarcerated population becomes single cell.

What Does AB 1140 Propose?
The bill mandates that the CDCR develop and implement a pilot program by January 1, 2027, placing incarcerated individuals in single-occupancy cells at four adult prison facilities. The pilot program will apply to 10% of the population at four designated facilities. Selection criteria for which inmates qualify will be determined by the CDCR Secretary or their designee.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in the program is voluntary—incarcerated individuals may request to be housed in a single-cell and may request to return to shared housing at any time. The bill explicitly excludes the following from counting toward the 10%:
Safety cells
Detoxification cells
Temporary holding cells
The CDCR Secretary must

submit a publicly available report to the Governor and Legislature by March 15, 2028, covering: capacity data, number of incarcerated persons housed in single-occupancy cells, number of incarcerated persons in each facility participating in:
Work assignments, education assignments; treatment and reentry programs for end-of-year in 2026 and 2027, along with housing classification.
Disciplinary Incidents & Violence: disaggregated data by facility, by cell type (single vs. non-single), and by month for the first year of the pilot.
Facility Changes: qualitative description of modifications made to implement the pilot at each site.
Assembly Vote: Passed on June 2, 2025 (vote: 77 yes, 1 no, 1 present/not voting).

Why the Bill?
The legislative findings underpinning the bill highlight: Health & Stress Studies indicate that inmates in overcrowded, shared housing experience higher stress and increased systolic blood pressure, compared to those in single cells.
Sleep & Emotional Well-being Sleep deprivation—common in shared

housing—can harm mood, emotional regulation, and increase anxiety. Single-cell environments may improve restorative sleep and psychological stability.
Violence & Overcrowding Shared housing and overcrowding have been linked to greater violence and stress for both inmates and staff. Reducing crowding may enhance safety and rehabilitation.
No prisons are currently confirmed to participate in the pilot program.
The decision lies with CDCR leadership, which will select based on operational criteria and logistics.

Scale of Impact
About 1 in 5 Californians — approximately 8 million people—live with a criminal conviction.
76% of people with convictions report encountering barriers to success.
Top Challenges Reported
46% struggle with finding a job.
45% face difficulties paying fines or fees.
40% report health issues
35% encounter trouble obtaining occupational licenses.
24% have difficulty securing housing.
Disparities worsen

inequities, people of color are 25% more likely than White individuals to experience job-related barriers, and 61% more likely to struggle with housing.
Economic Toll of Record Barriers
The average debt incurred from a criminal conviction is around \$13,607. Even a DUI with a base fine of \$390 can result in more than \$6,000 in court-related debt.
In 2014, restrictions related to conviction records led to the removal of 1.7 to 1.9 million workers from the labor force, costing California up to \$87 billion in annual gross domestic product. More recent estimates suggest an estimated \$20 billion in lost annual GDP due to underemployment of working-age Californians with felony records, with regional losses including \$9 billion in Los Angeles and \$4 billion in the Bay Area.
In summary, the report sheds light on how criminal records create pervasive, often unjust, barriers that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations—and have significant economic consequences for the state. Its data points make a persuasive case for reforms that dismantle these collateral penalties, expand pathways to record clearing, and support rehabilitation.

Law libraries offer pertinent information

By Michael Walker Journalism Guild Writer
Some people think that law libraries exist exclusively for lawyers, but in truth, they exist to serve anyone.
The Psychological Study of Social Issues notes that legal socialization is a right of every United States citizen.
“As a U.S. citizen I feel it is my right and responsibility to know the law after serving decades in prison,” said Corey McNeil, a former SQ resident. Speaking of K–12 education, he added, “There is a need for a blended standard curriculum in civil law and criminal [that is] long overdue.”
Public law libraries are vital for the American public’s understanding of the law. Access to legal information provides citizens with an appreciation of how judicial decisions affect public policy, while also shaping civic engagement.
There are legal/law dictionaries, and they cover definitions for every legal term and aspect of the law. The Latin phrase *Lex salut du people est la supreme loi*, translates to, “safety of the people is the highest law.” If the people don’t know law libraries exist or where to access them, then communities are not as safe as they could be with wider dissemination of this knowledge.
The American Association of Law Libraries recommends standards to state courts and county law libraries. This section helps to guarantee that legal information and archived case law is available to the public in law libraries across the United States.
The Law Library Company was America’s first law library. Founded in Philadelphia circa 1802, it is now known as Jenkins Law Library, according to *AALL Spectrum*.
The California legislature enacted statutory provisions in 1891 for the establishment of law libraries for attorneys and the public. California is made

of 58 counties, 56 of which have law libraries in operation. This public resource affords people access to legal material, as the California Constitution so expresses in its Declaration of Rights; Article 1; Section 7(a), dually conveying matters of legal socialization.
Civics begins in a nation’s school system. Generation Citizen is a nonprofit that teaches “action civics” to middle school and high school pupils. It’s curriculum helps students identify public safety issues and tackles matters like gang violence.
Public law libraries are legal public institutions. According to San Quentin Senior Librarian Gabriel Loiderman, legal public institutions are resources that play a role in the development of young citizens.
The United States Supreme Court of 1977 ruled in *Bounds v. Smith* that incarcerated people have the right to access to the judiciary. This signaled recognition of the constitutional rights of incarcerated persons. It also meant they could seek redress. In the 1996 ruling *Casey v. Lewis*, the United States Supreme Court handed down the opinion that correctional institutions must provide access to law libraries for incarcerated and lay persons. The ruling also stated that people can be aided by their peers.
“Civics matter to know about the structure of federal and local governmental institutions,” said San Quentin Sergeant F. Benes. “To know our constitution is vital because your rights lay within that document.”
“Learning your basics such as language, math, [and] financial literacy should be taught to build, good habits, and socialization to starting life.”
The rights and responsibilities of all American citizens are tied into public law libraries. They are the adhesives that bridge and bond the social capital networks that make up our communities. Legal redress is a right of every citizen. Educated citizens keep societies much safer.

Credible messengers prevent gun violence

By C. K. Gerhartsreiter Staff Writer

Carlisha Hood felt hungry. She stood in a take-out line to buy lunch while her son, 14, waited in the car. Jeremy Brown felt even hungrier. He stood right behind Hood. When Brown heard Hood asking for a special order that would take long to prepare, he lost it. He punched Hood in the head just before Hood’s son came in. The boy saw Brown punching his mother once, then a second time; then he pulled out his gun and fired.
The scene, relayed by Malcolm Gladwell in *The New Yorker*, occurred in Chicago and came from Jens Ludwig’s new book *Unforgiving Places* on gun violence. Stories like that have policy makers upset, but they happen far too often. Richard Mendel’s report “From Punishment to Prevention: A Better Approach to Addressing Youth Gun Possession,” published by The Sentencing Project, summarized ideas to minimize youth gun possession and to reduce youth and young adult gun violence.
“I was 11 years old, and I bought a .32 revolver from a homeless man who lived in an alleyway behind my house in Modesto,” said San Quentin Rehabilitation Center resident Carlos Valdez, 35. “It was to protect my mom, to keep drug addicts out of my house so that they would not sell drugs

to my mom. I bought it for \$12. It was an old and rusted gun that had three bullets. It was normal and I normalized it. That was my introduction to guns.” Unlike Hood’s son, Valdez never fired it.
The Sentencing Project report said, “In 2022, gunshots took the lives of 2,526 young people,” and “Roughly 5% of youth in the United States ages 12 to 17 – more than a million young people – carry a firearm each year.” Then it admitted, “This high rate of gun possession is not new.”
Ludwig’s book and Mendel’s report agreed that “Unlike gun possession, which is widespread in all areas of the country, actual gun violence is highly concentrated geographically, and it is committed primarily by a very narrow segment of the youth and young adult population.” The two publications also agreed on a solution: Mendel said to start with identification of reasons for gun violence followed by strategic intervention.
“America’s gun violence problem is highly concentrated geographically, and even within high crime neighborhoods only a small number of people ... comprise most of both the shooters and the victims.” That “small number,” the report said, meant typically young men. The report recommended development, funding, and support for effective community violence

interruption efforts in areas with widespread gun violence.
Mendel’s report complained about aggressive law enforcement and inflexible and punitive court responses to youth gun possession that “damage young people’s futures [and] exacerbate the justice system’s already glaring racial disparities.” Transferring youth to adult court and placing youth in locked detention centers would worsen recidivism outcomes, he added.
Diversion in gun possession cases would work better, Mendel kept writing throughout his report. Mendel also strongly favored cognitive behavioral interventions for youth at high risk for gun violence. Mendel’s report said, “Public health experts agree that the most effective strategies to reduce gun violence among both youth and young adults are not found in law enforcement and court prosecution.”
One such plan, the report said, would “employ social workers as well as ‘credible messengers’ ... who work

directly with young men at highest risk for gun crimes.”
These “credible messengers” would consist of “individuals with experience in the justice system, many of them formerly incarcerated.” They would engage in partnership with law enforcement and community organizations.
Credible messenger mentors supported participants in the 18-month program in the development of life plans. Participants also enrolled in cognitive-behavioral therapy, anger management, and substance abuse treatment for which they earned \$1,000/month in stipends. The success showed that new gun charges dropped by 90% and citywide gun violence fell 18% and by 29% in one targeted neighborhood.
“This sounds like a good idea,” said resident Douglas Tigges, 63, incarcerated for gun violence. This would mean jobs for when we get out and give us a chance to make a positive contribution to society.” Tigges added, “Once you pull that trigger, you can’t get that bullet back.”

New humane tracking device for high-risk parolees

By Jerry Maleek Gearin Journalism Guild Chair

A more progressive and humane tracking device will give high-risk parolees a better success rate, and lessen their likelihood of reoffending.
A state of the art Global Positioning System in the form of a biotech bracelet is being considered as a more compassionate and useful method for high-risk offenders’ supervision.
The new device allows returnees to blend into society without drawing unwanted attention, which can make them feel less alienated and promote mental wellness, according to Lexipol Media Group.
The GPS device would change the standard tracking device from a bulky ankle monitor to a designer smart watch. The new design is tamper and waterproof, lightweight, and has a 10-year battery life. It is artistically appealing and user-friendly, noted the article.
The objective of the new device is to improve re-entry success for parolees through a structured supervision system aiming to reduce recidivism. The new system will also be equipped with a two-way messaging and computerized check-ins through a modified interface, as well as speedy intervention if a parolee approaches restricted areas.
According to the article, the biometric bracelet will help

parole officers and medical personal detect early signs of stress and illness. It will be equipped with microchips and sensors that gather physiological data, which include alerts during medical crises such as heart rate and pulse monitoring, oxygen levels, and blood pressure monitoring.
The cost of monitoring an offender in California is approximately \$35.96 a day, while traditional supervision costs \$24.75 a day. GPS supervision is \$8.51 more than traditional supervision at \$33.26 a day. Further, the National Institute of Justice states GPS supervision is more effective, and better assures that offenders comply with the terms of their parole than other monitoring methods.
According to the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, parolees may be required to cover the cost of electronic GPS monitoring. Enforcement of parolee payment will consider employment status, level of income, and additional household expenses of returnees.
If CDCR finds that a person does not have the ability to pay for GPS monitoring, fees will be waived. The ability of parolees to pay will be determined by one’s supervising parole agent. In determining payment eligibility, the department will consider a parolee’s direct order of restitutions, and fines, and give priority to those payments.

