

San Quentin News

THE PULSE OF SAN QUENTIN

VOL. 2009 NO.6

JUNE-JULY 2009

SAN QUENTIN, CALIFORNIA 94964

POPULATION: 5,435

Cate Supports Plan to Enhance Sentence Credits



Photo By Troy Williams

Mayor Gavin Newsom and Secretary Matthew Cate

By **ALY TAMBOURA**
Design Editor

CDCR Secretary Matthew Cate visited San Quentin last month and gave the SQ News a few minutes of his time to answer questions. The central question asked: "Is there going to be a change in the prison sentencing credits?"

Under Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal,

the state would award prison inmates with sentencing credits for completing education and vocational programs. The credits would amount to 10 percent of an inmate's sentence per year or about a five-week sentence reduction, according to Cate.

"Credits for achievement not just for, you know, having your rear end in a seat,

See **Sentencing Credits Page 4**

Gov. Rejects Prison Health Care Proposal

By **DAVID MARSH**
Staff Writer

An agreement intended to overhaul and modernize the state's prison health care system has been rejected by Gov. Schwarzenegger as being more than the state can afford.

The deal tentatively agreed to in May between state corrections officials and the federally appointed prison medical receiver would have provided two new prison hospitals for long-term care at a cost of 1.9 billion dollars.

It was also seen as a first step toward ending the 21 years of litigation over the poor quality of the medical and mental health care provided in the state's 33 prisons.

The present settlement had been touted by state corrections secretary Matthew Cate and receiver J. Clark Kelso as an affordable compromise in the long running legal battle which appears headed for the U.S. Supreme court.

After agreeing to the outline of the proposal agreement in May, Cate, in a June letter to Kelso, stated that California can no longer afford the \$1.9 billion price tag.

A spokesman for the receiver's office, Luis Patino, stated: "This is now a matter for the courts. The receiver will have no public reaction at this time."

In the letter to Kelso, dated June 24, Cate said, "the state cannot, at this time, become further indebted for correctional health care."

S.Q. Celebrates Its 2009 Graduation Ceremony

By **ARNULFO GARCIA,**
DANNY TREVINO AND
JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writers

As the cheers of their supporters and family members carried throughout the Garden Chapel, 157 men from San Quentin received educational and vocational certificates and degrees at the annual commencement ceremony. More than one face in the audience registered the evidence of a passing tear, and forgotten momentarily was the looming threat for massive cuts in prison educational programs as Chief Deputy Warden Vincent S. Cullen addressed the standing room only crowd, Thursday, June 18.

The Vietnam Veteran's Group of San Quentin Color Guard had opened the ceremony as they carried in the American flag. They were followed to the stage by Cullen.

"You have accomplished some great things here," said a smiling Cullen. "This is a bright moment in the dark time. This

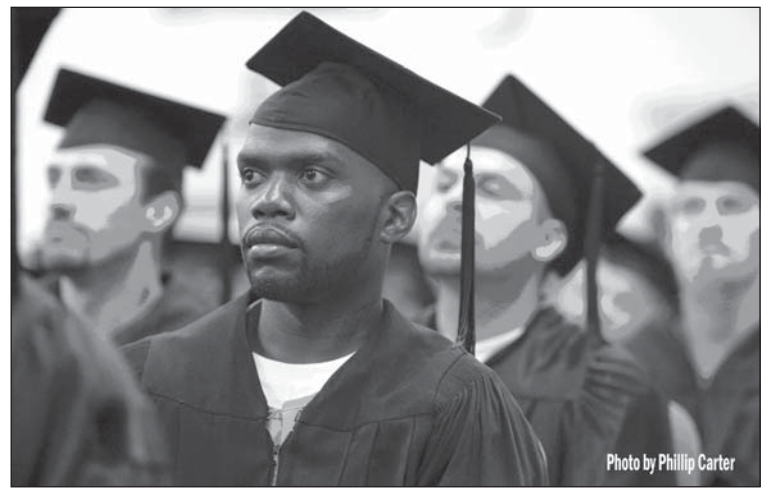


Photo by Phillip Carter

San Quentin 2009 Graduates

is a very big event in rehabilitation. Take this moment and focus on your accomplishment."

Master-of ceremonies and Education Vice-President Frank Kellum mirrored Cullen's pride for the graduates. "What these men accomplished today proves that they have the determination to move forward," Kellum said in acknowledging the efforts of this year's honorees.

With smiles radiating throughout the packed chapel area, 49

men stepped forward to receive their GED certificates, along with the 13 who received vocational certificates and the lone recipient of a high school diploma. In addition, 14 former students of Patten College made their way to the stage to receive their Associate of Arts degrees.

Dr. Martin C. Jones was the keynote speaker for the ceremony, along with Tiffani Neal who represented Patten College.

See **2009 Graduation Page 9**

Mayor Newsom Answers Prison Reform Questions

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and CDCR Secretary Matthew Cate made a tour of San Quentin and permitted the SQ News and Journalism Guild to ask Newsom, who is running for the state governorship, questions about what position he would take toward reforming the California prison system if he is elected Newsom said: he would not sanction the sale of San Quentin to cash in on its real estate value. He also believes that the three strikes law needs work to make it more equitable. And if elected governor, he would take a proactive role in the lifer parole process. Here is what he had to say:

Q:—Arnulfo Garcia: If you are elected governor would San Quentin be more important to you as a prison or would you consider selling the land?

A:—Newsom: I'm not promoting and would not promote the sale of San Quentin. That being said, I would like to see some of the good things happening here expanded in scale. I just was in prison industries, getting these kind of programs expanded, more rehab programs, and really start changing in a positive manner, building on some of the good



Mayor Gavin Newsom with SQ News editors and S.Q. Journalism Guild Members

things that happen here changing the culture of the prison and really focusing on the things that work would be my goal, I don't want to see the status quo...I want to continue to see improvement. I think that the Secretary is moving in the right direction and I think the state recognizes what is working, we just have to fund what works.

Q:—Arnulfo Garcia: As governor what would be your stance on the three strikes law?

A:—Newsom: My father was on the California Court of Appeals for 15 years and is one of the big vocal critics of three strikes law. I know we made some amendments and changes and were given a

little bit more discretion, but I do think it still needs to be tweaked. I think we need to amend it, we need to start fixing it because it's not just the third strike, it's the enhancements on the second strike too. For those non-serious, non-sex, non-violent offenses for the third strike, we've got to obviously be more sensitive to prescriptive rules, so I've got a strong desire to see changes made.

Q:—Juan Haines: Proposition 89 enacted in 1988, requires the governor to personally approve each parole decision that finds a prisoner who is sentenced to an indeterminate term of imprisonment suitable
See **Mayor Newsom Page 2**

Recent disruptions at San Quentin, including the annual education summer vacation and the swine flu quarantine, have resulted in a decision to run the June and July issues of the SQ News as one edition

One of the Last Black Revolutionaries

SACRIFICES HIS FREEDOM FOR HIS FAMILY'S SAFETY

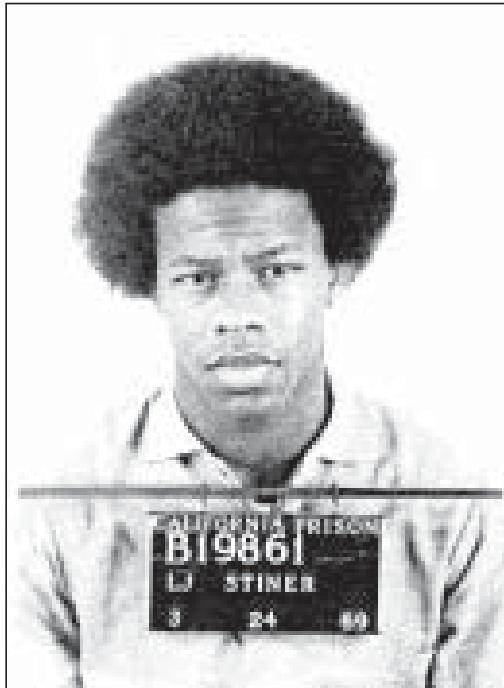
By **ALY TAMBOURA**
Design Editor

More than 35 years ago, in a daring prison escape, two brothers scaled the walls of San Quentin State Prison to freedom. Twenty years later, one of the men, Larry (Watani) Stiner surrendered to authorities in the South American country of Suriname, returning to San Quentin where at present he is fighting for his release. His brother George Stiner has not been heard from since.

Stiner's life story has all of the intrigue of a well written novel, but it is far from fiction. The story begins in the winter of 1969 when he was a student and member of the black movement group "Us." While a meeting was underway at UCLA discussing the selection of a director for the new African American Studies Center, a shoot-out erupted between Us members and members of the Black Panther Party. When it was over, two Black Panthers, John Huggins, 23, and Alprentice (Bunchy) Carter, 26, lay dead, victims of gunshot wounds. Shortly after the shootings an all-points bulletin was issued for the arrest of brothers Larry (Watani) Stiner and George Stiner.

UCLA SHOOT-OUT

The dispute was instigated by Us member Tawala Jones and Black Panther Elaine Brown, who had words in a hallway at the event. Brown reported the incident to Panther members John Huggins and Bunchy Carter who became enraged and retaliated by pistol whipping Jones in the UCLA campus cafeteria. One shot was fired, scattering the students. Another Us member present, Claude Hubert, observed the beating and subsequently pulled a gun and shot Carter in the chest and Huggins in the back. Huggins fired several bullets into the crowd, one hitting Watani in the shoulder before he died from his gunshot wound, according to Watani, who was working security at the January 17, 1969 event.



Watani Stiner's 1969 San Quentin booking photo

The Stiner brothers surrendered to authorities with the belief that since the shooting was spontaneous and they had not fired a shot, they would not be charged. A third man, Donald Hawkins, was arrested. All three men were charged for the murders of the two Black Panther Party members. The actual shooter, Hubert, was never apprehended.

Though neither of the Stiner brothers nor Hawkins pulled the trigger of the gun that killed Carter and Huggins, all three were convicted of second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Hawkins, who was 18 at the time of the shooting, was sent to the California Youth Authority where he served seven years. Watani and George Stiner were sentenced to seven-years-to-life and were sent to the California Department of Corrections.

ESCAPE FROM PRISON

After serving time at Soledad State Prison, Watani joined his brother at San Quentin, then the most violent and infamous prison in the country. The brothers were prison celebrities; everyone knew who they were from their highly publicized case. It was not long before Watani and George became

"DEAR MOM AND POPS— SORRY WE HAD TO DO IT LIKE THIS, BUT CIRCUMSTANCES DEMANDED IT..."

The note left for his parents in the family visiting unit the night of the escape.

targets. Watani was attacked by two inmates on the yard, one wielding a knife. A prisoner who attempted to protect Watani in the attack was stabbed to death.

"I had no problems with these guys," says Watani. "To me it was an obvious case of guard-prisoner collusion. Someone wanted me dead."

Although Watani had a few years left on his sentence and was sure to parole under the laws at the time, he and his brother decided that they would surely be killed before that time came. On March 30, 1974 while on a family visit, leaving a note behind for their parents, they escaped from San Quentin to a waiting car. Watani made his way to Memphis then boarded a flight to Guyana, South America.

LIFE ON THE RUN

Watani settled in Guyana, at that time the hub of the Caribbean anti-colonial struggle. Soon, because of his protest activities he was once again a target. But this time it was not U.S. authorities or violent prisoners and guards he had to fear, it was the Guyanese government who threatened to kill him. In 1980, once again in mortal fear, Watani fled Guyana

for neighboring Suriname, a former Dutch colony whose elected government had just been overthrown in a military coup. Despite economic collapse and political unrest, Watani made a life for himself with Nisha, a woman he met in the market while buying coffee and sugar, which he made a living at selling in neighboring Guyana. Watani and Nisha had six children together and, along with her 4-year-old son, they scratched out a meager living.

"I grew cassavas, tomatoes and string-beans which we traded in the markets. Nisha and I managed to scrape by, but just barely."

In 1993 the political situation in Suriname was unraveling. Soldiers were on the streets and there was a threat of civil war. Stiner's family home was commandeered; he and his family were forced to live in the bush. According to Stiner, there was only one choice, turn himself in to U.S. authorities in exchange for asylum for his family in the United

States. After negotiating his family's safe passage to America, Stiner turned himself over to FBI custody at the American Embassy in Suriname on a hot tropical afternoon in November of 1993. The United States government

renewed on their part of the deal and left his wife and children in destitute, according to Watani.

