

# San Quentin News

THE PULSE OF SAN-QUENTIN

VOL. 2008 NO. 2

AUGUST 27, 2008

SAN QUENTIN, CALIFORNIA 94964

POPULATION: 5,274

## Hope Realized Coming Through the Front Gate

By: David Marsh  
& Michael R. Harris

With a message of hope and inspiration for the graduates of the San Quentin Education Department's 2008 class, Willie Rahman Green returned to the institution from which he was released only 90 days ago. Only this time, as Green pointed out to an attentive audience of over 300 gathered in the Garden Chapel, his entrance to the prison had been made through the front gate as an invited guest, while his previous trip to San Quentin prison had begun thru R&R while wearing handcuffs.

"What I bring back is hope and a message to the men here at San Quentin," Green told the packed crowd. "You don't have to keep coming through R&R to come back to prison. You can come through the front gate!" Green received a special invitation to deliver the commencement speech to an audience which included graduates of the GED, vocational and college programs, their relatives, staff of the Education Department, and various prison officials including Warden Robert Ayers. If the three minute ovation he received was any indication, his message was well received by those in attendance.

After serving more than 25 years of a 33 years-to-life term for a murder

Green says he did not commit, Green walked out of S.Q. a free man after a Los Angeles county superior court judge threw out his conviction after ruling that a key prosecution witness had lied during the trial. Prosecutors declined to retry the case. Green says that he is slowly adjusting to the pace of life on the outside, and is not bitter against anyone, including the witness who lied during his trial.

The audience listened attentively to a man who only recently was himself a 14 year-long resident of North Block. During his time behind the walls at San Quentin prison, Green became heavily involved in many of the programs run by the Education Dept. as both student and tutor, giving and receiving.

Many in the audience know him personally through one of his many roles as friend, fellow student, tutor, associate or mentor. Green has himself graduated with an Associate of Arts



Willie Rahman Green and Julio Medina after the graduation

degree from Patten University through the Prison University Project at San Quentin. And by doing so, he became one of the 74 men who have received liberal arts degrees through the program.

In addition to his involvement as a student, his determination to help others achieve their own goals and to realize their dreams led him to become a tutor for Project R.E.A.C.H., an acronym for Reach for Education, Achievement and Change with Help. R.E.A.C.H. trains inmate volunteers as tutors. Green used his math skills to help many fellow inmates to develop academically, including one of the three valedictorians of this year's graduating classes.

Green was one of the founding members of the San Quentin T.R.U.S.T. (Teaching Responsibility Utilizing Sociologi-

of personnel for the organization.

"I learned never give up, never give up hope, and never allow anyone to define you," Green told his listeners, who can, perhaps, define who Green is most aptly by looking at the man he has become, during, and despite, his long period of incarceration.

Julio Medina, himself an ex-convict who served 12 years in New York's Sing Sing prison, also spoke to the graduates, and emphasized the education he received during his incarceration as the foundation for what his life has become today. Medina, the Executive Director/Founder and CEO of **Exodus Transitional Community, Inc.**, or E.T.C., earned a Master's Degree from the New York Theological Seminary, and is presently enrolled as a candidate of that school's Doctoral program.

Medina's organization is a faith based re-entry program that has helped over 3,000 ex-convicts, both male and female, transition back into the community. E.T.C. provides counseling, employment preparation, job, housing, health and education referrals, court and parole assistance and computer training. Medina founded E.T.C. in 1999.

"Education," said Medina "is the most significant thing that is going to help us when we get back to the communities." His message, much like Green's, resonated with hope to those wearing blue in the audience. "I started from behind prison walls, I think that's what's important," he added.

Medina credited education as the most critical component in state's rehabilitation efforts and attempts to make substantial cuts in inmate recidivism rates. Education, he emphasized, empowers inmates to make changes in their own lives, and only with that power can the cycle be broken.

"Let's stop allowing other people to solve our problems," Medina told the audience. "We solve our own problems!"