Sidebar:

The “Credible Messenger” violence interruption initiatives have a proven record of accomplishment in reducing gun violence:
New Haven, Conn.: average monthly shootings ↓ 73%
Boston: youth homicides ↓ 63%
East New York: gun violence injuries ↓ 50%
Cincinnati: gang-related homicides ↓ 41%
South Bronx: gun violence injuries ↓ 37%
New Orleans: gang-related homicides ↓ 32%

Music and mental health called part of rehabilitation

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Journalism Guild Chair

In dealing with life’s curve balls, incarcerated musicians express their love for music, and how they use it to cope with the stressors life throws at them.

Music offers remedies to regulate emotions, enabling a listener to disengage from distressing situations and focus on the beauty of the music, according to Psychology Today.

San Quentin resident Ammen Shinti, 71, Pianist, and Vocalist, said that, being away from his family, and being dehumanization, by being herded like cattle, has made his incarceration stressful.

“Every time I read scripture (Bible) I would put it into song, like the Psalms of David, it would help me cope with stress,” Shinti said.

He said that, he listens to all genres of music such as gospel, and classical jazz artists like Miles Davis.

Davis is a master engineer Of Bee-Bop (a rapid form of machinegun jazz) when Davis displays the mastery

of his instrument.

Incarcerated Musical Director, Composer, and Violinist John Zeretzke, 66, said he failed as a student in most academic subjects, but in the fifth grade his school offered Violin lessons.

“The first sound of the violin change my life, I went from academic failure to musical success,” Zeretzke said.

He said his Mom and Dad were painters; and that he grew up in a creative environment that helped him better understand the arts.

The church his family attended was open to different cultures. Zeretzke remembers his Mom saying that she did not understand the music but it sounded beautiful.

The musical opportunities at SQ enabled Zeretzke to help put together the Greater Good Band. It started with 4 members 2-3 years ago, and now today the band has reached a 12 member assemble.

Zeretzke said that, the Greater Good performances are deeply inspiring, the slower music is spiritually soothing, and could practically put a person into a trance.

“We honor the music; we honor the composers and songwriters as well as the musicians, and we honor ourselves,” Zeretzke said.

Born in Eritrea Northeast African, San Quentin resident Henok Rufael, 46, a Violinist, and Guitarist. He said Eritrean culture is big on the “Koboro Drum,” it produces a deep bass sound which has a common place in the household.

He said he was introduced to music in the 4th grade; at that time he owned a Magnavox transistor radio, he would get lost in the sound of the music. He was amazed how various sounds were brought together to make one particular sound.

Rufael learned to play the Violin at Valley State Prison in California by watching others play. He was in a place where he wanted to challenge himself to learn classical music at age 38.

One day prior to going to a Board of Parole Hearing, Rufael received a not so positive Comprehensive Risk Assessment, which measures a person’s threat to public safety. As a way to cope with the disappointment he would

go to the Prison’s recreation yard and just start playing the Violin.

He says that he went through a repertoire of finger exercises to speed up his finger’s dexterity. Then he would try to weave it into a song, which helped him relieve the stress by increasing his finger speed.

“If I am sad or in grief I would play something slow and melancholy [sad], which allows me to transfer my feelings into the instrument,” Rufael said. “It’s about removing that negative energy that’s stuck in the body.

The love of music began at an early age for SQ resident Wade Morman, 65, a Percussionist, Guitarist, and Vocalist.

In the 1st and 2nd grade is where Morman’s interest in music took place, he would beat on pots and pans, and empty fruit cans.

In the 1970s Morman’s grandparents owned “Blue Heaven Nightclub” in Louisiana; he was 10-years-old at the time, when it was time for bed he would listen to the music until he fell asleep.

Morman prefers 70s R&B music, he said it gives him a

sense of identity about where he grew up, music from that era was about peace and love, it lifted him out of stress.

“My favorite song is “Purple Rain” by pop artist Prince,” Morman said. “The song is a combination of emotions that draws me out of stress, speaking to my spirit and attaching to my reality.

The rhythm of slow music while in a sad mood is like a friend who empathizes with your experiences, according to Psychology Today.

SQ resident Vocalist and Guitarist Gabriel Moctezuma, 33, has performed at various events on the prison’s yard and Chapels. He started singing when he was three years old, and taught himself how to play the guitar at the age of 15; he said his voice was boring without music.

Moctezuma says San Quentin was a “Godsend,” especially after being at Avenal State Prison, where there were only three guitars on the entire prison yard.

His Mom introduced him to a lot of different music; he grew up listening to 90s Rock, Reggae, and the likes

of Frank Sinatra.

“Music has always been a part of me, from listening to it, I always been able to feel the music inside me,” Moctezuma said.

He said when he was a teenager he was in a dark time of drugs and alcohol, and living out of his car. The only thing he owned was his guitar, which he played on the streets for money in order to survive.

“Music is more than one feeling, when I can hear the song and feel the intense emotions it brings,” Moctezuma said. “It helps me have that empathy for myself, as men in society where we are not supposed to feel.”

He said the art of music is the medicine that brings people together. He felt connected to the different cultures through music when he traveled to Africa and New Zeland.

“Listening to music together leads to synchronization of brain activity,” according to Psychology Today. “Feeling connected to our social communities causes the release of endorphins, which are associated with feelings of pleasure, gratification, and a sense of trust.”

Doctors give wrong drug dosage to incarcerated individual

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Editor-in-Chief

As California’s state prison system grapples with inmate overdoses from fentanyl, California Health Care Facility, in Stockton, Calif., the state prison system’s prized medical facility, has overprescribed at least one inmate-patient’s medication and compromised the health and safety of untold others.

Howard Forbes suffered from multiple sclerosis. The 53-year-old African-American is confined to a wheelchair and has been incarcerated 15 years. He said that for three years, CHCF had been giving him “double doses” of his medication to treat his MS.

“The institution has been wasting money on expensive drugs I haven’t needed for three years,” Forbes said, adding that he is in constant pain from the reverse effect of CHCF having discontinued the overtreatment. “The reduction in medication is apparent in my body.”



Residents in the medical line

SQNews archive

MS is demyelination, which means the body’s immune system eats away the coating of nerves, affecting movement and other body functions.

“I’m an officially named plaintiff in the *Plata* [v. *Newsom*] case,” said Forbes. From his wheelchair, he produced pages of documents of research meticulously done on his medical records by the Prison Law Office, the non-profit legal organization that represented thousands of prisoners in the class-action *Plata* case. *Plata* tackled medical neglect and overcrowding in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Forbes said his physician’s signature was used by someone else at CHCF, a claim supported by the doctor himself in a story published by *The Sacramento Bee*. Days after it was published in June, Forbes called attention to the article.

“Somebody authorized for this to occur,” Dr. Aliasghar Mohyuddin told *The Bee*

about another incident with an inmate-patient, unrelated to Forbes. “And they should be brought to account for that.”

“Mohyuddin said he was meeting with an inmate at a Stockton prison a few years ago, when he pulled up the patient’s medical record,” *The Bee* reported. “In it, he found a letter documenting past care that bore Mohyuddin’s electronic signature. But the date on the record startled him: the doctor said he was out of the country at the time.”

Subsequent to that incident, Mohyuddin said he observed other files of inmate-patients he examined at CHCF. “Again and again he came across similar letters that said they were created and verified by the doctor,” *The Bee* reported.

“Mohyuddin estimates his e-signature has been used in a similar way at least 800 times,” *The Bee* reported. “He also alleges that orders for patient diagnostic tests and medications were placed under his name without him knowing.”

Mohyuddin questioned how something can be done without a doctor’s knowledge. He asked “What else was created or removed?” He has notified the Office of the Inspector General, the CDCR’s undersecretary, and Clark Kelso, monitor of the state prison’s medical system.

None of that provided relief to Forbes. On June 25, he said, “I can feel the progress of the disease inside.” Four days later, on June 29, he said, “I’m really feeling [pain] today.”

Excessive screen time impacts mental health

By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

Too much screen time on computers, tablets, cell phones and televisions can be detrimental to one’s health, brain activity, eyesight and overall mental health.

Adults should limit screen time to no more than two hours per day outside of work, according to MSNBC.

When a person overdo interacting with all these devices, individuals may experience back pain, eyestrain and limited social contact with other living human beings, according to MSNBC

In the United States, the average screen time for adults is about 11 hours a day, and 30% of adults say they are online almost constantly.

According to Maris Loeffler MA, a member of the Stanford Lifestyle Medicine Cognitive Enhancement research team, “The negative effects of screen time are insidious because you can’t see what’s happening in your brain as you’re staring at the screen,” he said.

The SLMCE also found that adults who expose themselves to excessive screen time could experience neuro-degeneration that may hamper learning, memory and a person’s mental health.

The study concluded that adults who watch five hours or more a day of television have an increased risk of dementia, stroke or Parkinson’s, all brain-related diseases.

“Instead, replace screen time

with an intentional healthy habit that feeds your brain in a healthy way,” Loeffler said. “Lifestyle medicine activities, like exercise, good sleep, social connections and stress management function like ‘nutrition’ for your brain and mental health.”

To further support cognitive enhancement, lifestyle medicine experts recommend no screen time for the first hour of the day. They promote starting the day with whole-body health activities, spending time outside to get morning light, calling a family member, eating a healthy breakfast, meditating, listening to music or reading a book.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation issued tablets to all the incarcerated people; San Quentin Rehabilitation Center received theirs in 2023.

San Quentin resident Robert Gomez said he is an avid user of the tablet issued to him by the state. He said the device allows him to play video games, watch movies, read the news, listen to music and engage in educational programs.

“I spend about six hours a day on my tablet,” Gomez said. “It gives me something to look forward to and it alleviates stress, especially on days when we are locked down inside our cells.”

Gomez added that he sees some San Quentin residents playing video games all day on their tablet but they are not harming anybody and they seem to be relaxed.

“One of the biggest advantages about these tablets is the ability to text or have video visits with my family,” Gomez said. “Not everybody can afford to drive to the prison to see us because a lot of us have families that live far away.”