STILL WAITING

After more than 10 years, with a letter and delayed help from now Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Watani and Nisha's six children were brought to the United States to live with Larry Stiner Jr., Watani's adult son from a previous marriage. The

wait had terrible consequences on Watani's family; his wife was committed to a mental institution and his children have to live with the trauma of years in foster care.

Stiner maintains under the daily weight of incarceration and in spite of serving an additional 15 years after his surrender, he holds on to the hope of parole one day.

"When I first came back to San Quentin, I thought that I'd serve my time, do a few years and get paroled. So long as I played by the rules, stayed out of trouble and did what they asked of me, they'd let me out so I could take care of my family," says Stiner.

Year after year the parole board refuses to grant Stiner parole. Now in the defiant spirit that made Stiner a revolutionary, he refuses to take part in the Parole Board hearings, which he has labeled "a sham."

"I have no faith that I will receive a parole date at my upcoming hearing. My only option is through the courts. I'd rather they slapped me with 30



The Stiner family in the S.Q. visiting room

years than have to deal with the politics of parole," says Stiner. "It's costing the taxpayers entirely too much money for them to deny parole to those who have done their time, transformed their lives, and are clearly no threat to society."

Watani Stiner was up for parole on July 22, he received a 5 year parole denial and will remain incarcerated for a crime he has served a lifetime for, and continues to insist he did not commit.

Mayor Newsom

Continued From Page 1

for parole. If you were elected governor, how would you simplify this process?

A: —Newsom: I appoint a lot of folks, hundreds and hundreds of folks. Sometimes they make the right decisions and sometimes I don't necessarily agree. So I would not be a rubber stamp to a commission, I would have to use my own judgment, but the adequacy of their work I would also want to analyze... But I would take obviously a lot of weight (of their opinion). If you appoint competent people, people that are independent minded, people that are there to do what you think are in the best interest of our com-

munity, then I would obviously defer to that, but not absolutely. Obviously I would have to make my judgment based on their analysis and their recommendation, but not rubber-stamp it.

Q:—Julian Glenn Padgett: "California is a firm practitioner of recycling items like cans and other items of waste and garbage. Do you feel that current and constant denials of parole are conducive to recognizing inmates' rehabilitation and will to improve?"

A: —Newsom: "The idea of recycling people in and out of the criminal justice system, the idea that we are allowing 70 percent plus, in some cases, recidivism is unacceptable, it's



San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom in the Garden Chapel area of San Quentin during a recent tour.

inexcusable. So, the frame of your question is an important one. It's failing everyone, it's failing people that are coming out of the system, it's failing our community, and it's failing us in ways direct and indirect. It's self evident that we dramati-

cally have to improve what happens in the prisons in order to reduce the likelihood that people are going to recycle back in, so, re-entry programs are critical. Looking at step-down facilities and looking at building capacity to support these types

of programs I was referencing is important. The secretary was kind enough to identify prison industries and these kinds of programs that are important to him and important to the rehabilitation of our prisoners. Giving people the opportunity to get educated, giving people the opportunity to build a sense of purpose and self-esteem, a sense of discipline and honor, all of those things are critical to reducing the recycling of inmates in the context of people who are finding themselves, as soon as they get out, lost without any hope and with no expectation that their lives are ever going to get off this remarkable journey."

—Aly Tamboura

For more of the interview with CDCR Secretary Matthew Cate, see sentencing credit article.

Growing Lives Through Gardening

By JOHN HARRINGTON
Contributing Writer

Did you know that the Insight Garden Program (IGP) in H-Unit will be growing an organic vegetable garden that will provide organic vegetables to local non-profit organizations? If you're like me, you'll be pleased that something positive is happening at San Quentin that will be shared with the local community.

Now you are probably asking why we can't eat what comes out of the garden. The answer to that is simple. There just won't be enough to go around. So what could be better than to donate it, develop new connections in the local community and get some positive publicity for the IGP, the Stand-Up Program and San Quentin Prison?

This is part of a program enhancement of the IGP, which originally started classes in 2002 under the direction of the Insight Prison Project (IPP), and has since then become its own non-profit organization, fiscally sponsored by the Agape Foundation in San Francisco. The flower garden currently on the H-Unit yard was planted around Winter Solstice, 2003, the shortest and darkest day of the year. After a year and a half of collaborative planning with

prison officials, staff and inmates, it took a mere four days for inmates and volunteers to transform a mound of mud into a 1,200 square foot organic flower garden which is now used to teach inmates about gardening, landscaping and environmental care.

Being the only non-segregated area of the H-Unit yard, the flower garden is one of the more popular gathering spots for inmates. In the program, IGP's class participants get hands-on



experience in many aspects of gardening – from pruning to planting to what organic fertilizers to use – the men of IGP do it all! But that's only half of what the program is about. We also garden from within, dealing with and working on ourselves, hence the name *Insight Garden Program*.

Over the past six years, approximately 500 men have

been through the program. The program intends to double that number over the next few years. In addition to the increasing number of men in the program, IGP wants to develop a sustainable and results-oriented organization that will provide much needed post-release job placement services to help men paroling to find landscaping, gardening or green jobs when they leave prison.

As with the flower garden, the proposed vegetable garden has been in the planning stages for almost two years. This new project will help men gain new skills, understand the connection between healthy food and well-being, and will provide IGP with new opportunities for funding sources.

Overall, IGP's mission is to help rehabilitate prisoners through the process of organic gardening. By working in nature, participants learn vocational and life skills so that they can practice constructive relationships between themselves, their communities and the natural environment. The proposed vegetable garden will serve all areas of that mission, so the students will gain new skills and understanding about food, health and the natural world.

Coming in the August issue of the SQ News, an article concerning IGP's community connections.

San Quentin Fights The H1N1 Flu

By DAVID MARSH
Staff Writer

While the normal flu season has all but faded away in California at this point in the year, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) health care professionals have watched with concern as the state has continued to experience widespread activity from the H1N1 virus, commonly referred to as the swine flu. With 33 critically overcrowded prisons potentially ripe for exposure to the virulent A Strain flu bug, CDCR medical workers were braced for the worst.

Wednesday, July 1, their fears became reality when a number of inmates in S.Q.'s minimum security H Unit became ill with obvious flu symptoms, including the persistent high fever associated with the H1N1 strain of influenza. Outside laboratory testing quickly confirmed that the prison had become infected with the swine flu.

H-UNIT QUARANTINED

San Quentin had become the first prison afflicted on a large scale. "And at that point," said the prison's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elena Tootell, the issue became how to handle it. This conversation goes all the way up to the director and secretary of the CDCR, Matt Cate."

After consultations with officials in Sacramento, Tootell and prison officials moved quickly to isolate the infected inmates and attempt to slow the spread of the virus.

H Unit was quickly placed un-

der a quarantine and contact with unaffected areas of the sprawling prison was cut off. In H Unit an isolation dorm was established and inmates exhibiting obvious symptoms were moved there. Meanwhile medical staff conducted frequent temperature checks while closely monitoring suspected new cases.

Infected prisoners considered at high risk were treated with Tamiflu, a medication intended to shorten the duration and severity of the symptoms of the virus.

Swine flu symptoms closely mirror those of the standard flu strain and may include coughing, chills, fatigue and shortness of breath. In some cases symptoms have included diarrhea and vomiting.

Officials in Sacramento responded to the first signs of the pandemic reaching S.Q. by providing additional resources and personnel including masks, the services of an industrial hygienist and specialized training for the prison's medical staff.

Successfully isolating the virus became critical if S.Q. were to continue functioning in its role as a reception center. S.Q. is tasked with accepting into the state prison system prisoners from jails in 19 California counties. Prison administrators continued to manage these inmates as they entered and exited the uninfected areas of the prison.

Quickly the isolation dorm neared capacity as the medical staff identified fresh cases of the virus.

Within six days, the flu had spread to additional housing units including the prison's North Block. The flow of in-

mates leaving the prison was halted in order to prevent the spread of the flu to other prisons.

The prison was soon unable to continue accepting new arrivals and S.Q.'s ability to successfully function as a reception center had become compromised.

By Wednesday, July 15, H Unit and Badger were the only areas remaining under quarantine and prison administrators decided to resume the orderly flow of inmates into and out of the prison.

According to prison officials, cases of swine flu have since been confirmed in two other California prisons.

There is currently no vaccine available for the H1N1 influenza strain.

IMPENDING FLU SEASON

Health officials fear that the virus will mutate and return even stronger when the regular flu season begins in the fall.

Attention is on the southern hemisphere for indications of what the H1N1 virus might do. Flu season in the southern hemisphere begins during our summer.

The World Health Organization considers the swine flu to be a global pandemic and has confirmed cases in at least 88 countries. As of July 7, '09, the H1N1 strain has infected at least 37,246 Americans and had caused 211 deaths according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These figures compare with the three major pandemics of the 20th century, the 1918 "Spanish flu," which killed an estimated 50 to 100 million people worldwide, the 1957 "Asian flu," which caused at least 69,800 deaths in the USA, and the 1968 "Hong Kong flu," which killed approximately 33,800 Americans.

Health and Wellness Corner

The San Quentin News "Health and Wellness Corner" column runs every month. A University of California, San Francisco, health professional student will answer questions that you submit about health issues. Inquiries will be answered in the next month's paper. Feel free to ask us questions about any medical concern that you have, and it may be answered so that everyone can benefit. If you have a question, put it in a U-Save-Em envelope addressed to: Health and Wellness Corner, UCSF Doctors (Dr. Shira Shavit) – Medical Box. If you include your name and number, they will be kept confidential. Note that this column is for general medical questions.

This edition, we will address the following question:

Meth and My Teeth

Methamphetamine (meth) is an addictive drug, also known as "speed" and "ice". It is among the most abused drugs in the world. Meth excites the brain and even small amounts can cause:

1. Euphoria (pronounced you-FOR-ee-yah, a feeling of pleasure)
2. Hyperactivity (too much energy)
3. Increased sexual pleasure

However, Meth has dangerous side effects:

1. Depression
2. Violent behavior
3. Weaker muscles
4. Heart disease
5. Dental problems

Dental problems are one of the most dangerous side effects of using meth. "Meth mouth" is a term used by dentists to describe tooth damage in meth users. A dentist knows that a patient has meth mouth when he has serious and sudden tooth breakdown.

Bacteria in our mouths break down the sugar we eat and release their waste into our mouths. Meth users tend to crave sugar more than someone who doesn't use meth. Normally, saliva (spit) protects teeth by washing away the waste that bacteria leave when they feed on sugar. Meth lowers the amount of saliva that the body makes (causing dry mouth). Without enough saliva protection, waste from bacteria stays in the mouth and eats away the teeth, causing cavities.

Teeth of meth users also get worn down quickly because meth users tend to clench and grind their teeth when they are high. Also, meth users tend to have poor oral hygiene (i.e. they don't brush or floss their teeth as much as they should).

**Eating and drinking sugary foods + Less saliva
+ Grinding teeth + Poor oral hygiene**



Tooth breakdown

Before seeing the dentist, meth users should drink enough water and eat less sweet food or drinks such as candy and soda. Make sure to brush teeth at least twice a day or brush after meals if food is sweet or sticky.

**Drinking enough water + Eating less sugar
+ Brushing and flossing teeth**



Decrease tooth breakdown

—Janice Chen
School of Dentistry, UCSF

Thousand Mile Club Runs the Lower Yard

By JONATHAN COPE
Journalism Guild Writer

A group of dedicated runners jogged distances of 5, 10 and 15 miles as part of the San Quentin 1000 Mile Club's event recently.

The leading runner was Ron Goodman, who logged the grueling marathon distance of 26.2 miles.

It was a bright, sunny day with no alarms to disturb the event. Ron's coach paced him for the final 10 miles. Ron has been running since his youth and considers the sport as spiritual. He missed the Boston Marathon qualifying time by 30 minutes. "It was a bad day," he said, "but I will continue to improve."