**"Education," said Medina "is the most significant thing that is going to help us when we get back to the communities."**

cal Training). The T.R.U.S.T. is a group of ethnically diverse men whose goal is to educate and empower inmates to assist them for a successful transition to a non-incarcerated life. The group also works with various citizen groups and elected officials in the communities of Richmond and Oakland in an effort to reduce crime, violence and recidivism, and to prepare inmates from these communities for reintegration back into the community. Green served the group for over five years, including the past two as chairman.

For Green, life outside the prison walls does not mean an end to involvement with the causes that came to play such a prominent role in his life. He remains in close contact with David Cowan, the man whom he mentored and prepared to succeed him as the chairman of T.R.U.S.T.. Green's plans are to remain active networking with the various community groups, and in the recruitment

## MARCHING FORWARD

By Kenneth R. Brydon

On June 19, 2008, the entire education department was closed to in order to allow the staff to attend a graduation ceremony in the Garden Chapel. Those who had spent their time and efforts in improving their own lives, were recognized by the San Quentin administration for their hard work accomplished in attaining diplomas in the areas of GED, vocations, Associate of Arts and Bachelor of Art.

All who came to the podium were loudly applauded for their accomplishments. Depending upon their individual accomplishments, they were handed their diplomas by those who had seen them through. Many families were in attendance. Loud shouts erupted from the various areas where particular members were seated, but everyone was applauded loudly.

Steve Welch completed his graduation from Machine Shop, actually requesting that his parole (on graduation day) come in the evening so that he could attend the ceremony. Eleven individuals were handed their Vocation certificates by Vice Principle of Vocations, William Reeves.

Marvin Mitchell was the valedictorian of the 34 inmates in attendance who received their General Education Diploma ("GED"). Mitchell received the highest scores of those who had been tested this past year. Certificates were handed out by Chris Wittick and Phil Leonida.

Michael Carter was valedictorian for the 2008 graduating

class for the six recipients of the Patten University Associate of Arts degree. The college here at San Quentin is operated without any taxpayer support. A long list of volunteers from all walks of life make up the faculty of the "Prison University Project" ("PUP"). Jody Lewen and Jennifer Scaife are the PUP coordinators.

Of particular note in this years graduation is Vince Russo. Russo completed requirements for his bachelor's degree through Ohio University. After finishing his AA



Vince Russo, Michael Carter & Marvin Mitchell

degree, Russo then began his studies to complete the more advanced degree in January 2005.

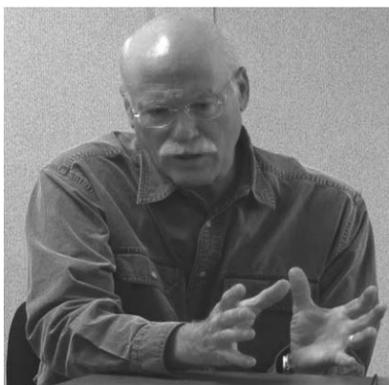
Cookies and refreshments followed the ceremony, and the proud families were able to have photos taken together. Many who spoke to the audience told of their journey, and how it gave them motivation to keep moving forward, and for setting higher goals for their lives. To each and every one, much kudos are deserved; further recognition of the completion of even higher educational goals is expected of those who remain here.

## TOBIAS WOLFF SPEAKS TO US

*'We choose how to behave; no other animal does that.'*

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

If you were standing in line for tryouts for American Idol, and they pulled you aside and sat you down with Bruce Springsteen to talk, that would be about how it felt to have a conversation with Tobias Wolff. For his many accomplishments in writing, he is considered a Literary Icon. In addition, he is a Vietnam Veteran, an



Army Green Beret, a B.A. Graduate from Oxford (with honors), a reporter for the Washington Post, and currently directs the English and Creative Writing department at Stanford University.

Wolff was the featured guest for Judy Breen's "Video Literacy Project." Professor Breen is doing a series of video interviews being aired on San Quentin

Television to promote literary reading. "Literary Work" is writing that is believed to have a depth of meaning that speaks to generations. Ms. Breen made the necessary connections for him to be among us.