San Quentin resident Jack Anderwald, 72, said there is a special value to having access to the use of a tablet. He said the anxiety he used to feel over standing in long lines at the prison in order to use the phone is gone.

“Who would have thought we would ever be able to make a phone call from inside our cell,” Anderwald said. “I don’t have Internet access, but being able to call home or watch a movie has really lowered my stress.”

In the article, Loeffler asked the question, “How do you want your day’s energy and mood to start?” She explained that intentionally implementing a morning routine that reflects lifestyle medicine choices instead of screen time will set a positive tone for a person’s day and support their brain health and cognitive enhancement.

Breathing fresh air, and taking walks or runs can offset some of the problems of being a “nerd,” Loeffler said.

“Passive screen time is like eating sugar but for your brain. It ‘tastes’ good, and you want it now, but you’re not actually feeding yourself. You’re not giving your brain nutrition,” Loeffler added.

A victim-mindset leads to distorted thinking and confusion

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

Many prisoners are learning to come to terms with issues that led to their criminality, by coming to terms with their thought process.

People who experience blame and frustration can be overwhelmed at times. Self-preservation can easily turn into emotional shutdown, based on a victim mindset.

“A victim mentality is when a person feels like a victim across situations, even when the evidence suggests

otherwise,” according to clinical psychologist Dr. Julie Landry, Psy D in *What Are Signs of a Victim Mentality*, an article published by psychcentral.com. “They may feel they have no control over what happens to them.”

A person who takes a victim’s stance might have experienced Multiple situations where they lacked control, ongoing emotional pain that led to learned helplessness, and betrayal by someone close.

San Quentin residents spoke about some of the

mental and emotional signs related to victim mentality.

Resident D. Hernandez said that it is easier to point the blame at someone else. He said he’s dealt with this type of behavior since he was a child, adding that it’s good that the article has placed a name and a face on the stuff he normalized.

Resident T. Tarques said he thinks the mental health services at San Quentin are convenient because a person can seek help without judgment.

“One thing is for sure,

you can’t come back from suicide,” Tarques said.

Resident P. Graves admitted that he has been sabotaging his relationships and that he recognized his need for help. Graves said there are many people with whom he will make amends; it starts with forgiving himself.

People can self-sabotage and have trouble taking personal responsibility, not clearly seeing the role that they play in a situation, and sometimes placing that blame on external factors and or other people when things

go wrong, according to the article.

“I never considered how I did things before. Sometimes going to a group is just that. Taking time to understand me requires more self analysis,” said resident M. Fox.

People with a victim mindset can experience thoughts of self-harm, suicidal ideation, or an unfair or unsafe world. They can also have pessimistic thoughts and harmful thinking patterns, according to the article.

The article noted key signs from people who bring a victim

mentality into a relationship, such as keeping score in a relationship or having limited empathy for others. Other indicators are having trouble accepting criticism and being emotionally unavailable.

In addition, the article highlighted signs of an emotional victim mindset, which included low self-esteem, social isolation, and depression.

“I work on taking my time to learn what a healthy relationship feels like. I didn’t have much practice before I came to prison,” Graves said.

EVENT

PEACE

Continued from page 1

Hundreds descend to Lower Yard for entertainment and information on programs



Left: Taiko Drummers

Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Above left: Soul Billies

Above right: Resident Aztec and Hawaiian Dancers

Far right: Buddhist ceremonial prayer

Immediate right: Resident speaks with Red Ladder Theater sponsor about the program



dancers to perform on the Lower Yard at the 17th Day of Peace event on September 6.

Resident D. Russell, who was attending his fifth Day of Peace event, said he always looks forward to the large turnout of both incarcerated and free people. Each year, he notices the peaceful environment that has become the model of San Quentin.

The event featured classic automobiles, a chalk art contest, and performances from Taiko Dancers, School of Rock San Rafael, Soul Billies, and Lucy and the Long Haul, and resident performance by Soul Unique.

School of Rock San Rafael has a house band made up of talented students who perform at various shows throughout the year. Those shows range from street fairs and festivals, charity fundraisers, house band bashes with other school of rock bands, the Marin Fair, and now San Quentin's Day of Peace.

School of Rock San Rafael's owner and general manager Heather R. said she didn't know what to expect coming into San Quentin, but said that everyone was kind, engaged, and great communicators.

"This is a testament to your mission as a rehabilitation center," said Heather R. "This has to have been the most meaningful gig we've played this year, and we look forward to coming back and collaborating further with your community at San Quentin."

Students in the house band shared their experience saying, "San Quentin was one of the most unique and fun gigs we've ever played, said keyboardist and vocalist Isabelle. Drummer, Ollie said, "Performing at San Quentin was honestly one of the best experiences ever. I didn't know what it would be like, but the incarcerated were super kind and excited to see us."

Soul Billies Band is a group of teachers who love live music and playing together for the last 10 years. Their last San Quentin performance was in 2019.

"It was a privilege to participate in the Day of Peace celebration. The residents were welcoming and engaging," said Mike S, guitarist for Soul Billies. "For me, it was the most fun show we've played all year."

Another band that performed for residents is Lucy and the Long Haul. The group said that playing at San Quentin is something they look forward to all year.

"It made me smile to see the joy in people's eyes as they sang along and danced to the songs," said Lucy. "We're all human, regardless of our circumstances, and music has a unique power to bring everyone together"

Longtime vendor Walkenhorst's provided 2,700 goodie bags for residents. Each bag included a Classic Macadamia Nut with Hershey's White Chocolate Chip cookies, a bag of Doritos Cool Ranch potato chips, a beef-n-cheese stick, and a Hershey's Crunchy Waffle Cone Chocolate Bar, totaling around \$4.50 per bag. Natalie Tovar, the company's representative, appeared at the event to show support to the many residents who purchase food, hygiene, and electronics from Walkenhorst's.

Residents wore white shirts as a sign of peace while volunteers and formerly-incarcerated people wore smiles as they spoke with residents about the benefits of self-help programs.

Gregory Starling, an incarcerated mentor with the Youth Offender Program, said the Day of Peace resembles his rehabilitative journey and his commitments to remain transparent and support the groups he's participated in.

"This event allowed me to see the value in myself and others. Everyone here — residents, staff, visitors, and volunteers — are the real peacemakers each year," said Starling. "We're one big community and I am glad I'm a part of it."

Spreading peace throughout the San Quentin community lives on through the long-running Day of Peace celebration, which held its first yard event in 2007.

The Day of Peace event is a call to action for incarcerated people at other facilities to consult with facility administrators to host peaceful events that showcase humanity in prisons. It is also an inspiration for new arrivals, who get a chance to learn about programs at the facility by listening to testimonials from program facilitators and volunteers.

—Ricky Ransom contributed to this story



Clockwise from left:

Day of Peace affirmation board;

Native American's blessing of the grounds;

Day of Peace artwork ;

The Beat Within representative speaks with resident about program;

Walkenhorst's Natalie Tovar performs running man with resident Soul Unique dance group;

Basic Education Instructor King brought in old school automobiles



SIDE BAR:

Between 2007 and 2025, over 100 peacemakers have carried on the legacy of spreading peace and nonviolence among the people who reside, work, and visit San Quentin. Some of those incarcerated individuals are listed below.

S. Alvarez, J. Appley, O. Arana, T. Banks, R. Barns, A. Beamon, R. Bennette, E. Boles, J. Brown, C. Burnside, M. Callahan, R. Carter, J. Chiu, C. Christenson, D. Clark, K.

Dallas, G. Derrick, R. DeTrinidad, T. DeTrinidad, R. Dietz, R. Ehde, C. Fairly, A. Farmer, I. Flores, D. Flowers, L. Fortanel, K. Fuqua, C. Gallo, A. Garcia, E. Garcia, J. Gomez, A. Gonzalez, I. Gonzales, T. Hall, C. Harris, O. Harris, J. Heredia, L. Hernandez, J. Huynh, A. Jackson, C. Jackson, S. Johnson, D. Keller, P. Kelly, H. Lacapa, M. Landeros, E. Lara, T. Lawson, J. Levin, C. Long, I. Love, Z. McCormack, V. Miles, M. Mizuo, D. Monroe, M. Moore,

Z. Moore, A. Moss, V. Moua, M. Negrete, S. Nguyen, E. O'Connor, D. Ong, F. Ortiz J. Parker, A. Parra, J. Reed, L. Pela, R. Polzin, S. Price, A. J. Pruitt, C. Ramirez, D. Reinehardt, S. Reitz, J. Sanchez, A. Sanders, P. Senegal, B. Shipp, D. Silva, H. Smith, A. Starks, C. Thao, B. Van Groeningen, J. Vue, T. Waldrip, T. Warren, B. Waters, M. Webb, R. Williams, T. Woodmore, L. Xiong, P. You, V. Zakharchenko, and R. Zorns.

El Género Musical contra el Femicidio

Por Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chair

El crimen contra las mujeres en México siguen robando vidas y cuando la mujeres se defienden son sentenciadas a largas condenas bajo una ley conocida como “legítima defensa propia excesiva”, los “corridos” son un género musical Mexicano, que recuerdan el dolor y las historias de estas mujeres encarceladas por matar a sus abusadores. de acuerdo al reporte de Megan Jenetsky y Fernanda Pesce de *la Prensa Asociada*.

La cantante Mexicana Vivir Quintana de 40 años, ha invertido una década

visitando a estas mujeres en los centros penitenciarios de México, los corridos de esta artista se enfocan en la realidad de las mujeres condenadas por crimines cometidos por defensa propia excesiva. La visión de la artista es generar conciencia y resaltar el nivel de violencia que ha estado escalando en Latinoamérica.

De acuerdo, al reporte de Janetsky y Pesce — un promedio de 10 mujeres son asesinadas cada día en México. Algo evaluado por los grupos de Derechos Humanos. Enfatizando, que en México el sistema Judicial ampara a los agresores de las mujeres.

Este género musical era generalmente dominada

por los hombres, pero en la actualidad el género femenino poco a poco ha ido creciendo en esta industria. La música controversial de Quintana es basada en historias de 10 mujeres, muchas de las mujeres encarceladas se encuentra detrás las rejas por el cargo de “legítima defensa propia excesiva”, estos son los cargos criminales de muchas mujeres en las prisiones. Esta ley, ha enfurecido a muchos de los ciudadanos Mexicanos, añadió el reporte.

“El álbum *Cosas que Sorprenden a la Audiencia*, tiene un corazón diferente y no fue creado para vender, fue creado para cambiar los pensamientos”, compartió la

cantante en una entrevista recargándose dulcemente en su guitarra, también añadió que “En muchas ocasiones no me defendí, ahora vivo en una prisión, y me siento más libre que cuando estaba en mi propia casa”.