After 38 Years Lamonta Paroles

By KEITH LETTIER
Contributing Writer

Having entered the correctional system as a young twenty-one year old in 1976, Lamonta McBroom happily reunited with his family on May 19, 2009. It has been a long, long road that Lamonta has traveled, one in which he has made the very best of his opportunities by never giving up the fight to gain his freedom.

As a pillar in the San Quentin Law Library since 1999 (paralegal for more than 29 years), Lamonta openly and willingly shared his knowledge with anyone, especially towards those willing to better help themselves. As all have witnessed, one of the many positive attributes he has consistently shown is that he would stop whatever he was doing to share his knowledge and time to help others.

The S.Q.U.I.R.E.S. program has been an invaluable resource at San Quentin that has helped 'kids at risk' for generations. One of several mainstay stops that these kids were privileged to experience has been Lamonta's intense and in depth speeches on Saturday mornings. These speeches emphasized the trials and tribulations of prison life, making the right choices and looking at the consequences of their actions. Rare is the kid that was not wide-eyed and unattentive to what Lamonta was saying to them. As a native from North Carolina, Lamonta would



Lamonta McBroom and his wife

generally talk about the definition, history and legal recognition of slavery today in the United States, incarceration and self: "Slavery in America [today] is no longer within the province of the private slave owner ... Consider your next action, consider your choices and consider whether your slavery is by your choosing and is it slavery that you intend for yourself."

In overcoming self-slavery, Lamonta says, "If it wasn't for education, I would have been locked into 1976. I stayed focused on the path to grow and better myself and took advantage of every opportunity. I made the best of my time." To name a few, he gives praise and tribute to Patten University for accomplishing his goal of a college degree, Victim Offender Education Group (V.O.E.G.) and Katargeo for channeling his energy in the best

and most healthy means possible. In receiving so much, Lamonta will continue to give back and help serve others. His offering of sage advice: "Don't give up the fight! Don't be compacent! Be proactive, help others when you can and get an education!"

Our friend offers his sincere appreciation and gratitude towards all of the people who he has come into contact with, most especially to his wife, Leager, who has been his rock. Lamonta, it is us who "Thank you!" for touching the hearts of all the people whom you have made an impact.

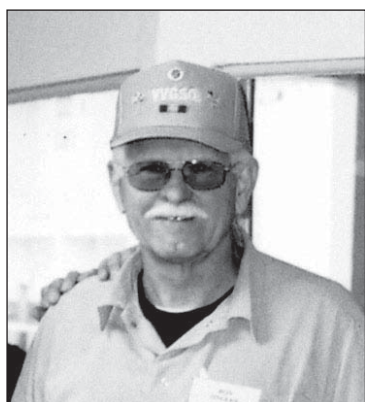
Lamonta, we will all miss your compassion, patience, and tolerance. We wish you the very best in your volunteer and research work, that your business venture will be as successful as your prior business, and that you will forever enjoy life to the fullest.

Veteran Wins Final Battle: Release

BY MIKE NORTROP
Contributing Writer

Ron was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1944 and migrated with his family to Northern California in 1952. Before graduating Encina High School in 1962, Ron played several varsity sports and was a life guard during the summer months. Studying Aeronautical Engineering was his passion in college. Ron is a master plumber and stained-glass craftsman. He is an avid Corvette hound, owning a '57, '62 and a '67 throughout his life. Due to the current economy Ron may opt for a hybrid now.

In 1982, at the age of 36, Ron unfortunately came to prison. After serving over 26 productive years, he finally gained his long overdue release on Thursday, May 21. During his incarceration, Ron has been instrumental in starting and enhancing many prison programs: Victim Offender Reconciliation Group (VORG) whom he worked with Wes Stevens and Father Rodriguez to bring into CSP-Solano (1986), and later Victim Offender Learning Together (VOLT) at the California Medical Facility; Foothills Running Club at Solano (1986), receiving large popularity and media attention for its successful fund-raising efforts to purchase timing devices, trophies, monthly news letters, and organizing running events with prizes awarded.



Ron Singler

HONORABLE DISCHARGE

In 1965, Ron joined the Army, 149th Division, and received an honorable discharge for his service. Shortly after arriving at San Quentin, Ron involved himself with the Vietnam Veterans Group San Quentin (V.V.G.S.Q.) and subsequently held several executive body positions and chaired multiple committees. In giving back, he has been a key part in helping VVGSQ flourish and gain national recognition, along with responding with the development of the Veterans Issues Group (VIG). The VIG provides weekly therapy meetings of therapeutic modules that run from eight weeks to six plus months with representatives from many active outside community veteran organizations. Recognized nationally for its verified results of benefits rendered, VIG has been providing self-help assistance for over ten

years. Ron also co-wrote the Senate Select Committee Report that is utilized by several senators during their discussions regarding the plight of incarcerated veterans.

As an original member of the Buddha Dharma Sangha (Soto Zen) meditation group in 1999, meeting every Sunday, Ron has embraced his practice, accepted Lay Ordination (2002) and has continued to be an inspiration for many others. Also, as an original member, Ron also enjoyed the weekly Hatha Yoga sessions with James Fox, Yoga Instructor; has volunteered with the Christmas Toy Program for over 10 years; served as a youth counselor mentoring at-risk youth through the R.E.A.L. Choices Program since 2003; and, worked in PIA since being at the "Q" - in the capacity of desk assembly Leadman for the last several years.

OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

Being a veteran, Ron paroled to the Veterans Administration Transitional Housing Program where literally everything is provided. He will begin another opportunity to serve and give back to his community. Ron's son, daughter, sister and family are very happy that he has finally been released. Ron walked out Thursday with a few final words, "Be compassionate towards your fellow man," and "Be active in the programs."

Electric Vehicle Kills Seagulls

By DANIEL TREVINO
Journalism Guild Writer

On a sunny afternoon on the mainline San Quentin Lower Yard recently, three of the resident seagulls who regularly inhabit the lower yard died in a horrific traffic accident. An electric vehicle speeding on the lower yard, at a whopping three miles per hour, ran them over.

The vehicle driver seemed genuinely remorseful of the accident and looked to be in shock. "What happened?" he asked.

The lackadaisical, half-tame birds were distracted by food on the ground that they were devouring, and never saw it coming. The vehicle killed them instantly.

The 30 or so Lower Yard resident geese stood in a semi-circle and watched intently as the driver put the dead birds in a plastic bag and dumped them in the back of his vehicle. As he drove away, the geese honked and lifted off, following the vehicle. You might say the accident created a big flap in the bird community.

Junior Steele Paroles

Junior Steele finally heard the words that he had waited so long to hear. The words from the Board that would, after more than 27 years, allow Steele to walk out the gates a free man. On May 20, 2009, Steele left San Quentin into the arms of his waiting family.

Junior had some very productive years here while at S.Q., attending numerous self-help programs, maintained an excellent work ethic, you could always find him working on small rock sculptures and pendants.

He will be remembered fondly by the friends he left behind, among them Homer McWilliams who said, "Very few people knew Jr. as long as I have known him. When he received his date from the Board we were all very happy for him."

Junior realized his greatest dream of returning home to his dying father so that he could go fishing with him.

"Junior, we all hope you and your father catch the big one." said another one of his close friends.

"Junior wasn't much of a talker, especially when it came to matters of the Board, he could get frustrated easy. When talking together the hour before his parole hearing, he was told to think about the big picture, and that his freedom was on the line. He was listening because he told the Board what they needed to hear and was found suitable for parole. When Lt. Robinson brought Junior his walking papers that said he was going home, there were many of us cheering for him. I wish you well Junior," says Williams one of Junior's oldest friends of 25 years.

Junior mentioned on the morning before he departed, "If I had a dollar for every hand shaken this morning I would have over a hundred dollars."

—Keith L. Lettier

Sentencing Credits

Continued From Page 1

but if you earn a G.E.D. or earn an Associates degree, if you earn a major component of a drug or alcohol program, if you earn a vocational certificate from PIA or somewhere else, then you can earn an extra five weeks off your sentence," says Cate.

If the proposal passes, the sentence credits will not be applied retroactively, they will only apply to the year of the specific accomplishment.

When asked if an inmate could earn sentencing credits for every year of his or her sentence, Cate said, it would have to be "a learning gain that is significant, you would have to accomplish something every year, to earn that credit."

The proposed sentence credits for educational achievement would also apply to other programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and other self-help programs that include inmates with learning disabilities.

"So, for a learning disabled it might be that he follows his own individualized rehabilitation program. For those with drug and alcohol issues, (completing) a major seg-

ment of that program," said Cate

The proposed sentencing reforms came as the California legislature was in session trying to come up with a stopgap plan to address the \$26-billion budget deficit. Prison budgets are a major burden to the state and the legislature has proposed cutting prison vocation and educational programs to save money. All the while, the legislature has been less than transparent in how it proposes to cut the prison population to comply with a three-judge panel's finding that prison overcrowding is the cause of unconstitutional medical care in California prisons.

Prisoners feel that the fact that the legislature has a sentencing reduction proposal in front of them is a significant step in the right direction.

"It seems that the state is finally looking at the benefits of educational programs," says Troy Williams, a student at San Quentin's film school.

Even secretary Cate realizes the impact education has on lowering recidivism.

"We know those things make it less likely for you to return and so we want to encourage that because it saves money and makes the streets safer at the same time," said Cate. "I have strong hopes that it is going to pass."

Michael Jackson

08/29/1958 – 06/25/2009



The King of Pop's Six Degrees of Separation from San Quentin

By KRIS HIMMELBERGER and JULIANGLENN PADGETT
Journalism Guild Writers

DANCING WITH THE KING OF POP

The death of Michael Jackson on June 25 at age 50 brought back memories for at least two San Quentin inmates whose paths had crossed with his: Julian Glenn (Luke) Padgett and Michael Harris. Padgett was a dancer in one of Jackson's famed music videos and Harris knew him through his entertainment connections.

Padgett remembers: "I got a chance to work and talk with the best showman on the planet on a professional level. He was fun, relentless, and focused during rehearsals for the Smooth Criminal video. Being on the set and dancing in that video with him was like taking a master class in dance and acting. Michael was highly disciplined and he commanded that same attitude from his dancers."

After high school Padgett kept acting. "I auditioned for everything I could to pay the bills and to keep learning. Some jobs I got and some I didn't, but I never quit." It was at an audition for Disneyland at the Debbie Reynolds studio in Los Angeles where he stumbled onto an audition for a Michael Jackson video.

He didn't get the job at Disneyland, but he did land a role in one of Jackson's most innovative dance videos. "I was relentless at all auditions, especially that one. I told myself, 'I'm getting this job,' and I did!" said Padgett. "There was a lot of excitement the day Michael walked onto the set. The choreographer, Vince Patterson, came in with Michael. He talked with all of us for awhile, then he stepped on the set and we all went to work."

Padgett remembers a special bit of advice: "One thing Michael said

to me was to dance in the moment to be the music. I took that to heart."

Padgett attended the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati, Ohio, for two years while in grade school. In 1978 his family moved to Sacramento, where his mother put him into a summer program, Musical Comedy Workshop, at El Camino High School. "It was a summer stock acting program for kids who wanted to learn about theatre. We gained confidence, experience and it kept us productive."

Padgett offered a concluding thought about Jackson: "He literally changed the landscape of music videos with Thriller and Smooth Criminal. His work gave this multi-cultural world visions of hope, love and peace. Enduring qualities this planet could always use more of."



Michael the young prodigy

THE BOY, THE MAN AND THE BUSINESS

Michael Harris, co-founder of Death Row Records and currently the Editor-in-Chief of the San Quentin News, had this to say: "I was 11 years old when I was first exposed to Michael Jackson. But I actually met Michael years later through his sister, Janet, during my play producing days."

On stage Michael was a brilliant performer, but was he that way in business? Harris answered: "It's clear Michael fared better than most. A lot of people don't understand the business of music. It's a monster and it's been known to eat its young. That said, there are certain steps people can take to protect their interest and their integrity in this business of music."

Are there a lot of tragic stories out there? "There are lots of horror stories in this business mainly because artists didn't do their homework. People need to understand that it's a business, and in any business



Michael Jackson "The King of Pop"

you venture into you must study what and who came before you."