La primer canción del álbum es basada en la amarga experiencia de Roxana Ruiz, una mujer Mexicana sentenciada a seis años por asesinar al hombre que la violaba y amenazaba con matarla en el año 2021.

“Esto no es justicia” dijo Ruiz a la corte, cuando la corte la halló culpable en su caso. “Recuerden, que fui abusada sexualmente por ese hombre, y él murió porque me defendí ... Porque yo no quería morir por sus manos”.

Los fiscales retiraron el los cargos contra Ruiz, después de un llamado nacional por el pueblo Mexicano a favor de Ruiz y su libertad.

El álbum de la artista, busca cambiar el tono de los corridos para enfatizar la severa realidad que las mujeres Mexicanas siguen enfrentando. Quintana busca entonar la violencia contra las mujeres y otra clase de machismo en su música. Para Quintana, dar voz a las mujeres ha sido su sello de marca en su carrera.

La cantante es una seguidora de las noticias locales, además de entrevistar a mujeres encarceladas y compartir su tiempo con los familiares de las mismas, esperando entender sus

personalidades—y no solo el acto violento que marco sus vidas.

Una de sus canciones relata la historia de una niña de tan solo 14 años al sur del Estado de Tabasco, quien mato a su propio padre cuando él estaba abusando de su madre. Otra canción cuenta la historia de Yakiri Rubio, quien fue secuestrada por dos hombres que se la llevaban a un hotel y donde fue violada. Después ella mato a uno de los secuestradores, y fue trasladada a la prisión; acusada por “legítima defensa propia excesiva”. “Es algo doloroso cuando el estado te dice que si tú misma te defiendes, nosotros te vamos a castigar”

Estudio de factores que impactan a la reincidencia criminal

Por César Martínez
Staff Writer

Un reporte realizado por el profesor Randi Hjalmarsson revisa la evidencia de cuatro factores que impacta la reincidencia como; la probabilidad de ser atrapado, el sistema de justicia criminal de prisión alternativo, la prisión y el ambiente pos-prisión.

El modelo económico criminal, fue formulado por Gary Becker in 1968, como una simple estructura para pensar en cómo la decisión de un individuo en cometer un crimen. Dentro de esta estructura, la reincidencia puede disminuir por los factores que incrementa supuestos costos del crimen y factores que mejoran la legitimidad de oportunidades resultados.

Esta estructura claramente predice una reducción en la reincidencia debido a un incremento en el cambio de ser atrapados, e.g., vía de introducción la base de datos Ácido Desoxirribio Nucleico ADN, y un incremento laboral en la oportunidad del mercado laboral

Este reporte argumenta que un ingrediente del primer orden para un tal aproximación es prueba que una póliza ha intentado el casual efecto en un blanco de la población — en este caso, los ofensores.

Por ejemplo, ¿hacer castigos severos causa una reducción en la reincidencia? Esta es una pregunta difícil de responder. Para ilustrar el por qué, debemos considerar los patrones uno puede observar en la cruda estadística. Estaría frecuentemente ser una relación positiva entre la severidad de la sanción y la reincidencia: individuos quienes recibe un castigo severo son más probablemente que reincida.

La probabilidad de que un ofensor sea atrapado puede ser impactado por varios factores incluyendo la capacidad de fuerza, visibilidad y trabajo de la fuerza policiaca, el uso de cámaras de vigilancia e incluso “las habilidades” de los ofensores criminales.

De hecho, contratar más policías es uno de los medios principales en la que la probabilidad de atrapar a un

“¿hacer castigos severos causa una reducción en la reincidencia?”

ofensor puede incrementar típicamente son ideas de como el principal medio atreves en el uno puede incrementar la posibilidad de ser atrapado.

Uno de los grandes prospectos correspondientes proporcionan evidencia practica general de disuadir los efectos de la policía. Sin embargo la policía no necesariamente incrementa la probabilidad de ser atrapado diferentemente por primera vez contra ofensores recurrentes.

Hay, sin embargo, tecnologías que puede específicamente impactar la probabilidad de que un conocido ofensor pueda ser atrapado. Dos prominentes ejemplos son la base de datos ADN, en el cual mantiene los archivos de ADN de ofensores convictos selectos en registro para coincidencia para futuros muestras de evidencia de ADN en una escena de crimen y (típicamente público) ofensores sexuales registrados.

El crecimiento de la población encarcelaría mundial tiende llevar el sistema criminal de justicia a confrontar temas de sobrepoblación de prisiones y de capacidad restricciones como también preocupaciones en el potencial daño de los efectos en la prisión.

Una herramienta que se usa para combatir el tema es la “desviación”, en el cual es usado para mantener relativamente ofensas menores lejos del sistema legal y de prisión. Los perseguidores pueden decidir en no presentar cargos o los jueces aplazar una condena hacia un futuro condicional de buen comportamiento.

Otra herramienta cada vez más usado para disminuir la población encarcelaría es el monitoreo electrónico (ME): ofensores convictos selectos son equipados con un tecnología que monitorea su localización GPS y están detenidos en casa en vez de la prisión.

Fiscalía contra la Corte Suprema; pena capital inconstitucional en Alabama

Por Marco Serna
Spanish Journalism
Guild Writer

El Fiscal General de Alabama Steve Marshall, expresó en una conferencia de prensa, que el Estado está preparado para desafiar el fallo de la Corte Suprema quien declara la pena capital como “inconstitucional”. De acuerdo a un artículo publicado por *The Alabama Reflector* escrito por Brian Lyman.

Según el artículo, el autor describe que crímenes horrendos conducen a crear leyes más duras para asegurar que esos crímenes no vuelvan a ocurrir. Sin embargo la Corte Suprema en 2008 declaró la pena de muerte “inconstitucional”, para crímenes que no resulte en la muerte de la o las víctimas.

En el artículo Lyman da un ejemplo; como ocurrió en 2018, después de una falla en el Sistema de Justicia Criminal en Alabama, la cual condujo a la liberación errónea de un individuo, el cual más adelante asesino a tres personas, incluyendo a un niño de siete años, durante una serie de robos en Guntersville, AL.

El Gob. Kay Ivey y el

Fiscal General Marshall, hizo un llamado para cambios drásticos al sistema de libertad condicional. Enseguida, los empleados de la Junta de Libertad Condicional JLC e Indultos, era mayormente personas en duda hacia los prisioneros. Como resultado, el número de reos en libertad condicional cayó.

También añade, que la JLC produjo docenas de crueles y ridículas decisiones, como negarle la libertad condicional a un reo paralítico. Sin embargo estos mismos miembros se están volviendo más flexibles en sus decisiones.

El republicano Matt Simpson y la Rep. Daphne, ex fiscal en casos de abuso sexual a niños, reintrodujo una propuesta de ley presentada el año pasado, que impondría la pena de muerte a aquellos convictos de asalto sexual a niños menores de 12 años. Según Simpson y sus seguidores quienes apoyan la propuesta, describen esos delitos de abuso sexual como una atrocidad.

En el condado Bibb, AL., las autoridades presentaron cargos a siete personas acusadas de operar una red de tráfico sexual de menores, incluyendo victimas de entre

tres a 15 años.

Simpson y sus seguidores quieren anular la decisión de la Corte Suprema en el caso de Kennedy vs Luisiana, donde se prohibió la pena capital por violación de niños, en ese caso la corte voto cinco a cuatro, anulando la sentencia de pena de muerte para un hombre convicto por violar brutalmente a su hijastra de ocho años.

Sin embargo, Kennedy advirtió que el perseguir la pena de muerte, significaba que la víctima — en este caso una niña —, aparte del trauma vivido, tendría además que describir su dolorosa experiencia, primero con las fuerzas de ley y después en un juicio público, especialmente cuando la resolución conlleva varios procesos judiciales.

En el artículo Kennedy también menciono las preocupaciones de las organizaciones de trabajo social, sobre el abuso de niños muchas veces no reportado, debido al temor de acusar a un miembro de la familia. Imponer la pena de muerte podría hacer aún más difícil el reportar el crimen.

Acorde al artículo, la pena de muerte no es un freno ante el crimen. Alabama acelero la pena capital en años

recientes. En comparación de otros Estados del país, seis personas murieron en la cámara de muerte en Atmore, AL, en 2024.

Alabama cuenta con altos índices de homicidios en la nación, en 2022, más de 700 personas murieron por homicidio, un porcentaje de 14.9 por cada 100,000, el cuarto más alto en el país.

Según Lyman, “Los detalles son difíciles de procesar, cualquier convicto de estos crímenes deberían estar encerrados y nunca salir de prisión”, agregó que entiende el deseo de la población de someter a los culpables de estos horribles actos a los castigos más severos.

El editor expone las siguientes preguntas: ¿Vale la pena exponer a la víctima, a ese trauma otra vez? ¿Vale la pena poner en riesgo, el reportar el abuso a niños? y; poner a victimas potencialmente en mayor peligro.

“Cualquier convicto de asalto sexual a niños ,debería ser encarcelado de por vida. Pero no dejemos que nuestro coraje supere al bienestar de las víctimas. Si lo hacemos, esto podría traer resultados horribles, sin darnos cuenta”, concluyo Lyman.

La desactivación de prisiones en California ante la expansión de ICE

Activistas pro-inmigrantes piden al Gobernador Gavin Newsom para que cierre permanentemente las prisiones desocupadas en California y evitar así que el gobierno federal las utilice como centros de detención para inmigrantes. Según lo reportó *El Sacramento Press* con comentarios de Yanik Llamas.

Las redadas de Agencia de Inmigración y Aduanas ICE por sus siglas en inglés, California siguen creciendo, algo que puede tener un impacto negativo a los miles de inmigrantes, si el gobierno federal decide alojar a inmigrantes en las prisiones que no están siendo ocupadas en el estado.

Desde el 2021 el gobernador Newsom, ha cerrado tres prisiones, incluyendo una que operaba privadamente; California City Correction Facility. Esto proyecta un ahorro de \$900 millones anuales. Sin

embargo, la decisión del estado de mantener estas prisiones estatales en “cierre temporal” con el personal administrativo, seguridad y empleados, estando vacías — sigue costando a los californianos \$300 millones al año, de acuerdo a un reporte de Llamas.

“ICE está buscando jaulas en las prisiones que están temporalmente cerradas en California son el blanco ideal a menos que el Gobernador Newsom inmediatamente tome acción y cierren estas prisiones permanentemente”, dijo Brain Kaneda, Director Diputado de la Unión de Presupuesto Responsable en California, por sus siglas en ingles CURB una coalición a nivel estatal con más de 100 organizaciones.

CURBS hizo un llamado a Newsom y a los Legisladores, que tomen medidas inmediatas para des comisionar todas la prisiones que están “temporalmente

cerradas” eliminando fondos para los Centros de Detención y Rehabilitación de California CDCR, removiendo los planes operativos, cerrando el uso por ICE o cualquier otra agencia, cancelar por medio de protecciones conforme a los estatutos reglamentarios y el control financiero; así como prevenir que el grupo GEO e ICE en reactiven lugares como FCI Dublin y la Institución Correccional de California.

De acuerdo a este reporte, CDCR podría eliminar por lo menos 10,000 camas vacías, dando a las agencias la flexibilidad al manejo de la población encarcelada. La incertidumbre de los resultados de la Proposición 39 en conferir el poder de cerrar más prisiones a La Oficina Legislativa de Análisis del Estado, calculando el cierre de cinco prisiones adicionales y proyectando un ahorro de

\$1.5 billones anuales. En contraste al mantenimiento de las prisiones temporalmente cerradas, algo que continua agotando los fondos públicos mientras estamos presenciando el riesgo de la expansión de ICE.

“En un momento de tensión fiscal y una confusión moral, cada dólar mal gastado en la infraestructura de las prisiones es un dólar que debería haber sido gastado en resguardar a nuestras comunidades más vulnerables”, dijo Tannah Opplinger, coordinadora asistente de CURB.

El reporte concluyó que el liderazgo del Gobernador Newson debe ser agresivo, este es un momento definitivo para cerrar las puertas y mantener a ICE fuera, y protegiendo el futuro de California.

— **Por Edwin E. Chavez**
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chair

Flag football match-ups competitive and high scoring

By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Sports Editor

The season opener of San Quentin Rehabilitation Centers’ All-In flag football league featured the Spartans and Don’t Hate, who matched each other touchdown for touchdown as their game came down to the very last play.

The Spartans led 48-46, after Don’t Hate scored the possible game-tying touchdown with four seconds left in the game. Don’t Hate just had to convert their two-point conversion to tie-up the game, but failed.

Don’t Hate’s quarterback, Keyshawn Strickland, threw a perfect pass to Sidney King who mishandled the pass to end the game on the heartbreaking failed conversion. When Don’t Hate failed to execute the conversion, the Spartans scored another touchdown to



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

#18 Jose Maya attempts to grab the flag of the runner

keep their undefeated season alive with a 54-46 win.

Strickland led Don’t Hate with 12 completions while scoring five touchdowns. Jimmie Hollins grabbed six receptions and made one touchdown; P. Lord also snared four catches for two scores and a two-point

conversion.

For the Spartan’s, Devon Adams and Velteese Mathis were not stayed the offensive leaders of the team by combining for 12 completions and four touchdowns. Antron Gully led the team with six catches and three touchdowns

and Joey Coey had four receptions.

The second game of the weekend had Team Finesse against Three P’s.

The Three P’s started off strong but lost their groove when quarterback Andrea Armstrong threw two late-game

interceptions that proved costly. Andrea Armstrong had 19 completions for five touchdowns, and Darius Poole and Letoyree Gilmore combined for 12 catches and three touchdowns. Newly acquired Ishmael Burch had four grabs and a score, as did Treavon Early, who contributed two catches and one score. Team Finesse found their rhythm with their new quarterback, Taiosis Matangi, who played well with 17 completions, four rushes and nine touchdowns. His favorite target appeared to be Aaron Moton, who had ten grabs for four scores. Team Finesse won 52-42.

The third game of the trifecta saw Don’t Hate pull off a victory over the winless Go Crazy, 56-28, as Strickland led Don’t Hate again. He had 10 completions for five scores on offense and added three interceptions — two for scores — on defense. Jimmie Hollings also shined

with six receptions and three touchdowns.

Go Crazy utilized Bryant Clark under quarterback as he played another good game but struggled under pressure, that led to him throw four interceptions. Clark did have 19 completions and five rushes for three scores; and Elijah Walden, Maurice Higgs and Teron Davis all combined for 16 receptions and two touchdowns, while Navion Starks added a late touchdown.

All-In program coach Carlos Smith spoke about the weekend. “I’m super proud of all the teams, as well as the referees as they’re finding their groove, and I’m looking forward to the rest of the season,” Smith said. “I do recommend our teams start practicing during the summer break to gain chemistry because teams that practice will always have an advantage over a team that doesn’t practice.”

Female professional athletes bargain for equitable pay

At present, less than one-fifth (20%) of the total revenue in the WNBA is distributed to its female players compared to an estimated 50 to 52% of revenue sharing that occurs in male-dominated sports.

This disparity of income, confirmed by *Market Watch* and Jocelyn Shek of NBC, prompted the WNBA’s star players to show up at the league’s All-Star game in Indianapolis, Ind., wearing black t-shirts that featured a slogan on the front of the shirts: ‘Pay Us What You Owe Us’.

“We are taught that domestic violence includes financial abuse of our partners, and yet, on a larger scale, companies abuse women every day with wage abuse,” said San Quentin Warriors Coach Jeremiah “JB” Brown.

According to Rohan Nadkarni of WNBA.org, the

existing collective bargaining agreement is due to expire in October, and players believe that now is the time to support this popular women’s sport by rewarding the rising stars who continue to generate the league’s success.

The shirts’ slogan has become a mantra aimed at the league franchise owners. The slogan spurred the player’s association and the fans of the WNBA to act in protest of the grossly dismal players’ share of the leagues’ total revenue.

According to Rohan Nadkarni’s story posted on WNBA.org, the leagues’ representatives are working to negotiate a new CBA.

Nadkarni reported the players’ association believes that as the league grows exponentially, and as attendance and television revenue increases proportionately, the time is ripe for the players to get

their just due.

Their current salaries almost universally support the demands from players.

The average salary for WNBA players this season is \$102,000 per year. In San Francisco, \$120,000 per year qualifies a household of two for general assistance and food stamps.

Caitlin Clark’s rookie season salary was \$78,066 during the first year of her negotiated four-year contract that totaled \$340,000. In 2024, Clark entered the league and helped establish WNBA merchandise sales records and attendance records during the 24-game regular season.

Clark’s rookie year paralleled Angela Reese’s arrival in Chicago and created the first true sports rivalry that recalled the most famous rivalry in basketball; Ervin “Magic” Johnson vs. Larry Bird.

The increased fan interest has led league prognosticators to estimate a 30% expansion that will grow the franchises from the current 14 teams to 18 by 2030. Franchises awarded for the five years of expansion include Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia and Toronto.

The ownership groups in Detroit, Philly, and Toronto will pay a \$250 million expansion fee compared to the Golden State Valkyries expansion fee of \$50 million in 2023.

A meeting between the league and players before the All-Star game brought frustration. Breanna Stewart, New York Liberty forward and union vice president, spoke about the impasse in negotiations after the most recent meeting with the league’s Board of Governors. “I think, to be frank, it was a wasted opportunity,” said Stewart.

“We could have really kind of gotten into a deeper dive of everything. Based on their most recent proposal, we just aren’t able to get to a place where we’re actually even talking about the same thing,” Stewart said.

Another revenue stream being negotiated is the WNBA’s television contract that was signed last year for a reported \$2.2 billion over the next 11 years.

On July 29, 2025, Dustin Dorsey, of ABC 7, reported that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors introduced legislation supporting the WNBA’s Golden State Valkyries. The bill proposes a resolution for equitable overall compensation — not just equal pay for WNBA players in the negotiated CBA.

According to the Bay Area News Group, the Valkyries are already the most valuable ownership group and

franchise in the WNBA with a record-breaking estimated value of \$500 million. This estimate makes the Bay Area team the most valuable franchise in all of women’s sports.

Chiney Ogumike, who played with the Los Angeles Sparks in 2023, wrote in *The Players Tribune* in May of 2024 that discriminatory pay in women’s sports is not a new issue. “It’s time for WNBA players to get a higher percentage of the league’s basketball-related income,” said Ogumike.

On August 26, CBS Morning News reported that Caitlin Clark signed the largest endorsement deal in women’s sports history: a \$28 million deal with Nike that comes close to the total annual payroll allocated for the WNBA players.

— By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Sports Editor

Half-marathon marks halfway point in season

By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

San Quentin’s 1000 Mile Club runners demonstrated speed, strength, and endurance during their annual half marathon as hundreds of residents, outside coaches, and volunteers gathered on the Lower Yard to support over 70 participants who trekked the 13.1-mile run.

The club’s top runner, San Quentin resident Jose Fajardo, 44, said competing in races like this brings out the best in people. He expressed that exposing the San Quentin community to events like these inspires others to participate.

“I’m excited and anticipating a good run,” Fajardo said. “This run is an important milestone for us all because it is half the distance towards our goal of completing a marathon in November.”

Runners gathered at the starting line to receive a transponder attached to a numbered bib that allowed outside volunteers to digitally track their lap times and notify them of their progress throughout the race.

Fajardo’s stellar performance landed him a first place finish time of 1:18:58 that came just shy

of toppling Markelle “The Gazelle” Taylor’s club record of 1:17:47.

Encouraging runners from the sidelines, the formally incarcerated Taylor, 52, said he has been part of the San Quentin 1000 Mile Club organization for 10 years.

“When a friend of mine committed suicide in 2015, I started running,” Taylor said.

Taylor said running not only helped him cope with the death of his friend, but also helped strengthen his mental health. “Life is a marathon,” said Taylor. “Each day brings a different challenge and the key to success is to never give up.”

Volunteer coach Lee “Timbuktu” Goins said he paroled from “The Q” in 2019 after serving 33 years in prison.

Standing side-by-side, Taylor and Goins cheered on runners and reminisced about the 2015–2018 1000 Mile Club seasons when they spent time together kicking up dust around track the track.

“There comes a time in a man’s life when you have to decide what is important, go free or stay in prison,” Goins said. “You can’t expect to get out unless you change your behavior.”

Goins explained how the running club allowed him to

become part of a community.

“Despite our crimes, we all came together to run. And that was special.”

Outside coach Jim Mahoney praised the dedicated team of San Quentin residents and volunteers who helped create the well-organized event, including four of whom made the journey from Norco California Rehabilitation Center.

Guests Brian Charest, Phil Peng, Tracy Hunt, and Tina Ogata are a group of volunteers who helped establish the Born to Run Running Club, inside CRC in 2024.

Brian Charest is a professor at University Redlands who also teaches a class inside the Norco facility. “Running can be a vehicle for all kinds of change within a person, both physical and mental,” he said.

Standing alongside Charest, Peng, a retired Los Angeles Court commissioner, said they modeled the CRC running club after what the San Quentin 1000 Mile Club has been doing.

According to Peng, because of the combined efforts and support of the Norco facility staff, officers, and residents their running club has more than doubled within the last year.