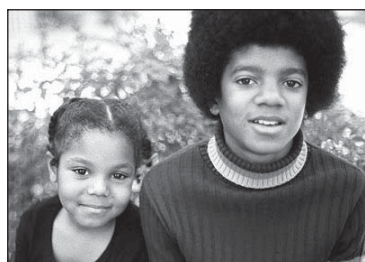
What about the old models of doing the record business with distribution and sales? "The old record companies of yesterday no longer exist. The new vehicle for distributing music is the internet, period! And Michael Jackson understood that superbly. Even after he died he broke internet and Billboard records, and the traffic was so heavy it crashed major music and informational web sites. Nobody could keep up with the pace and demand of Michael's music."

It's been said that Jackson was a universal phenomenon—how so?

"Michael's death affected the 'new model' in such a way that now the industry has no choice but to step up their game when it comes to digital distribution platforms. People were trying to get his music so feverishly that sites not only crashed from the traffic but also because website owners thought they were being victimized by internet terrorists, and to protect themselves they actually shut down their own sites.

Harris went on to say, "Jackson had a profound influence on MTV video. Prior to Michael MTV did not air videos with African American performers."

That's huge! "No. It's Mike-tastic! Because afterwards various cultures came to see and believe that we're not all that different. This is the ultimate display of appreciation of how the little man we fell in love with became the King of Pop."



Janet and Michael Jackson as children

From "S.Q. To M.J."

*Sent as an Envoy, flying with Motown wings
Dashing, silky pure, fleet and smooth
For us, smiling as an angel upon arrival
Not for preaching-but for teaching
Not to shout-n-judge-
But to singing-n-dancing
Gleefully imparting a touch of Hope, Peace and Love...*

"I'LL BE THERE"

*Truly, - your own words, singing & musing – so refreshing
Surely- in your eyes – a purity of pleasure
Really- in your songs- an inspiration so transforming
Serenely-in your smile-an innocence to treasure...*

SAY, SAY, SAY, FAMILY, FRIENDS AND FANS...

*Courageously, and curiously- in all that laughter
Like a Michael- soulfully gliding and crooning
Fearless and fleeting with each step
Leaving no stones unturned- filling each heart...*

ON THE WINGS OF GLORY

*We do forgive your enigmatic vanities
So, will you please, forgive us our misunderstandings
With our short-comings, too
Now, when your radiance shines over us...*

IN THE MOMENT...

*While your soul envelops the earth
While your spirit leads in spurts
We are all together- singing-n-dancing
With you, to, "We Are The World"...*

STILL HERE WITH US

*We close our eyes- you're in our dreams
In your greatness-n-love- we bathe, as in the streams
Looking up at you now- we share in the countless memories
'Cause you left us with no more worries ...*

LEGEND & KING...R.I.P. ...

A Masterful message - look with your hearts, see where it's safe One Human Race- You and Me, "Making The World A Better Place"...
—Raphael E. Calix



The Jackson 5

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

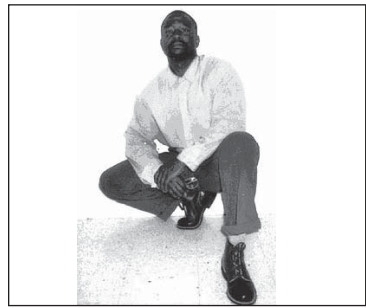
Folsom Inmate's Poetry Inspires Swedish Choir

By **ARNULFO GARCIA**
and **JUAN HAINES**
Journalism Guild Writers

"It's all about keeping the soul free, free to soar," writes Spoon Jackson, a poet incarcerated for the last 30 years.

Those lines are part of a poem called "Realness," which he included in a letter Jackson wrote seven years ago to a pen pal in Sweden. The pen pal happened to be a member of the choir at Krista parish, just north of Stockholm, Sweden.

A choir member showed this and other Jackson poems to composer Stefan Säfsten. Two years later, Säfsten began composing music around them. After he finished composing the works on CD he sent copies to Jackson who decided not to listen to them immediately. The first time Jackson heard his poetry set to music was in May, when the 38-member choir performed a concert at Folsom State Prison, where Jackson is serving a life sentence without parole.



Spoon Jackson



Järva Röster Choir

The concert included two of Jackson's works, "Freedom for the Prisoners" and "Words of Realness."

Säfsten founded Järva Röster choir in 1978. Järva Röster's repertoire includes many different genres from baroque to jazz.

"A great many people have been moved by Spoon Jackson's lyrics, and the music is meant to reach their inner hearts," Säfsten said later after a similar concert at the Catholic Chapel at San Quentin. "Jackson's lyrics literally get under your skin and revitalize your senses."

Säfsten added, "Never in my life had I been so inspired by such poetry. It feels so good for us to be here, and I hope that you will enjoy with us the realness of this man's poetry. The spirit of God is upon us. It's all about keeping it real."

Jennifer Scaife, coordinator of Patten University at San Quentin, said, "I think that it's incredible that poems written by a man in California inspired a man in Sweden to compose a musical suite for choir and then inspired him to travel to California to perform the music.

It shows that experiences of people in prison are relevant everywhere."

Also attending the performance were members of the prison group Real Choices. They brought to the choir's performance 27 at-risk youngsters from Havencourt, a local community in Oakland. One of the leaders said the kids "were thrilled."

After performing at San Quentin, Järva Röster performed in San Francisco before returning to Sweden.

See Poem By Spoon Jackson →

Protestant Chapel Hosts Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream

By **RONIN HOLMES**
Journalism Guild Writer

The San Quentin Shakespeare troupe took the Bard's classic, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and put a new spin on it, to the enjoyment of all.

In the Protestant Chapel on June 15, the small group of prisoners and volunteers from the Marin Shakespeare Company put on a play for a mixture of guests, press and inmates.

To most, this play is usually produced by professional theatres and high schools, but on the 15th, it was acted by 10 inmates, their teacher and two female guests. They had few props and no costumes to speak of yet the group was able to put on a full-scale production.

Despite various trials and tribulations, lock-downs, loss of people, and scheduling difficulties galore, the play leapt off the stage as the performers brought the fairy tale to life, throwing their own unique spins into each act.

For the characters, little things set them apart from any other production done in the past. Like the troupes of old, improvisation



The prisoner and volunteer cast of the Shakespeare play

was key to making the production a hit. There was a slurpy cup, modern glasses, a wholly different theme to the fairy queen's courting of a mortal turned ass, and there were in-house jokes and a brief Michael Jackson dance-off after intermission.

The laughter only died down long enough for the guests to hear the tom foolery being performed before them and within seconds it would begin again. Clapping broke out more than once during the production, and few, if any, left their seats during the story being played out. One person stated he had seen the play over a dozen times and had never seen it done in the fash-

ion of the SQ troupe; he loved it.

Some prisoners in the cast play had never seen the production, and thus were able to put their own take on the character giving it a unique, if not hilarious, personality. From a booming-voiced king being annoyed by a hyperactive Puck, to a character called Bottom who was held captive by an enchanted Fairy Queen and her henchmen, the story weaved and bobbed all over the place to only slightly resemble the original script.

All were smiling at the end of the play, and the audience gave the players a standing ovation.

(Editor's Note: The author of this article was a member of the cast.)

Writing Contest

PEN American Center sponsors an annual writing contest for prisoners. Anyone incarcerated in a federal, state or county prison in the year before the September 1 deadline is eligible to enter. Prizes of \$200, \$100, and \$50 are rewarded for first, second, and third place, respectively, in each of the following categories:

•**Poetry:** Submit up to 10 poems of any form, no more than 20 pages total.

•**Fiction:** Short story or excerpt from a longer piece, no more than 25 pages.

•**Drama:** Monologues, scenes, or plays intended for stage or screen, no more than 25 pages.

•**Nonfiction:** Essay, observation, journal excerpt, editorial, article, or memoir (personal experiences from childhood or later) no more than 25 pages.

PLEASE SEND ENTRIES TO: PEN Writing Awards for Prisoners, Pen American Center, 588 Broadway, Suite 303, New York, NY 10012

CONTEST GUIDELINES

PEN's Prison Writing Contest accepts contest submissions between January 1 and September 1 of each year. Winners will be announced the following March. Manuscripts should be typewritten and double-spaced whenever possible, or legibly handwritten on 8.5-by-11-inch paper. All submissions should be accompanied by a brief cover letter with the author's name, identification number, and complete mailing address.

Authors may not submit more than one entry in each category, except poetry, which has a 20-page limit. Only unpublished manuscripts will be considered, with the exception of pieces that have appeared in publications for the prison population only. Any subject matter will be considered.

Please be sure to send copies of your work, not the originals. PEN is unable to return manuscripts. Always include a return address.

Selected winning entries will be published by The Fortune Society in FortuneNewsandonPEN's website.

Poetry

Realness

*It's all about
Keeping it real
No matter
How you feel*

*Keeping it real
The way the ants
Move up an ant hill*

*It's all about
Keeping it real
When there are no clouds
You can see*

*It's all about
Keeping it real
Because it's always
Raining somewhere*

*Although our heart's
Been broken before
It's all about
Keeping our hearts
As open as the sky*

*It's all about
Keeping it real
The way some plants grow
Through the concrete and steel*

*It's all about
Keeping it real
Though engulfed
In the body*

*It's all about
Keeping the soul free
Free to soar
Anywhere it need be*

*It's all about
Keeping it real
No matter how
Distant you feel*

*For realness eats raw meat
And does not waver
Nor drift on the currents
He has the staying power
Of the sun
Realness walks only
In his own shoes
—Spoon Jackson*

Little Boats

*all the little boats
on dry ground be
who's the captain of the ship
That will set me free*

*i will give them treasures
far as the eye can see
upon the bloody waters
the lil boats be*

*the night is dark, its Hard to see
all the waves crashing
on lil' o me*

*but just look up in the Night sky
and there I'll be
who can Navigate the waters
That will set me free
—Kevin Barros*

THE DEPTH OF MY SORROW

*Every morning I awake with a
cry
Not wanting to rise an let the day
go by*

*Smile in my sleep as I dream of
the past*

*An frown as I wake knowing it
wasn't to last*

*In a rage yelling curses up at
God*

*An worst of all labeling Him a
fraud*

*Biggest wounds in life are self
inflicted*

*My biggest scars from a knife I
wielded*

*It was I that dropped the stone
and saw the ripples*

*Not knowing the lives I would
cripple*

*I alone must live with all this
shame*

*A family's broken and I'm to
blame*

*I can't express my depth of regret
Or the pain I feel at every sunset
Knowing tomorrow I'll wake just
like today*

*It will start with a cry and end
the same way
—David Bertrams*

For People Who Know Everything

1. What sport does neither the participants nor the spectators know the score or the leader until the contest ends?
2. Which famous North American Landmark is continuously moving backward?
3. Which two perennial vegetables can live through multiple growing seasons to produce on their own?
4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
5. There are brands of pear brandy which have a whole pear inside of the bottle. How does the pear get in the bottle if it hasn't been cut or opened in any way?
6. In Standard English there are only three words that start with the letters "dw" can you name two?
7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. How many can you name?
8. Name the vegetable or fruit that is never sold in any form except fresh.
9. Name at least 6 things that you can wear on your feet that begin with the letter "s."

Answers

1. Boxing
2. Niagara Falls 30" Annually
3. Asparagus and Rhubarb
4. Strawberry
5. They are grown in the bottle
6. Dwell, Dwarf and Dwindle
7. : ; — - ? ! " ' ([{ . , ...
8. Lettuce
9. Shoes, Socks, Skis, Stockings, Stilts, Sandals, Sneakers, Slippers and Snow Shoes

WHAT AN IMAGE....