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Over 70 participants ran the half-marathon

Volunteer Tina Orata said CRC running club members also have access to learning valuable life skills taught inside the classroom that aims to help residents make a successful transition back into society.

“For 16 weeks our cohort of runners train for either a five or 10K run of their choice,” Orata said. “Each week they spend one hour in the classroom, before spending one hour out on the track.”

Orata added that her group’s goal of observing the 1000 Mile Club event was to help aid them in organizing a half marathon run of their own.

Rounding out the top five

after Fajardo were Hugo Dimas (1:21:18), Delfino Verdin (1:29:53), Jacob Coleman (1:36:09), and Leandro Gonzalez (1:42:39).

The 1000 Mile Club president, and resident Greg Stephens, announced that all current club members are soon to receive new running shoes. He added, “I want to say thank you to all the volunteers and coaches for their continued support.”

Club member resident Jeffery Covarrubias, 51, said, “Running seems like a solitary activity but it is actually a very social activity, especially on event day.”

The fraternity known as the 1000 Mile Club is now halfway to the marathon.



Joyful expression from runner



Gregory Stephens

California Health Care Facility residents connect with their roots

Asian Pacific Islanders build up worship service, learn Hawaiian/Polynesian songs and dances

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Editor-in-Chief

“Aloha” is a Hawaiian greeting a group of Asian Pacific Islanders use at the California Health Care Facility, in Stockton, Calif. Many of them need wheelchairs but are at work to build up their own spiritual worship service.

On most Tuesday afternoons a diverse set of men from the CHCF facility’s API community meet in the chapel to learn traditional Hawaiian and Polynesian songs and customs such as “Haka,” a war dance called.

“I started the group in February this year,” said

Netani Vosacataki who has been incarcerated since 2019. “I want the men to be rehabilitated through their customs and traditions.”

Born in Fiji, Vosacataki said the API community were guests in the Native American circle at CHCF, but he wanted to reach the broader API community. “Men can be rehabilitated when they know who they are,” he said.

In a July gathering, about two dozen members from the API community attended the spiritual service. Eleven showed up in a wheelchair, and two used a four-wheel walker. Seven were able to sing and dance in a group lesson.

In the face of not having volunteer support from the outside, and few resources, the CHCF Jewish chaplain sponsors the API group. Nonetheless, a spirit of brotherhood was present at their gathering.

One of the API elders, Ropati Seumanu, referred to himself as “Usō Smurf, a real authentic usō” (brother). He dons cultural tattoos on his knee and back. Like everyone in the group, he was good-natured, in spite of the fact he has a death sentence still looming, and is confined to a wheelchair. “We’re doing this for the Suicide Awareness [event],” he said.

“I’m teaching you to be

a warrior without a king,” said Tupoutoe Mataele. He is another one of the API elders who also has a sentence of death and uses a wheelchair. He recalled the songs as well. “Memorize the words to get the rhythm,” he said regarding the “Kamate Haka.”

Mataele instructed the group to “Let the Haka, the spirit of the ancestors, takeover you,” adding, “Ride the wave.”

There are four API elders at CHCF. One repeated, “Ride the wave. Don’t let the wave take you.” After a short break they learned and sang songs such as “Aloha.”

E O Mai Ka Ike/Mai Luna Mai E/Ona Mea Hana No

Eau/E Ō Mai/E O Mai E/ Mahalo.

The following week the group was back in action, singing to a makeshift drum beat performed by Seumanu on a file cabinet. They practiced the song “I Jisu.”

“It’s a special song for the British armed forces,” said one of the elders who explained how it is sang before battle. “It’s a death song.”

Mataele helped with pronunciations as the group learned the song “Sun Greeting.”

“In Polynesian songs, if you pronounce the words [as written] phonetically, you won’t go wrong,” said Mataele.

“There are a lot of Ks in the Hawaiian language.”

The group learned greetings in API languages: Samoan, Fijian, North/South Indian, Tongan, Hawaiian, Chamorro, Mādiri, Laotian, Mien, and Native American.

“Everyone has to learn how to lead the Haka, said another elder. “We are in here together. We live what we preach.” He encouraged the group to “lookout for each other.”

“The mana spirit is given to us from above,” said Vosacataki. “It helps us know who we are.” The group closed out the gathering with a prayer in the form of a song, ending with “Mahalo” (Goodbye).

Veterans display bravery in Shakespearean-style theatrical production

By Bostyon Johnson
Managing Editor

An individual who joins the military and serves their country through unfamiliar terrain show bravery while enduring life altering circumstances. Incarcerated veterans at San Quentin shared that same bravery in a Shakespeare style theatrical production highlighting social issues veterans face after discharge.

The performers are part of the Veterans Healing Veterans group at San Quentin, founded by former resident Ron Self, which is based on trauma-recovery training veterans on ways to cultivate insight and self-regulation. The program collaborates with programs and agencies to provide mindfulness, yoga, theatre, and assists incarcerated veterans seeking benefits. VHV has been an important platform for residents at San Quentin since 2014.

The scene: service members outfitted in fatigues and trudging through mud

underfoot in pairs, bent double like old beggars under sacks, they marched on bloodied, blind, and deaf even to the hoots of gas-shells dropping softly behind them.

The performance, “The Thanks We Carry,” was a nod to Tim O’Brien’s “The Things We Carry,” memoirs of the Vietnam War; and poems like Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum” and Robert Laurence Binyon’s “The Healers,” highlighting events of World War I.

In Chapel B, the presentation raised awareness to the harsh reality of hearing the words “Thank you for your service,” and the struggles veterans face after they served their country. Those words meant more to those present than what they appeared.

Resident Ray Melberg served in the U.S. Air Force. He said that hearing “Thank you for your service” means different things to different people.

“[Some people] say it because they don’t know what else to say, but sometimes I

can see people really mean it and have been waiting for the opportunity,” said Melberg. “I accept that they mean it from whatever place their able to say it from.”

During the performance, veterans who fought in various wars shared some of the supportive catch phrases created during wartime in order to show the American people supported the troops who sacrificed their lives.

“[Today] it’s ‘Thank you for your service.’ During the Gulf War it was ‘Support the troops, not war,’ and people tied yellow ribbons everywhere when we returned home,” said U.S. Navy veteran and resident Steven Joyner.

“When I was 18-years-old, a 20-year career in the U.S. Navy seemed too long, and like I was giving the Navy too much,” Joyner said. “But when I was 45-years-old, 23 years of service seemed too short, and I felt the Navy still had a lot to give me.”

Another veteran shared his experience serving in the Vietnam War, stopping mid-sentence. The room stood

quiet as the performer took a deep breath. In unison, they all gave an audible exhale as the entire room fell silent.

“People did not want to talk about it then, either,” Joyner told the audience.

Steve Drown said he appreciates the compassion veterans receive today, but he hopes its not a form of trying to overcompensate for the treatment they received after the Vietnam War.

“I can’t help but think that if I’d gotten the care then, I wouldn’t be here now,” Drown said.

As the performance continued, veterans shared some of their proudest moments of answering the call for service.

Resident Greg Ward said he is proud of answering the call to be of service. As a first responder, he said he had the opportunity to be helpful to someone in need.

Melberg said he is proud to witness the acknowledgement veterans receive within the San Quentin community.

“I’m proud that former service members are

recognized as leaders in the new rehab center environment,” said Melberg who made note of the chronic issue of homelessness among veterans. He expressed that he wants to continue being of service to other veterans.

“I can’t tell when I see a homeless person if they are a veteran or not. I might be passing a veteran who is suffering from his or her service. So is there a way to solve this dilemma? I challenge myself to regard every person living on the street with the esteemed regard I have for a veteran,” Melberg said.

Resident Andrew Gazzeny said his proudest moment was geographical more than anything was.

“I’m proud that I was born in America. I could’ve been born just about anywhere,” Gazzeny said.

Some veterans expressed that their proudest moments were what their family members received because of their service. Manuel Medina said his wife was able to obtain her bachelor’s degree

and that was a proud moment for him.

Veterans of San Quentin aimed to address social issues that affect all service members’, wheather active or discharged. The Veterans Acting Program is a space where residents discussed traumas of service and set out to share with the community though a Shakespeare-style performance titled “The Thanks We Carry” which gives credit to the personal experiences of the incarcerated performers.

At the closing of the performance, the performers shared their experiences of incarceration and the encounters they face as veterans returning to society, and some of the fears that loom in the distant future.

If you’re a veteran or know a veteran who is homeless or at risk of homelessness, please call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 877-424-3838 for assistance. The staff is available 24/7. They can connect you with your nearest Veterans’ Administration for help.

BOOK REVIEW

Book reveals matrix of the prison-industrial complex

By C. K. Gerhartsreiter
Staff Writer

Readers of *The Prison Industry: How It Works and Who Profits* might arrive at the impression that the book presented carceral institutions as shadowy planets in a parallel universe about which everyone has heard something but no one knew any concrete details. For anyone curious about the mass-incarceration universe, Bianca Tylek exposed a dozen aspects dealing with dollars circulating deep in the shadows of jails, prisons, and other vaguely defined detention facilities.

Readers might find themselves disturbed to learn that parasites have attached themselves to the mass-incarceration universe and that such parasites have operated invisibly-but-in-plain-sight within that universe. Most bizarrely, the parasites’ prey has kept on thanking the parasites for their presence.

“The prison industry is comprised of a vast matrix of public-private partnerships that undergird the nation’s commitment to human caging and control. It is a seemingly amorphous system of more than 4,000 corporations, and their government conspirators, that profit from the incarceration of grandparents, parents,

children, siblings, and cousins. It relies on starvcommunities of economic, social, and political capital to exploiting their devastation,” Tylek wrote.

Tylek’s arguments sounded thoroughly convincing. Every chapter in the book offered a brief description of the profiteering sector, displaying easy-to-understand statistics. The book covered 12 sectors of incarceration: architecture and construction, operations and management, personnel, labor and programs, equipment, data and information, telecom, financial services, food and commissary, healthcare, transportation, and community corrections.

The book has one unnamed but common thread across the dimensions it examined: extraordinarily intelligent business thinkers have figured out surreptitious ways to profit parasitically from mass incarceration. The thinkers all recognized one exploitable advantage: the Thirteenth Amendment that allowed the continuation of slavery as punishment for crime. Tylek’s book subtly made the point that big business has employed this principle as the basis for its profiteering.

The book provided many useful history lessons. Anyone not familiar with the Ashurst-Sumners Act (1935) that prohibited the sale of

products made using prison labor in interstate commerce would see the way big business maneuvered its way around the act by using chain gangs to build public infrastructure. Established at the beginning of the New Deal, Ashurst-Sumners exempted agriculture and services. The Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program, created by Congress in 1979 at the tail end of

the New Deal, continued the exemptions — and corporate profiteering on (literally) the backs of incarcerated persons.

A year later, the U.S. entered the neoliberal era that intensified profiteering on every level and legitimized parasitical profits in the carceral sector. One prime example, Global Tel Link, came into existence in 1980 and after various ownership changes ended up

in the portfolio of American Securities, which rebranded it as ViaPath in 2022.

The neoliberal era typified such juggling of companies as if tokens in a game of Monopoly and the book’s section on telecom detailed such corporate maneuvers. Anyone interested in the history of the way H.I.G. Capital formed Securus, which later turned into Aventiv (owned by Platinum Equity), should consult page 90.

ICE Air does not stand for Iceland’s national airline or a brand of air-conditioner, but as the private-public partnership that flies deportees unlucky enough to have ended up stuck in a web spun by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. It began in 2006 as a partnership between ICE and the private aviation company-slash-military contractor CSI Aviation. ICE spent \$420 million on immigrant removals in 2023, which this year would increase exponentially.

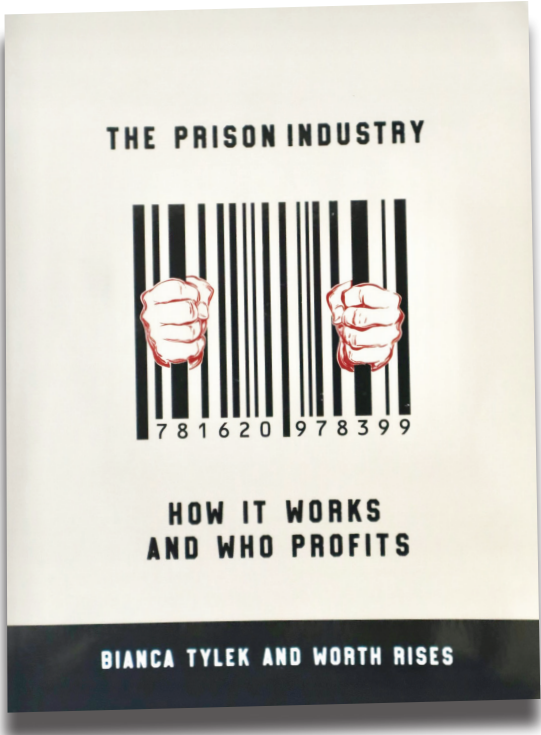
The dollar amounts detailed in the book only raised eyebrows. Every penny looked meticulously documented in a 53-page endnote section that substantiated every one of Tylek’s arguments and every statistic with a comprehensive reference.

The book’s conclusion sounded a sad tone: “Unknowingly, many of

us are implicated. Our tax dollars are funding the prison industry and the harm it causes. Our personal savings sit with banks that provide billions in financing to it. The financial aid that helps us make tuition payments is, at times, supplied by the prison industry.”

Tylek listed Worth Rises as a co-author of the book. She described Worth Rises as “a nonprofit organization dismantling the prison industry and ending the exploitation it touches.” As a committed prison abolitionist, Tylek in the past often took radical approaches at odds even with incarcerated persons. In this book, though, Tylek kept her abolitionist rhetoric at a detached distance.

Tylek’s book showed who has extracted from the carceral system wealth beyond the wildest dreams of Croesus, not only at the expense of incarcerated persons and their families but also from correctional officers working double-shifts and volunteers sacrificing their time to help prisoners. The book would not help anyone go home tomorrow but it would give innovative residents the necessary background to think their way forward strategically. Perhaps one of its readers could one day successfully outthink the parasites.



YOUTH



By Darius Poole

Contributing Writer

The first five years of my 15-to-life sentence words like accountability, amends, and remorse were foreign to me, especially coming in with a young mindset. All of that changed when I met Kenny Vernon at The Beat Within one Monday night. Kenny started telling me about KidCAT and how he felt it would be a good opportunity for me.

That was almost two years ago. Since then, I have participated in, and completed, over 10 self-help groups, one vocation, and became a member of San Quentin's tour team and basketball team.

Without KidCAT, I would not have been able to understand that my past is just that, my past but what I do today is what defines me. Being around so many positive peers has not only established strong and healthy friendships, but it has given me the courage to step outside of my comfort zone and dare to be different in a good way. Knowing the history of my fellow KidCAT members and seeing their transformation was inspiring for me in the beginning because I didn't feel like I was good enough to change.

Like, I have done too many unforgivable things in my past.

So, hearing that I could do it and realizing that it was possible, was huge for me. However, KidCAT did not just help me; it gave me the power to help others in here and on the streets. Whether I was going on the tiers to collect hygiene for at-risk teens or reciting a specific curriculum that could help others who are not going to groups to have a better understanding of traumas and where behaviors come from, it is kind of like the gift that keeps on giving.

No matter what I think I know or what I thought I accomplished, I always found out on Thursdays that there's always more to learn. I know that by being involved with KidCAT I will always have room for improvement, something that every human needs.

KidCAT has given me a sense of confidence when I am less comfortable with myself. For example, having the opportunity to encourage the group to facilitate a curriculum that we learned. Growing up, I dealt with speech problems causing me to not speak out as much or just have fear of public speaking as a whole. So with this facilitation practice it helped turn my weakness to my strength.

Now I have no problem going up in front of a group of strangers and being transparent. This is big for me because I have to appear before the parole board and we all know what that consists of. KidCAT is an everyday thing for me and I am grateful that I took the opportunity once presented to me because I have grown so much since my first day in the group.

So when asked about KidCAT and if you want to sign up I recommend you think about it and if you want change for the better put that pen to paper, because KidCAT gave me my first step toward a more humble life. I grew up in a single-mother home with five mouths to feed in a city that's not famous for people like me making it out of my environment.

So I grew up making sure I was going to be the best robber, shooter, liar, manipulator I could be. I was just living for today because tomorrow is not there yet. Looking back I was lost and blind. Getting my life sentence at so young I was confused but now I understand that my first thinking error that I had when I was just a kid caused me to give up when in actuality I should have been worrying about being a kid and this is why this group is so important to me. I want to help those kids that hopeless just like I did and change that thought.

At-risk youth donation drive for Tiny Home Village Spirit a success

By Terrell J. Marshall

Journalism Guild Writer

The incarcerated population of San Quentin Rehabilitation Center held a food and hygiene drive in an effort to subsidize a marginalized community in Richmond, Calif.

The aim of the community outreach project is for SQRC residents to show kindness and empathy by providing necessities to the at-risk youth occupants of the Tiny Home Village Spirit.

"This is a way for us to reach outside these walls and show others we are capable and willing to help those in need," said resident Troy Makanski.

SQRC Community Resource Office's staff A. Torres and residents Kenny York, Troy Makanski, Coby Philips, and Benjaramin Greenspon fostered the idea of building a relationship with the outside community by providing support through a donation drive.

Hundreds of SQRC residents showed their willingness to participate when they lined up on collection day to place items into donation boxes.

Resident Tony Chavez donated a tube of toothpaste and a bar of soap; he is thankful for the chance to give back.

"A lot of times people are too proud to ask for help," Chavez said. "This gives us the opportunity to let others know we care about them."

Items collected had a value of more than \$1,300 and consisted of pouch food, Top Ramen soups, dry goods, body wash, bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and conditioner.

Sally Hindman, from the Bay Area Executive Directory of emergency housing for at-risk youth, and outside volunteer Dennis Kettler said the donations would go a long way in supporting the first legal Tiny Home Village Spirit in Richmond.

Hindman said the generosity and kindness shown by the SQRC community is an expression of loving your neighbor as yourself.

"This wouldn't have been possible without all of you," said Hindman. "This means the world to us. Thank you so much."

According to Hindman, adding 13 new units to the location, more than doubled the emergency space available for the young unhoused people in Richmond.

Warden C. Andes shook hands with participants of the community outreach and encouraged both the SQRC and Richmond volunteers to continue working together.

Resident York said the plan is for staff of the community resources team at San Quentin to collaborate with residents to assemble the furniture.

"The donations were approved, the lumber bought and delivered, now we are just waiting for a scheduled date to start building," York said.

Resident Makanski said there are many people within the incarcerated population who are willing to give to those who may be struggling.

"This is what we do here at San Quentin: we find ways to help people and then we work together to get it done," Makanski said.



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

CRM Office Technician A. Torres, residents, Sally Hindman, from the Bay Area Executive Directory of Emergency Housing for at-risk youth, volunteer Dennis Kettler, and SQ's Librarian Cordez Tarantino.

By Bostyon Johnson

Managing Editor

Actor, restaurateur, and activist Danny Trejo and producer David Enabnit visited San Quentin to gather information and talk to residents about an upcoming documentary titled, "Trial by Fire".

Trejo, who has a connection to San Quentin, talked about his experience in several fire camps from the Rockies to the Sierra and prisons including Folsom, Soledad, Tracy, and San Quentin.

"We have dedicated our lives to help people stay out of prison. Prison is not all the movies said it is," said Trejo. "Once in the system, you get tied up in it and it's almost impossible to get out. With all the programs now, it is more possible."

In addition to the "Trial by Fire" documentary highlighting incarcerated firefighters, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed the California state budget allocating \$10 million to increase incarcerated firefighter wages. Assembly bill 812 will take effect Jan. 1, 2026.

The 1,800 firefighters who provide critical support during fire season live in minimum-security facilities around California called "fire camps."

Currently, an incarcerated firefighter can receive between \$5.80 and \$10.24 per day with an additional \$1 per hour during active emergencies, according to *CALmatters*. Calif. Governor Newsome signed the bill on October 13, 2025 granting incarcerated firefighters federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour during active emergencies.

Katie Dixon, the policy and campaign coordinator for California Coalition for Women Prisoners, an organization that supported the bill gave credit to the people fighting the fires.

Dixon served two years of incarceration at a fire camp. She worked with the hand crew battling hundreds of fires, but after being release in 2012, she said she learned that her experience did not lead to a promising career because she had a criminal record, the report said.

"It felt like a dream deferred. A dream that's been cut off due to systemic policies designed to keep people like me — Black people — out of certain professions," Dixon said. "Deep down inside, I'm suppose to be a battalion chief."

Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (D) from Culver City initially authored the bill to increase wages to \$19 per hour, but negotiated down to match the federal minimum wage.

"It's the right thing to do and it's long overdue," said Bryan in the *CALmatters* article. "It feels really beautiful and life changing for folks who have sacrificed to save others during their time being held accountable for whatever harms they may have caused in their past."

Trejo, who went to the parole board in July 1969 and released August 23, 1969 talked about his involvement with rehabilitation initiative programs including those for people interested in pursuing careers in firefighting. His documentary is a chronicled journey of incarcerated firefighters rebuilding their lives through programs and skill development.