By AL CUNNINGHAM
Contributing Writer

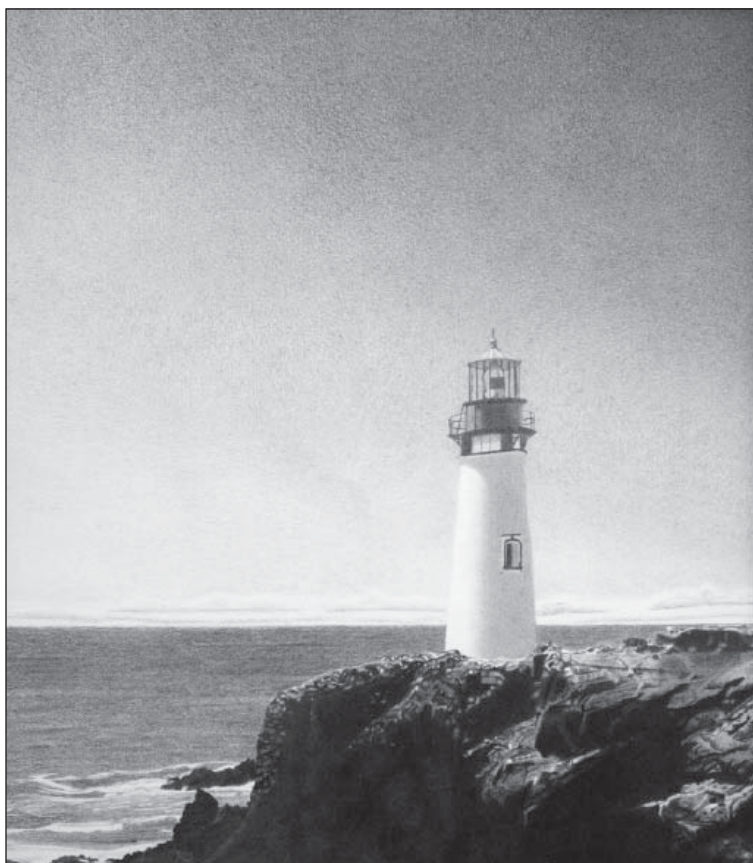
Can you imagine working for a company that has a little more than 500 employees and has the following statistics?:

- 29 have been accused of spousal abuse
- 19 have been accused of writing bad checks
- 117 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 businesses
- 3 have done time for assault
- 71 cannot get a credit card due to bad credit
- 14 have been arrested on drug-related charges
- 8 have been arrested for shoplifting
- 21 are currently defendants in lawsuits
- 84 have been arrested for drunk driving in the past year

Can you guess which organization this is?

Give up yet?

It's "The 535 members of the United States Congress" - the same group of idiots who crank out hundreds of new laws each year designed to keep the rest of us in line.



Art courtesy of the S.Q. Arts in Corrections Program
By Kevin O'Donnell

Snippets

Bung hole is the opening in a beer cask used for filling.

Under-the-wire originates from horse racing and the line that marks the finish line.

Dalai Lama is Mongolian and means ocean and teacher. The full meaning when attributed the His Holiness the Dalai Lama is "ocean of compassion."

Ground Zero is a term which originated in 1946, describing the destruction of the atomic bomb which the U.S. dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.

England is technically not a country. Scotland and Wales also are not countries. Instead, Scotland and England are kingdoms and Wales is a principality. They all are in the country of Great Britain.

Tobasco sauce is more than 150 years old. The spicy sauce gets its name for a hot pepper that originates in Tobasco Mexico.

Caesarean section comes from Julius Caesar who is allegedly the first person delivered surgically.

Under the Federal Reserve, the U.S. dollar has seen a 98 percent drop in value since the Fed was established by Congress in 1913. Today's dollar would have been worth 2 cents in 1913.

The word salary originates from the Latin word salarium, which means payment in salt. Salt was a valuable commodity in ancient times and a form of payment for much of the early world.

Steam rising from a mug of hot coffee has the same antioxidant content of three oranges.



May's Sudoku Solution

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

S.Q. Variety Book Club Book Review



By RANDY MALUENDA



PILLARS OF THE EARTH (by Ken Follet) -- intrigue, bloodshed, and lust during the building of a medieval cathedral.



WATER FOR ELEPHANTS (by Sara Gruen) -- Nostalgic look at early 20th century America from a young man traveling with a circus.



FLIGHT (by Sherman Alexie) -- Young Native American time-leaps into a variety of characters.



CAMEL CLUB (by David Baldacci) -- Park-bench conspiracy nuts join forces with FBI to avert assassination attempt.

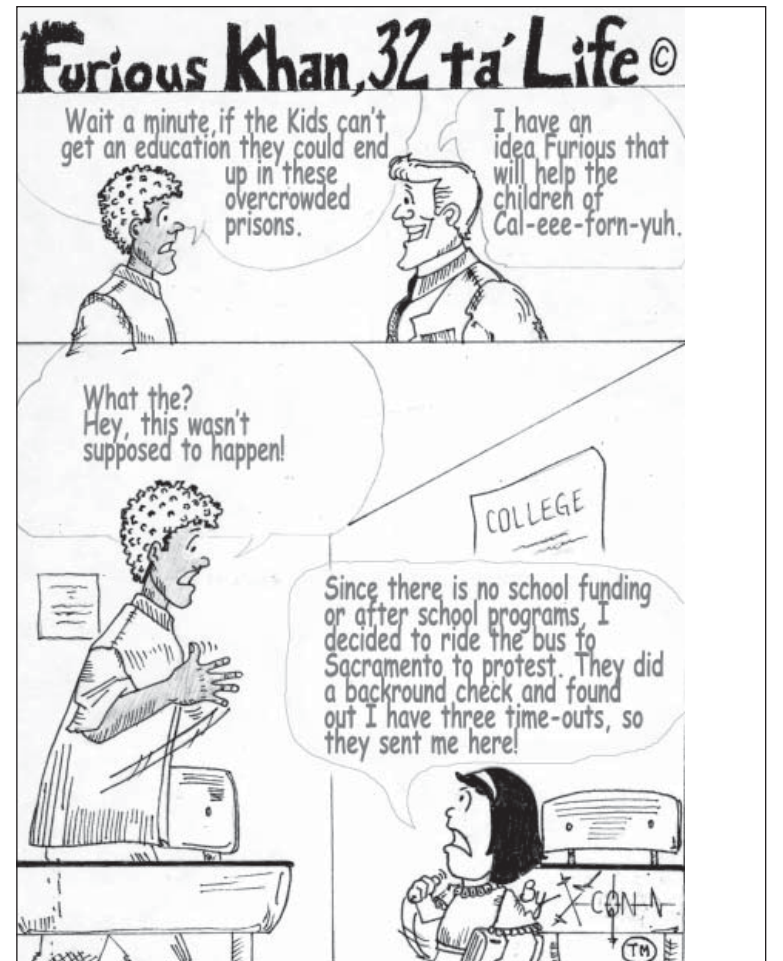


THE DEAD (by James Joyce) -- Life in early 20th century Dublin.

RATINGS:

Top responses are four ribbons progressing downward to one:

Responses which are two ribbons or less are not recommended reading:



Sudoku

By GEORGE LOWE

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

SPORTS

A Long Road Trip And an Exciting Day of Baseball

By **DAVID MARSH**
Staff Writer

On a clear, crisp beautiful Bay Area day for baseball, the Dodgers came to town for a day-night doubleheader with S.Q.'s own Giants and Pirates. And what resulted was two exciting games that might well have been scripted in Hollywood, with each game decided in the final inning of play.

These Dodgers, officially known as Dodger Town West, each drove or flew over 400 miles up the length of the state from Southern California simply for the pleasure of playing two games behind the walls of the aging prison by the Bay on Saturday, June 6. Baseball lovers all, this bunch of zany, fun-loving weekend warriors features a well-rounded cast of characters. They range from a long-time Hollywood actor and a director to an insurance agent, realtor, musician, couple of lawyers, sales director and a couple of fish salesmen, among others.

WINNING MARGIN

Faced with the Giant's pitching ace, Chris "Stretch" Rich, in the morning game, the road-weary visitors played a hard and evenly fought game, entering the ninth inning trailing by one run, 3-2. Down to their final out of the game and runners at second and third, Dodger first baseman Paul Galletti slammed a two-

strike pitch from Rich down the first base line for a ground-rule double. Both runners scored on the hit for a 4-3 Dodger lead, which proved to be the winning margin when the Giants failed to score in their half of the ninth.

The 15 men of this ball club who made the arduous journey, epitomize the love among fans for America's favorite pastime, and their enjoyment of the game, whether trailing or leading in the score, was always readily apparent.

Actor Peter Cook, who appears on the Fox series *Herman's Head* and counts several movies, numerous commercials and Hollywood credits, pitched the distance and picked up the win for his team. "The acting merely serves to support my baseball activities," said Cook, with the bare hint of a smile.

Cook and his fun-loving teammates compete in an Adult Baseball League, which features six teams playing an approximate 40-game schedule in Los Angeles and Orange counties. In 2004 the league sent a team to the annual 48 and Over Senior Series held in Arizona, and came away with first place. Those seeking to join their league must first attend a major league team's Fantasy Camp, a weeklong adventure that carries a price tag of right around \$4,500. They're a fun loving bunch of guys willing to fork out

some serious money, and whose love for the game of baseball can take them a long way from home.

San Quentin's Pirates came out ready to play in the night-cap, and led the visitors by a 4-2 score going into the sixth inning. The Dodgers, despite losing three teammates to an early departure for a flight home, hadn't made such a long journey just to give up in the face of a little adversity. Much to their delight, the Dodgers scored four runs in the sixth and one in the seventh, and an ominous silence settled over the home team dugout as the umpire announced that the game would be called at the end of the inning due to darkness.

But the home team Pirates behind pitcher Dave Baker refused to be outdone on this night and, with the help of four errors from the visitors, scored four runs in the bottom of the inning. Final score: Pirates 8, Dodgers 7. An exciting finish to a great day of baseball!

VOWED TO RETURN

For Dodger right fielder Ted Tannenbaum, the smile of pure pleasure upon his face after losing a close game in the night-cap was just as big as the one he had displayed earlier after winning the first game. "The camaraderie is wonderful, I'm just happy to be here," Tannenbaum said. "It's my first time in prison."

For the 61-year-old Tannenbaum, his love for playing the game has taken him to the East Coast, Hawaii and as far as the Caribbean, simply for a chance to suit up and try out the competition.

The Dodger players vow to return next year. And for the local teams, what an honor it is to have a talent-laden team of baseball devotees travel so very far simply for the pleasure and memories of playing in this aging prison by the Bay.

Professional Boxer Irish Pat Lawlor Paroles from S.Q.

By **DARRELL C. HARTLEY**
Staff Writer

Noted boxer Pat Lawlor departed the gates of San Quentin on May 17th 2009, but not his dreams. He has decided to open a boxing theme pizza bar called "Ringside Pizza". He wants to establish the goals that have alluded him such as proving to his 14-year-old daughter that he is not a loser and demonstrating to his detractors that when in shape he is a formidable opponent.

When he speaks, Lawlor commands attention. His presence is engaging, even when it appears that he is calmly reflecting upon the years that have been good, bad and indifferent. "There is much I wish I could change. Like this prison sentence for a DUI. I was actually just trying to sell DVDs of my fights. Evidently, the judge saw it differently.

Among his impressive achievements was defeating Wilfredo Benitez in 105-degree heat in an action-packed ten rounder in Tuscon, Arizona on May 23, 1990. On March 18, 1991 on the Mike Tyson/Razor Ruddick under card, he stopped Roberto Duran in six rounds.

Eligible for the Boxing Hall of Fame in 2010, Lawlor 45, began his odyssey into boxing by entering Golden Gloves competition because he wanted to win a title for dear friend Merlin Porter, who died tragically in a motorcycle accident.



Irish Pat Lawlor

Those titles propelled him to enter the professional ranks.

He fought through an array of disabilities and injuries and admits that his last professional fight in 2005, on three days notice that resulted in a 4 round draw against Paul Vasquez, for the love of the sport. One of his few regrets is he has not spent the time that he wants with his 14-year-old daughter, the other is not being in the best boxing shape at the time of many of his 40 bouts.

The last fight that he truly trained for was in September 1994 in San Jose versus Hector "Macho" Camacho. At 150 pounds, he battled valiantly but went down to defeat. In 18 years of professional boxing, Lawlor accumulated a record of 23-16-1, 7 KO's, with earnings of \$198,000.

He wants to be the first boxer to fight anyone who has been a champion in a weight class because that would set him apart from all others in the sport. That would include the likes of Mike Tyson, Hector Camacho, Evander Holyfield and Roy Jones Jr.

NEWS BRIEFS

WICHITA, KANSAS
—**6-10-09** -The family of the slain abortion doctor, George Tiller, has decided to close his abortion clinic forever. Tiller, who was shot to death May 31 while serving as an usher in his Lutheran church, was one of only a handful of doctors in the country that performed third term abortions.

TEHRAN, IRAN-6-15-09- Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claimed victory in elections held Friday, June 12. Opposition candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi's supporters took to the street in protest, claiming massive fraud.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL-6-15-09- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has, for the first time, endorsed the idea of a demilitarized Palestinian state to co-exist along-side Israel. He has refused to order a halt to West Bank settlements. Palestinians immediately rejected his terms.

HOLLYWOOD-6-26-09- America lost two high profile entertainers as Farrah Fawcett, 62, died from anal cancer, and pop icon Michael Jackson, 50, succumbed to cardiac arrest while preparing for his come back concert tour scheduled for 50 dates in London.

SACRAMENTO-6-24-09- A 24-Year-old Sacramento woman became the state's tenth swine flu related death.

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS-6-28-09- Leftist President Manuel Zelaya was ousted in a bloodless military coup and forced into exile. The United States has strong military ties with the Honduran military, and President Obama has strongly condemned the action. Zelaya has been pushing an unpopular constitutional referendum seen as an attempt by him to stay in power beyond the current one-term limit.

SOUTH ATLANTIC-7-04-09- Signals from the "black boxes" of Air France flight 447 continue to fade and weaken along with hopes of resolving the mystery of what caused the Airbus jet to break up in the skies

off of Brazil's northeast coast, killing all 228 people on board.

ST. PAUL, MINN. - 6-30-09- The state Supreme Court voted unanimously to certify former Saturday Night Live comedian Al Franken as the victor for the state's contested seat in the U.S. Senate. The vote gives Democrats in the U.S. Senate a filibuster proof 60 seat majority over Republicans. Franken won over Republican Norm Coleman by 312 votes out of 2.9 million cast.

SACRAMENTO, CA.-7-01-09- With the legislature unable to agree on how to close the state's massive deficit, state controller John Chiang began issuing interest bearing I.O.U.'s to pay a portion of the state's debts. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is forcing the state's 220,000 workers to take a third unpaid monthly day off beginning in July.

WASILLA, ALASKA-7-04-09- Gov. Sarah Palin resigned July 25, long before her term was to expire in 2010. The announcement by the 2008 Republican vice president candidate shocked the Republican party and could boost

former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney to the front of the Republican presidential hopeful pack for 2012. No clear-cut reason was given by Palin for her decision.

NOWA, AFGHANISTAN-7-05-09- Four thousand U.S. Marines continued to root out Taliban fighters in the biggest U.S. military operation since the American-led invasion began in 2001. The operation, centered in Afghanistan's southern Helmand province is meant to take and hold Taliban controlled areas prior to upcoming elections.

WASHINGTON-7-01-09- A panel of the Food and Drug Administration has voted for the removal for sale of such pain-killing drugs as Vicodin and Percocet. The drugs contain acetaminophen, which is the leading cause of liver failure in the U.S. A final decision is pending. Other popular drugs that combine acetaminophen with other pain-killing ingredients, are Tylenol, Excedrin, Nyquil, and Theraflu.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK-7-04-09- A 25-year-old San Jose man gobbled a record 68 hot

dogs to claim his third straight crown at the annual July fourth Coney Island hot dog eating contest. Joey Chestnut bested six-time titleholder Takeru Kobayashi 68 to 64 1/2 dogs.

THE VATICAN, ITALY-7-04-09-The Vatican posted a budget deficit for the second straight year. This year's deficit was around 1.28 million, and donations to the Holy See from the churches world wide were down to about \$75.8 million from \$79.8 million in 2007.

NASHVILLE, TENN. -7-04-09- Former NFL quarter back Steve McNair was found dead from multiple gunshot wounds, the victim of a possible murder-suicide. McNair was a three-time Pro-Bowler and Super Bowl quarterback who threw for 31,304 yards and 174 touchdowns during his 13-year career. He retired following the 2007 season.

HONDURAS-7-06-09- The Honduran military blocked a runway with trucks and soldiers to prevent a plane carrying deposed president Manuel Zelaya from landing. Zelaya vowed to return at a later time.

Pulitzer Prize Winner Advises Writers



Junot Díaz

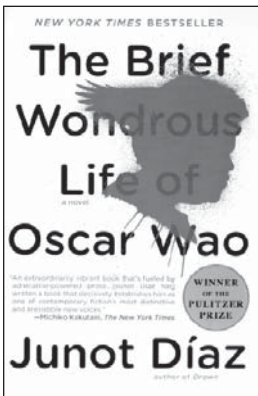
By KENNETH BRYDON
Journalism Guild Writer

One of America's top writers gave some tips and advice to San Quentin's Creative Writing Class recently.

The speaker was Junot Díaz, author of *Drown* and *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, which won the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

A writer lives and dies by the quality of his details, Díaz said during his San Quentin appearance on June 24.

Born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, he was raised on the East Coast and became recognized for his gritty story-telling of migrants. His story deals with the cruel abuses that humanity inflicts on others, while intertwining it with acts



of heroism and love, leaving the readers with what can be described as a bittersweet ending.

He described the 11 years it took him to write his Oscar Wao novel as a journey of frustration, doubt and despair that walked side by side with a burning desire to tell a story with relevance

to inequalities of humanity.

"Life...adheres to no formula," he said, explaining his purpose of writing of callous and cruel issues that prisoners understand.

Dressed all in black, Díaz, 42, bounced his leg as he spoke, answering

questions from the group of incarcerated writers. Using the collection of short stories and two novels that has won critical acclaim, he told the group, "Be opinionated," as he pointed to why he thought his writing was praised..

Berkeley Law Professor Lectures On Parole and Sentencing Reform

By ARNULFO GARCIA
and JUAN HAINES
Journalism Guild Writers



Jonathan Simon

California needs a massive overhaul of its prisons and parole system to effectively cope with crime and repeat offenders, a noted law professor told a San Quentin audience.

Jonathan Simon, an author and professor at the University of California Bolt Hall law school, visited San Quentin to lecture prisoners on why parole does not work, and why re-evaluating California's sentencing structure for violent crime is crucial to eliminating mass imprisonment.

Simon's research shows that the institution of parole has changed little since its inception.

Unlike many other states, that eliminated early releases through parole, California continued to require parole supervision in the community for all released prisoners. And that, Simon contends "is a big part of what's broken."

expensive state-run prisons. State-funded institutions should be set aside for lawbreakers who pose such a threat of violence that they cannot reasonably be worked with in the community, he said. The state's financial support should actively subsidize counties (as done in the 1970s) to keep more offenders in their county system—where with less effort they can be integrated back with their families and community resources.

Californians also need to revamp the state school structure, which have become gateways to criminal-justice custody through disciplinary regimes and test-based pressures to force out weaker students, Simon said. Another example is California's mental health system which has been allowed to deteriorate, leaving many untreated mentally ill on a pathway toward criminalization and incarceration

Simon is the author of a number of books. More on Simon's studies is available at this web site: <http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/>

S.Q.'s Imam Hassan Retires

By KHAIRY REYNOLDS
Contributing Writer

Imam Rafiq S. Hassan, 67, retired after devoting more than 20 years of service to the San Quentin Muslim Community.

"I will miss him, as well as his leadership skills," said Protestant Chaplain, Pastor Morris Curry.

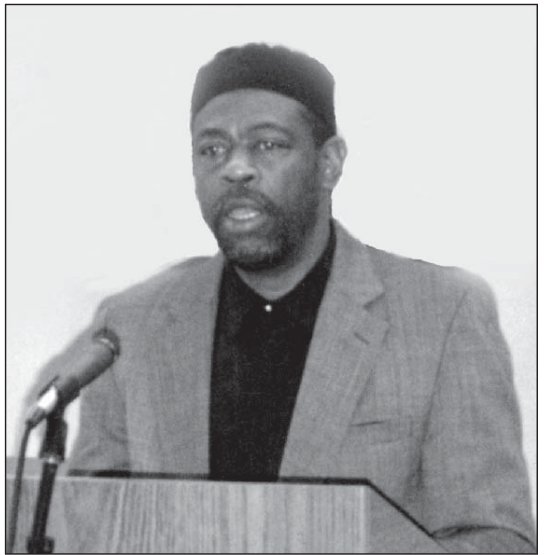
Imam Hassan is a diligent practitioner of the Islamic faith and was instrumental in facilitating many of the Islamic programs for prisoners.

"He was the only prison Imam who facilitated the 'Night of Power' (Al-Qudr) and was here in the prison during Iftar (break-fast) the entire 30 days of Ramadan," says Islamic Clerk, Shahid Rouse.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, celebrated each year by Muslims world wide who read the entire Koran while fasting from sun-up to sun-down. Imam Hassan made sure that all of the Muslim prisoners at San Quentin were able to participate and sacrificed being with his family during the holy month to pray with prisoners.

"We will miss his dedication to helping the Muslim community grow," said Islamic community

volunteer Abraham Nana. The Islamic Chaplain job position has yet to be filled, but applicants are being interviewed, according to prison officials.



A Close Look at the Three Strikes Law

California's Three Strikes Law has flooded state prisons but has little effect on curbing violent crime, according to a professor who researched the impact reports.

"California has over 7,000 more third-strike prisoners than any other state. California's Three Strikes Law is in a league of its own," said Elsa Y. Chen, assistant professor of political science at Santa Clara University. She was guest lecturer recently for a classroom of over 50 San Quentin prisoners sharing her research about the Three Strikes Law.

Washington State is ranked second in the nation with about 350 third-strike inmates.

Chen's study covered from 1986 through 2005 to explain the circumstances that framed passage of the Three Strikes Law by Californians. She said the study concluded "California's Three Strikes Law failed to produce a significant incapacitation effect on crime compared to 24 other states with a similar law but narrowly constructed to target recidivists who commit a third violent crime."

She said she was troubled by the disparity in the application of law from county to county in California. She found that age, race, ethnicity, and even political affiliation played a significant role in whether an individual was subjected to the extreme penalties imposed under the Three Strikes Law. "Elected [officials] make policy about strikes, changing... from county to county. They are not only allowed to make policy,

but they do so publicly," she said.

Chen's research bolsters a general hypothesis that exposes the meager effect Three Strikes has had on crime in California. 87,500 individuals who have violated any of over 500 different felonies, whether violent or not, have been subjected to three strikes in California, according to Chen's research, costing California taxpayers \$500 million a year.

One of Chen's positions is director of public sector studies at Santa Clara University. She commented, "I can assure you that working as a public intellectual I will be able to apply my research in the future." But she added, "Currently research opinion [on sentencing reduction] is not highly sought by politicians."

Chen expressed optimism that her research will have great value to a sentencing commission as she awaits the slow state legislative process of adopting a commission that may potentially bring fairness in sentencing.

Chen's study is titled "Impact of 'Three Strikes and You're Out' on Crime Trends in California and Throughout the United States." It can be found in the Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, Volume 24, Number 4 and at <http://ccj.sagepub.com> hosted at <http://online.sagepub.com> or get a copy by asking Jennifer Scaife of Patten University at San Quentin.

By Arnulfo Garcia
and Juan Haines
Journalism Guild Writers

2009 Graduation

Continued From Page 1

Jones challenged the graduates in saying, "You have a responsibility, meaning you're going to have to leave some of your old habits and pick up new ones...education is your foot in the door."

Inmate Larry Dixon served as the valedictorian for the Robert E. Burton Adult School, while Felix Lucero Jr. was the Patten University Valedictorian.

Most in the audience appeared focused on the continued accomplishments of the students and staff of San Quentin's educational community, rather than the specter of cuts in the program's budget. Among those who voiced a positive perspective was educational Correctional Officer Coon, who said, "One of the most rewarding things I get out of my job is to see a young man come



Patten University Valedictorian Felix Lucero Jr.

into the education department, start showing up every day, then graduate from the program with a diploma or degree."

And it appeared that those inmates taking part in the day's ceremonies were focused positively on what the future might hold in store, knowing that each of them had

at least one more thing working in their favor, an education.

"The valedictorians said it all, that's what we're all about, changing hearts, building character, educating minds and giving people a chance at life," said Ted Roberts, the proud principal of San Quentin's Education Department.

OPINION

Prison Sentencing Reform Proposal

In My Opinion



By **KENNETH PACKNER**
Contributing Writer

Sentencing reform is among the hottest topics in California's prison system, but despite the heat, not much is happening. I would like to get things moving and so respectfully offer my own proposal as a starting point.