"Anything that's ever been good for me has come from helping someone else," said Trejo.

The bill raised concerns with the California SherriFF's Association, which cited the fiscal impact the bill may have on the counties, according to the *CALmatters* article.

U.S. representatives Sydney Kamlager-Dove and Judy Chu from California introduced a bill that would allow incarcerated firefighters to have their records cleared, which would remove one of the barriers a person with a criminal record faces when seeking employment.

"...[A]s we are seeing that it is harder to recruit and retain firefighters, why would you miss an opportunity like this to connect a pipeline that is trained right into municipalities that need more firefighters?" said Kamlager-Dove.

Danny Trejo visits San Quentin

Two San Quentin residents go to California Medical Facility to discuss expansion of Canine Companions

San Quentin residents and their four-legged tail-wagging trainees visited a Northern California prison in an effort to expand the Canine Companions Program.

Correctional Officers escorted incarcerated dog handlers Jared Hansen, 42; Chase Benoit, 29; and service dogs Ferguson, Cedric and Jermone to the California Medical Facility in Vacaville, Calif.

Their trip was to observe the future location of the housing area at CMF where service dogs and their handlers would reside. The goal of the day's excursion was to have open dialog between the two facilities and to lay the groundwork for expansion.

"Being invited to another institution to discuss what we've learned about starting a dog program is validation of its importance," Hansen said. "To have the opportunity to help this program grow is awesome because it will allow us to train more service dogs that will have a positive impact on peoples lives."

The visit allowed the experienced dog handlers a chance to share their insight and general knowledge about what it takes to start and run a dog program.

Canine Companions, the successful.

"I think CMF will be the fifth prison in California to launch a dog program," Dearmore said. "With all of us working together, it will give the new location the best chance to hit the ground running."

After returning to SQRC, resident dog handler Benoit said that the observations and discussions he had at the other facility reminded him of both the challenges and rewards of his own journey.

"To think this little guy will soon be out there as a service to someone in need makes it all worthwhile," he said looking down at his tail-wagging trainee.

Benoit explained that it takes everybody working together to train and care for a service dog. This program allows communities inside and beyond the walls to work together and achieve the same goal of helping people with disabilities.

"We ran into some obstacles when we started this program at San Quentin," Benoit said. "Having the opportunity to go to CMF and help them understand our growing pains gave us the chance to set the next generation of service dogs up for success."



Photos by Marcus Casillas // SQNews

Canine companions

sponsors of the program, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide highly trained service dogs to people with disabilities free of charge.

San Quentin Correctional Officer S. Dearmore said that upon arrival, CMF's Associate Warden, L. Bravo, the community resource staff, Canine Companions representatives, and future resident dog handlers welcomed his group.

During Bravo's tenure at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, he helped start the dog program there with Lt. B. Haub, Public Information Officer Lt. G. Berry, and Canine Companions representatives.

Bravo wants to continue the collaboration with the people and resources that helped make San Quentin's program

—By Terrell J. Marshall
Journalism Guild Writer

GAMES

CROSSWORD CLASSIC

Created by Michael Fangman

“It’s the Great Pun-kin Charlie Brown!”

Edited by Jan Perry

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- Across
- Down
1. It can be apple, pecan, or in this case this month’s 1-Down
7. What you might do with 1-Across
9. This band famously invited you to their “Dead Man’s Party”
15. He’s often with the Mrs.
17. You can find these on many a phone message pad, particularly during those more boring calls
18. In this US state, you can find both Beavers and Ducks playing football
19. Not neg.
21. College Bachelor’s degrees are usually designated as either BA or ____
22. ____ or die.
23. This stock symbol is usually used to identify Berkshire Hathaway
24. Former US Surgeon Gen C. Everett
26. In 1988, Bobby McFerrin invited us all not to worry, but rather to be...
29. This First Nations people lives in a vast area of Central Canada
30. “I’m not Larry or Curly!”
32. Smaller than a tbsp.
33. These letters will let you know that you’re going to be studying
34. A possible web address for the National Idiot Academy
36. Victoria’s Secret computer language?
37. The eve of All Saint’s Day
38. They are better than tricks
40. Ichabod Crane’s beer?
43. Island nicknamed “Little Rhody”
44. This often precedes a big scare
47. A depression in the sphenoid bone containing the pituitary gland
48. The bane of a modern Marine
49. Wonka’s product
51. Doe a _____. A female ____.
52. One short of a case?
53. A honeyeater (bird) found in Hawaii, or perhaps, the face of a halloween ghost’s costume
54. Chemical symbol for Arsenic
56. Offer more choices than ands?
57. What Canadians call Mac & Cheese
58. What Southerners really mean when they say “I’m fixin to...”
62. Steals in a baseball box score
63. What you do after yelling “Trick or Treat!” if you want some 49-across
65. Kylo ____ (Vader’s grandson)
66. He had his revenge on the Atari 2600
1. Linus sat in this patch waiting all night long
2. For some years, this Captain danced in Tomorrowland
3. This small hill can also open the door
4. You can find hundreds of square yds. of this at Levi Stadium
5. Skater-
6. Just an “T” short of winning?
7. Michael Jackson once? (2-Down)
8. Third strikers at the alley?
10. Not the ego or superego.
11. Oh my _____.
12. Things on radar?
13. A whipping boy?
14. They follow F-words?
16. A more spacious bathroom on a ship?
18. Portland beer brewers?
20. This Greek word for “body” was the center of Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World
23. Mario and Luigi were two short ones
25. Marketing for the 100 Acre Wood?
29. Cattle raised in Scotland?
31. An angry Yelp review?
33. These cookies are loved by those who fall into two camps... one of which believes you always eat the creamy middle first
35. Glosses (abbr.)
36. He and Jerry sold their ice cream company to Unilever
38. _____ treat. (2 words)
39. A female deer walking backwards?
41. Margarine
42. A Snickers bar, without the nuts
44. A-Team member who didn’t fly
45. “It’s not on meh, it’s _____”
46. Officer of the Day (abbr.)
49. It can be popped or canned
50. They are better than nays
53. A sign of the times?
55. You can be one or wish on one
58. It’s an electronic address
59. These aliens might be looking for Reese’s Pieces
60. A German “the”
61. This So Cal area had a TV show
63. Half of all light switches
64. It’s right next to TN

ART



Resident's creativity reignites artistic fire despite setbacks



Art and photographs provided by Savary

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Editor-in-Chief

Keffier Savary is a man of many aptitudes: painter, sculpter, and musician. He is also a veteran. He hails from Kingston, Jamaica, but is known to friends as “Miami” after the city that raised him, and where his talents surfaced. While incarcerated at California Health Care Facility, he works as a peer support worker.

“Art was always in me,” said Savary. “I was good in art and music, but music was my true passion.” He said his father was friends with Bob Marley, and his father’s cousin (Oswald Palmer) was one of Marley’s recording engineers.

Savary said his mother sang backup for Dennis Brown, a famous reggae artist and music pioneer in Jamaica. “She tried to steer me away from music,” he said, out of concern about the negativity and unpredictable

cadence of success in the music industry. By middle school, he had already learned to play drums and trumpet.

Savary said his mother diverted his attention from music by having him try out for an art program, to which he was accepted. “That’s when I started getting serious,” he said, recalling the days he would watch Bob Ross paint on television on PBS.

In high school, Savary attended New World School of the Arts in Miami, Florida, where he quickly absorbed the art all around him. He transferred to another school after his mother feared negative influences after discovering Savary’s stashed-away “Hail Mary” lyrics by rapper Tupac Shakur.

Through his studies, Savary placed in national art competitions, received scholarships, and was commissioned to paint portraits and murals.

“I didn’t want to go to college right away,” said Savary, but his mother pushed him. “I decided to go to California to get away.”

Savary landed at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. “I was the first freshman in the school’s history to get my artwork in the school’s gallery,” he said.

The events of September 11, 2001, however, quickly changed Savary’s path. Filled with a sense of patriotism, he joined the U.S. Air Force. “Even though I wasn’t in the military for art, when they found out about my skills they had me build [a] statue.” He was commissioned to create

a life-sized welded statue of a pilot made of sheet metal — now permanently on display at Heritage Park in Eielson Air Force Base, Fairbanks, Alaska.

“While in the military, I started buying recording equipment,” said Savary. After an honorable discharge, he opened a studio and began recording music. “My true love was music. I was up-and-coming.”

Savary has served 14 years on a 77-years-to life sentence. Ironically, he said prison brought him full circle — back to art. He said his time inside has reignited his creative fire, despite institutional setbacks, like CHCF’s rejection of his art supplies from approved vendors.

Acrylics are Savary’s primary medium, but he is adept in oil painting, watercolor, pastel, graphite, and airbrushing. His portrait work is especially striking, layered with color perception others do not often see. Some of his influences are Ernie Barnes, Salvador Dali, and Kehinde Wiley, but he still reveres Bob Ross, “the voice of calm from his childhood,” Savary said.

Savary has contributed his art to the personal collections of famous people, and recently donated a portrait of Alec and Kaleb — two patients and spokespeople for Shriner’s Children’s Hospital — back to the facility.

Savary hopes to transfer to San Quentin and take advantage of its many programs — art, audio engineering, and self-help groups to name a few.



SUDOKU

1		9		8	2	6		
	2			6				
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		2	9	4		3		8

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

Juneteenth event in the September edition, the correct spelling is Jamal Harrison and not Jamal Harris, and also the dance groups name is “Soul Unique” and not Sole Unique.

SOLUTIONS

8	9	6	9	4	2	1		8	9	4	1	6	7	9	4
4	1	9	2	8	6	9	7	6	7	4	2	9	1	8	6
6	2	8	4	1	9	4	8	9	7	6	4	1	9	8	6
8	9	4	1	9	4	1	6	9	7	6	9	4	1	8	6
4	9	1	4	9	6	8	7	4	2	1	9	8	6	7	4
2	6	7	1	8	9	9	4	8	6	7	4	1	9	8	6
1	4	2	9	6	7	9	8	4	1	9	8	6	7	4	2
9	4	6	8	2	4	1	9	8	6	7	4	1	9	8	6
9	7	8	9	4	1	2	8	6	9	7	4	1	9	8	6

A	V	A	R	R	S	N	N	E	N	E					
V	X	O	V	S	E	H	I	N	E	D	O				
B	S	O	L	A	D	V	E	R	W	I					
S	R	O	S	V	A	N	O	O	S	V					
R	E	E	D	E	X	N	D	O	S	D	E				
V	I	T	E	S	O	O	B	E	D	O	H				
M	V	O	F	O	N										
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