A three-judge panel of Federal District Court directed the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the Prison Law Office (PLO), the plaintiff in the successful suit to force health system changes, to work together to generate a viable framework for sentencing reform. The judges' directive flows from the fact that the prison health system shortcomings are a result of prison overcrowding and overcrowding stems from the current sentencing system. But despite the judges' order, nothing much has happened.

My proposal relates to the April 24 first leg of a "Sentencing Seminar" at which the guest speaker was Kara Dansky, executive director of the Stanford Criminal Justice Center. Her presentation featured a brief history of indeterminate sentencing law, determinate sentencing law and the explosion of California criminal sentencing enhancements. Ms. Dansky also discussed the ongoing jurisdiction of the Federal District Court over CDCR.

I believe that both the CDCR and the PLO should use this moment in time to craft an equitable sentencing scheme that the court can implement and that will direct the Legislature to enact a new sentencing package. It should be noted that draconian voter initiatives on sentencing will fail when found to be in violation of the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, when cruel and unusual punishment and due process guarantees are threatened. My proposal to start the conversation on sentencing reform follows:

BACKGROUND

The United States has the largest incarcerated population in the world, with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation making a significant contribution to this fact. Three decades of

"tough on crime" have tripled California's prison population. Prisoner overcrowding leads to inadequate medical health care.

Politicians elected on promises to be "tough on crime" along with the absence of medical oversight have led to the establishment of two Federal receiverships over the CDCR.

There is no incentive for the CDCR to reduce prisoner population.

MY SENTENCING REFORM SCHEME

I.

MODIFIED SENTENCE

Eliminate "Early Release Proposal."

Create "Progressive Sentencing Reform Challenge."

II.

EXISTING SENTENCING STRUCTURE

Sentencing Criteria for Conversation & Fire Camps;
Now; 2 Day Credit, for 1 Day served

Propose; 3 Day Credit for 1 Day Served

Example; 30 Day Sentence; 10 Days Served, Instead, 30 Day Sentence; 5 Day Sentence Served

III.

DAY FOR DAY REFORM:

1 Day Credit; 1 Day Served, Instead, 2 Day Credit; 1 Day Served; 80% - 85%

Instead, 1 day credit; for 1 day served

Program failure, return to "80 - 85%"

IV.

ABOLISH 3 STRIKES

Return to "original sentence, plus enhancements

Mandatory 60 - 65% time cut
Mandatory Program Targets

V.

REFORM MATRIX

SENTENCING STRUCTURE

7 to life Minimum 5 years, Top Matrix 11 years; (Good/Work time credit) 6 years 8 months;

15 to life Minimum 10 years; Top Matrix 21 years; (Good/Work time credit)

14 years 8 months; 25 to life, Minimum 16 years 8 months; Top Matrix 33 years

Max (Good/Work time credit) 21 years 8 months

VI.

LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE;

Converted to 30 to life using above matrix outlined above.

VII.

DEATH PENALTY SENTENCE

Abolish Death Penalty. The current system is overwhelmed, commute Death Sentence to life without parole. Although this writer offers no opinion on this issue, there are many comments that atonement and redemption is worthy of review and should invigorate a spirited and intellectual discussion.

Parole Date Cancellations By Governor Devastate Prisoners and Families

HOPES AND DREAMS DEFERRED

By **MICHAEL HARRIS**
Editor-in-Chief
and
STEPHEN LIEBB
Staff Writer

When the governor rejects parole to a lifer, it's devastating both to the inmate and his family. The family members become faceless victims.

To illustrate the point, we interviewed three lifers who were found suitable for parole by the board, but the governor rejected their parole dates. To safeguard their privacy, no names are used.

CASE 1

He joined a Los Angeles gang at age 14, in part to flee a physically abusive father. He committed a senseless murder at age 17. Arrested in 1989, he became an unwed father a month later.

Twenty years later, serving a term of 15 years to life, he was found suitable for parole after repeated denials. This restored some of the faith his family had lost. "I knew there was a nearly 90 percent chance that the governor's office would systematically reverse my first finding of suitability. When the actual (denial) news came, I was more concerned about the impact it would have on my family."

His mother's heartfelt letters to the governor pleading that he let her son's parole date stand went unheeded. "I understood how my actions, my selfishness, my past conduct, has contributed to the pain and suffering my family has had to endure. I also have come to understand how I affected the lives and well-being of my victims and their families and loved ones."

HIS RESPONSE

"The governor's office is directly responsible for the pain and suffering of our families and loved ones. If I were still doing wrong or committing crimes or not trying to comply with the board's expectations of rehabilitation, then I would be responsible for their continued suffering."

He was asked how he would respond to those who argue that he took a life and the victim's family still suffers and so what does it matter if his family also suffers. He said, "During the Vietnam War, pilots said that at first they had no qualms bombing villages. He recently graduated from San Quentin's Patten College. Professors wrote to the board supporting his parole. They described the clear potential

he has for academic excellence and leadership qualities. He earned Navy certification as a substance abuse counselor and is valued by professionals in the juvenile justice system.

CASE 2

As a 20-year-old he left his mother and sister in Portland, Ore. and their neat home with its manicured lawn to serve his country in Vietnam. In 1969, his skull was shattered by a Viet Cong rocket. His right side was paralyzed. A metal plate was placed in his skull. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

CHANGED HIS LIFE

He returned home disabled and vilified for his service to his country. His Class 1 driver's license was revoked due to epilepsy seizures linked to his head injuries. "That license was my ticket to driving multiple axles and making money (so) I got fired."

He turned to using and selling drugs, eventually beating a woman to death he believed had stolen from him.

In prison he slowly reconstructed his life. He became a journeyman machinist and an active leader in the Vietnam Veteran Group of San Quentin. One of the most decorated colonels in the United States military supports his parole

He longs to reunite with his aged mother and his sister. Their home is in disrepair and the lawn overgrown and choked with weeds. Angry neighbors cut the lawn to the dirt, attempting to eradicate a neighborhood blight. With pain in his eyes he said, "My mother will be 84 this month. My dad is 85 and I'm surprised that he's still alive. They have kind of given up. My family is looking for answers and I don't have any."

After serving 23 years of a 15 years to life term, he was granted a parole date. The governor cancelled it, saying he needed to examine his "Vietnam experience" to gain more insight into his crime. He said his heart and commitment are for his fellow veterans. "I guarantee in the next 10 years there's going to be hundreds of vets coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan and they're going to need help. I want to be there to help them. I can be an asset for them. This country needs us Vietnam vets to still fight for this country. I want to do that by counseling them on how to deal with the challenges they will face and help them make better

choices than the one's I made."
CASE 3

As a young drug user, he killed a friend who he believed had provided his girlfriend with "bad dope."

"I was 19 years old and I made some serious and very foolish mistakes," He says. "I took my friend's life. It started with a foolish argument over the bad drugs. I had known him a very long time. At the time of the crime I was on an eight-day drug run."

He offers no excuses but reflects that when his "father left his mother, leaving him without a man in his life, He took on the responsibility and became a man at age 13. But I had no guidance, because there was no role model in my life to steer me in the right direction."

He received his first parole date in 2006, but as a result of a malfunction of the recording system, the date was vacated. In 2007, he was again found suitable. He says, "I felt that when they gave me the first date that they were telling me that I was still a human being. I had hopes and dreams to reconnect with my youngest brother in Texas." His younger brother was his last living brother.

BONE CANCER

His wife returned from Central America after his second parole date, but it was vacated too. "She was back at my side for support. When she came back, I had just lost my second date. I also found out that I had bone cancer. This was so devastating and I felt so helpless. I wanted to be there for my wife."

He was granted a third parole date in 2008. The day before the hearing he was told that his leg may have to be amputated up to the waist due to the cancer. He was found suitable and began the vigil to see if he would go home. Forty-nine days before he was due to be released, he was notified that his younger brother in Texas was murdered, shot in the back by a homeless person he was helping.

The governor took the third parole date too.

His cancer is in remission. "I refuse to give in to hopelessness and despair. I learn from these experiences that I'm not alone and to be more humble and allow people to be a part of my life."

Note: A referendum passed by California voters in 1988 and enacted the same year, Prop 89 gave the State's governor veto power over all paroles granted to persons convicted of first or second-degree homicide.

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes it is a tree of life."

Proverbs 13:12

"No injustice can be corrected by creating a new injustice."
David Grossman, Israeli writer, from "The Yellow Wind"

Happy Birthday S.Q. News

By JOHN EAGAN
San Quentin News Advisor

This edition of the San Quentin News marks the one-year anniversary of the resurrection of the inmate-produced newspaper whose aim is to tell what life inside the walls is really like.

We have come a long way since that June 2008 paper hit the Print Shop presses, and we still have a long way to go. But everyone involved in the production can be proud of our accomplishments.

The layout is better, the content is stronger, the editing is crisper and the journalistic quality is remarkable.

As a retired journalist, I was asked to help put the paper back together in April 2008, after a 16-year hiatus. I agreed because I felt the effort could accomplish several worthwhile goals: improve communication among the administration, prisoners, staff and guards, improve communication between the prison and the outside community, and provide valuable job skills to inmates. We have, in fact, accomplished all of those goals.

A large percentage of our stories have detailed the positive side of prison life: inmates who are turning their lives around, getting education, training and counseling to help them toward positive, productive lives whether inside or outside of San Quentin.

The reaction has been remarkable. At first many prisoners viewed the paper suspiciously but by now virtually all of them look forward to reading every story in every edition. The warden reports his phone has been ringing off the hook from other prisons that love the paper and want to start something similar at their facility.

A publication distributed inside London prisons wants to send a representative to San Quentin to learn how they can do something similar for British inmates.

The paper has been featured in stories by The Associated Press, San Francisco Chronicle, Marin Independent Journal and National Public Radio.

We are featured on the internet web site of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, including complete copies of papers since June 2008.

Not everyone loves us, of course. There are people who don't like the idea of a prisoner writing for publication about what's going on inside the walls, especially if there is the slightest hint of criticism.

But we have been honored with strong support from the administration and staff.

We are proud of our newspaper and hope it will be around for many years, helping to tell the story of San Quentin Prison.

Letters

Former Warden Praises SQ News

To the Editors

I am in a state of shock that in nine months the San Quentin News has produced this level of quality. You, with the Advisory Board's help, have far surpassed what I thought would be done. My congratulations to everyone involved for a superior accomplishment. Now the real work starts. Improving on excellence is a huge challenge.

Robert Ayers, Jr.
San Quentin Warden, Retired

On S.Q. Going Green

Dear Editors Mailbag:

Really enjoyed the article "Obama's Green Czar Seeks The Help Of S.Q. Inmates" (March 2009). Not only was it a great synopsis of local author Van Jones' speech, it also raised some interest on some new green directions S.Q. may be headed toward.

I couldn't agree more that inmates "should be able to access the opportunities" of an equal opp-green economy, so I was excited to read that Harris has proposed the creation of a Green Technology Learning Center, and also that (Chief Deputy) Warden Cullen was quoted about becoming involved and making this one of the first institutions in the country to go green.

The time is ripe for the CDCR to expand its vocational learning and trade programs. If there was ever an institution to embrace green technologies for use here and on the outside, San Quentin is the place to do it. The Bay area is committed more than ever to the manufacturing, installation and developing of green technologies such as solar energy, heating and Co2 reduction. Three to name a few that S.Q. could incorporate.

Another article on the proposed Green Tech Learning Center and Chief Deputy Warden Cullen's goals to take S.Q. in new green directions would be of interest and relevance to us all.

Keep up the great work,
EUGENE R.

Congratulations From Other Prisons

To whom it may concern,

I stumbled upon the March issue of the San Quentin News here at the library and was surprised. Congratulations!

We didn't have a paper when I was there in 2001. You guys are doing good.

Thank you,

William Cordoba
California Medical Facility
Vacaville, California

Project R.E.A.C.H. Hosts M.A.S.H. Actor Mike Farrell

By ARNULFO GARCIA,
JUAN HAINES, and
JULIAN GLENN
PADGETT
Journalism Guild Writers

Actor Mike Farrell says prisons need to do more to help people, such as the San Quentin R.E.A.C.H. program is doing to combat illiteracy.

"My friend Nan Sincero invited me here to see this class," Farrell said. "When Nan told me about the Marin Literacy Program's involvement with prison literacy, I was amazed at what the people in it are accomplishing. We need programs in prison that are designed to help people."

Sincero is a key part of the R.E.A.C.H. program.

Farrell was on a book-signing tour for his new book, "Just Call Me Mike," in San Francisco. He took a break from his tour to visit



Mike Farrell

Project R.E.A.C.H., a San Quentin literacy program co-sponsored by the Marin Literacy Program.

Farrell is a political and social activist best known for his portrayal of Army doctor Capt. B.J. Hunnicutt in the TV series M.A.S.H., and Dr. Jim Hansen in the weekly NBC series "Providence." He has served on the board of directors of the National Coalition to Abolish The Death Penalty, as the former co-chair of the California Committee of Human Rights Watch, and is currently president of Death Penalty Focus.

Unhappy About Guitar Lesson Article

Dear San Quentin News:

I saw the article in a recent issue of the paper that talks about some guitar hero offering lessons to perspective players in the G.P. (General population).

While that serves to fill blank sections of the pages with words and offers limited hope for a comparative few wannabes in the G.P., it provides a big nothing for aspiring guitarists over here on the Row. In fact, that article wouldn't even provide enough scrap paper for a decent origami fish. I tried it...

Robert Frazier
East Block

An Opinion on PSA Testing

Your article on taking a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen Test) is very misleading. PSA test is a simple blood test.

I am Afro-American, over 50 years old, and take a PSA test every year, I am taking 5 mg. of Terazosin HCI for an enlarged prostate gland.

Your answer to the question: "Should I have a PSA test for prostate cancer?" The answer, "This is a very complex question and there is no right answer" is very misleading! It's a simple blood test. Yes, if you are over 50 years old, a male African-American, you should take a PSA test, which is very different from a prostate biopsy.

Am I correct on this? Please refrain from scaring the Afro-American men, over the age of 50 years, from taking a simple blood test.

Thank you,
Lee A. Samprath

Privileged to be Involved

+
I'm writing in regard to the positive influence the "San Quentin News" has on me and a thousand others in the prison population, as well as people in society.

What truly makes S.Q. unique is its many educational, and self help programs. The story of eddy Zheng is a testament to the positive influence the programs here in this institution have. The heartwarming story showed how somebody can turn their life around and give back to the community.

The story really touched me personally because I believe that giving back to the community is one of the most important and helpful things we can do as human beings. Just recently on the yard a small group of individuals and I were discussing the benefits of education and giving back to the community. It is through the S.Q. News that inmates are looking at life in a new positive direction with enthusiasm you can see. Indeed some see their purpose.

It is my wish that the people involved in these programs realize that they are privileged to be a part of something that is unique in the California prison system. That they should take full advantage and apply them-selves accordingly. Hopefully I will be endorsed to SQ main line as well. It would be a very fortunate opportunity.

Michael Anderson.

Rocky Cote are on the executive body of project R.E.A.C.H. Rocky is a graduate of project R.E.A.C.H. and is currently enrolled in the Patten University program.

Jones said, "It takes a lot of courage for a man who cannot read or write to come to project R.E.A.C.H." Frye added, "We create a safe environment for a man to expose his weaknesses and be receptive to learning basic academic skills." Rocky reflected, "Once a prisoner is signed up with project R.E.A.C.H., we are able to assist him in many ways."

Project R.E.A.C.H. holds an annual fund raiser, and donates the majority of the contributions to other literacy programs in the community.

The model of Project R.E.A.C.H. has been recognized by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and is being implemented in the state's 32 other penal institutions.

Sponsors Carolyn Hardee, Jane Curtis and Debra Sheldon assist prisoners who attend the Wednesday evening academic sessions.

Marin Literacy Program provides Marin County adults with free student-centered instruction in reading, writing and speaking to help them reach their full potential at work, at home and in the community. Begun in 1985 with a \$31,000 grant from the California State Library, the program is sponsored by the Marin County Free Library, San Rafael Public Library and Marin Literacy. Marin Literacy has served over 8,400 adult students and trained nearly 5,000 tutors since its inception, and currently has an annual operating budget of over \$550,000. Services are provided to Marin County adults, families and prisoners.

Project R.E.A.C.H. tutors receive seven hours of instruction on methods of teaching prisoners the fundamentals of academic proficiency and life skills.

Roy Jones, Robert Frye and

1. Hartford, Conn. — Republican Gov. Jodi Rell vetoed legislation that would have eliminated the death penalty in the state of Connecticut. The state Democratic-controlled assembly does not have the required two-thirds majority vote which would enable them to override the governor's veto. Currently there are 10 prisoners on Connecticut's death row awaiting execution.

2. Rancho Murrieta, Calif. — California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Undersecretary Scott Michael Kernan was arrested for suspicion of drunk driving. The state-owned vehicle Kernan was driving the time of his arrest is a benefit that goes with his \$157,000-a-year salary. His arraignment was scheduled for July 16 in Sacramento County.

3. Chicago, Ill. — A Chicago police officer, William Cozzi, whose attack on a hand-cuffed man in a wheel chair was caught on video, has been sentenced to more than three years in federal prison. The victim of officer Cozzi's beating was the victim of an earlier stabbing and was brought to the hospital where Cozzi was sent to investigate.

4. Philadelphia, Penn. — To settle a class-action lawsuit the city of Philadelphia has agreed to pay \$5.9 million in damages to people who were strip searched by prison guards after being arrested for misdemeanors and traffic violations. The courts have ruled that such searches for people who are incarcerated for minor crimes are degrading and unconstitutional.

5. Richmond, VA — Death row inmate Daryl Atkins whose case set precedent for a national ban on executing mentally retarded offenders, will spend the rest of his life in prison after a 5-2 decision the Supreme Court upheld a York County Court's decision to commute his sentence to life without the possibility of parole.

6. Lansing, Mich. — In a move to save the state more than \$118 million, Michigan officials announced that they will close three prisons this year as well as five minimum security prison camps. One thousand correctional employees will be affected by the closures.

7. Petros, Tenn. — The prison which held Dr. Martin Luther



King's assassin James Earl Ray and Tennessee's most violent criminals is closing after 113 years. The Brushy Mountain Correctional complex became too expensive for the state to upgrade and maintain, which prompted the closure. The prison employed more people in Morgan County (40 miles northwest of Knoxville) than any other industry.

8. Phoenix, Ariz. — Prostitute Marcia Powell, serving a two year sentence at Perryville State Prison, was placed in one of the facilities outdoor holding pens for almost four hours. Powell collapsed and died in the 108-degree heat, prompting a criminal investigation and a ban on the use of the outdoor detention cells.

9. Carson City, Nev. — A smoking ban that was scheduled to take effect July 1 in the Nevada state prison system is expected to increase tensions among prison guards and inmates who smoke, according to a prison union spokesman. The ban is similar to tobacco product bans in other states, which are said to reduce medical costs attributed to smoking-related illnesses.

10. New York, NY. — Bernard Madoff, perpetrator of a \$170 billion ponzi scheme, was sentenced to 150 years in prison. Madoff was sent to a medium security prison where he will more than likely die before completing his sentence.

11. Philadelphia, Penn. — Attorney H. Beatty Chadwick was released from prison after serving 14 years on a civil contempt charge stemming from his refusal to turn over millions of dollars to his ex-wife in a divorce settlement. Chadwick

served the longest sentence in U.S. history for civil contempt.

12. Santa Fe, New Mexico — Two men on death row face execution after the state officially abolished the death penalty last March. New Mexico's law abolishing the death penalty applies to murders committed after July 1, leaving Robert Fry and Timothy Allen eligible to receive capital punishment. Their criminal cases are currently in the lengthy appeals process, which means they may be executed more than ten years after the state passed the abolition law.

13. Columbia, SC. — Prison officials representing more than 24 states have signed a petition asking permission from the FCC to jam cell phone signals inside of the nation's state penitentiaries to stop inmates from using smuggled cell phones to make unauthorized calls.

14. Georgia — State officials, faced with tight budgets, have cut prisoner meals from three a day down to two in an effort to save money. Two meals will be served to state prisoners three days a week: Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The ACLU is investigating if the state's meal cuts are unconstitutional.

15. Rockville, Ind. — JPay developed a system which uses ATM-like kiosks giving inmates the ability to video conference friends and family members. The system allows 1200 inmates at the Rockville Correctional Facility to conference with previously approved people from their home or office for a fee of \$12.50 for 30 minutes. JPay covered the cost of the kiosks and their installation and visitors must have a web camera and an internet connection.

of 16-year-old Adele Jean Corradini. Mattson confessed to both murders to Los Angeles County investigators. Mattson kidnapped Gutierrez as she sat on a curb outside of the Santa Fe Springs High School Community Swimming Pool. He drove Gutierrez to Legg Lake, a portion of the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area, where he raped and strangled the victim. The next day, Gutierrez's nude body was discovered in the area. Two months later Mattson kidnapped Corradini, who was hitchhiking in the Laguna Beach Area. Mattson drove to a secluded area in Duarte, where he forcibly raped the victim on three different occasions and

subsequently strangled her with his hands. Mattson thought he had killed the victim but when she recovered, he strangled the victim with his belt to ensure that she was dead. Mattson led investigators to the victim's partially buried body at the north end of Vinedale Street in the Duarte Area. Mattson was sentenced to death in Los Angeles County on April 10, 1980. Since 1978 when California reinstated capital punishment, 45 condemned inmates have died from natural causes, 17 committed suicide, 13 were executed in California, one was executed in Missouri and five died from other causes.

Back in the Day

Selected Stories From Back Issues Of The San Quentin News

April 25, 1980 - "The Phantom Diner" - S.Q. News' esteemed "Restaurant Critic" reported that after sampling 26 meals over nine days in the chow hall, eight were poor quality, 12 adequate and six were good. Notably, gravy was cold and lumpy, while most baked goods were excellent.

June 13, 1980 - The First District Appellate Court ruled that the suspension of prison visiting for inmate wives who refused to submit to a full strip search was not necessary for the reasonable security of the institution and violated prisoner's right to have visitors.

August 29, 1980 - Five shots were fired to stop an assault on an East Block correctional officer, according to Mike Madison, prison informational officer.

November 21, 1980 - The legendary "Godfather of Soul," James Brown, performed a special holiday show in the North dining hall for approximately 1,000 inmates.

June 5, 1981 - A fire set to a blanket hanging on a cell door, in protest a of a lock down, got out of control in the Badger section of S.Q. claiming the lives of two prisoners, who were trapped because the heat intensity of the flames caused their cell door to jam.

February 13, 1981 - Richard Chase, dubbed the "Vampire Killer" because he reportedly drank the blood of his victims, was found dead in his death row cell of an apparent suicide by drug overdose.

May 15, 1981 - S.Q. holds annual Family Day. Forty two visitors came from all over California to enjoy a breakfast of bacon-and-eggs, fried potatoes, orange juice and coffee in the North dining hall.

July 10, 1981 - The lower yard received a layer of asphalt to stop contraband from being hidden in the dirt areas.

San Quentin News

Current and past copies of the San Quentin News are posted online at:

http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Visitors/San_Quentin_News/SQ_newsletter.html

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The San Quentin News welcomes and encourages inmates, free staff, custody staff, volunteers and people and entities outside of the institution to submit articles for this publication.

Please use the following criteria when submitting:

- Please limit your submitted articles to no more than 350 words.
- Articles may be edited for content and length.
- The newspaper is not a medium to file grievances, use the prison appeals process. However, we do encourage submitting stories and/or articles which are newsworthy and encompass issues that will have an impact on the prison populace.
- Please do not use offensive language in your submissions.
- Art work is welcomed (i.e. Poems, songs, cartoons, drawings).
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

Send Submissions to:
Education Dept. / SQ News
San Quentin, CA 94964
(No Street address required)

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Condemned Inmate Dies

By Lt. S. Robinson
Public Information Officer

Condemned inmate Michael Dee Mattson, 55, who was on California's death row for the kidnappings, rapes and murders of two Los Angeles County girls, ages 9 and 16, was pronounced dead of natural causes at an outside hospital facility July 17, 2009.

Mattson was received by San Quentin State Prison on April 14, 1980 for the July 14, 1978 murder of 9-year-old Cheryl Kristy Gutierrez, and the September 6, 1978 murder