See: Tobias Wolff Page #5

# SAN QUENTIN PRISON MEDICAL

By the Medical  
Department Staff

## NEW FACES IN MEDICAL

Dr. Tootell, the previous CDCR Central Regional Medical Director and consultant with UCSF, has joined San Quentin Prison as the new Chief Medical Officer ("CMO"). She is well-versed in correctional medicine and is glad to become part of the new San Quentin Prison Medical Team.

Dr. Pratt has also joined San Quentin Prison as the Chief Physician and Surgeon. She also worked as a consultant for UCSF, and was the Medical Director of public health clinics in San Francisco. She has extensive experience with correctional medicine, addition medicine, and primary care physicians.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Medical Receiver in charge of medical upgrades has a web site at: [www.cprinc.org](http://www.cprinc.org).

## PHARMACY OPERATIONS UPGRADE

As one of the many steps being taken by the Office of the Receiver, San Quentin Prison is in the process of upgrading the Pharmacy operations with the installation of a new computer software program. SQ is the seventh institution within CDCR to receive this program. This software came on-line here on June 23, 2008. The installation of the new software program will not change what



New San Quentin Hospital construction built to accommodate original 1885 facade

on time.

If you do not report as instructed on the ducat, then you are subject to discipline as stated in Title 15 § 3014, "Call and Passes." However, it is not our desire in health care to write you up, but to provide necessary or requested health care services. When you don't show up as ducated, you put your own health at risk and may need more extensive care or treatment later on, which could have been avoided if you had reported to the health care as scheduled. Additionally, if you don't report as scheduled, you just took away an appointment from another inmate-patient who could have been scheduled and seen by health care staff.

You need to report even if you don't want the assistance or care. Health care staff want (and need) to make sure you understand the decision you are

making by not being seen or treated. Health care staff will educate you on what could happen if you are not seen or treated. It is your decision, but the job as health care professionals is to ensure that you are informed of what could happen. If you don't want treatment it will not be forced upon you and health care staff will ask you to sign a CDCR Form 7225, "Refusal of Treatment" form.

## REQUESTS FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES

All health care services, including Medical, Mental Health, and Dental, that you need are requested by submitting a CDCR Form 7262, "Health Care Services Request." Copies of this form are available to you in the housing units as well as all clinic areas. When you wish to see a health care staff member, you need to complete the form and place it in the designated sick call box within your housing unit.

Health care staff (usually a nurse) picks up the requests on a daily basis and reviews each one. The nurse makes a decision, based upon what you write on the form, if you need to be seen that day (urgent care needed), the following day, or forwards the request to Dental, Mental Health, or other health care service areas for action.

Once you submit a form, it is reviewed and processed as quickly as possible. If the reason you requested to see a doctor is urgent based on the nurses review of your request, you may be requested to report to the clinics or custody staff will escort you to the clinic area. If your request is not urgent, you will be scheduled to be seen by health care staff. How soon you are seen is based on the nature of your health care problem. Some issues can reasonably wait several days while others need to be seen sooner.

Please do not submit duplicate requests for the same reason, as this only slows down the review and scheduling of necessary appointments and puts everyone behind in ensuring that all patients are seen as soon as possible.

## SAN QUENTIN PRISON'S MEDICAL FACE-LIFT

There is construction aplenty at SQ these days, as the Receiver moves forward with plans to improve medical delivery and support space.

All systems are go to proceed with the creating of the five-story "Central Health Services Center," providing 50 beds, mental health, and dental services, clinics, R&R, administration, lab, X-ray, medical records, and pharmacy for the entire institution. That \$146 million project will become a reality in the year 2010.

Soon, a modular unit for clinical and administrative space will open on the upper yard. Another project - to build out the West and East Block rotundas for clinics - is on its way. We are also working on the design for a new personnel building and a medical warehouse.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

A complete copy of the "Statewide Inmate Medical Services Program Policies and Procedures, Volume 4, Chapter 4, Access to Primary Care," can be found in the Law Library, if you want additional details regarding this process.

# ROUTINE CHECKUPS & SCREENING FOR INMATES

By: Dr. Alvarez

Routine checkups can find health problems early. For many health problems, early treatment can help prevent more serious problems. A "screen" is a test used to look for a disease that has not already been found or diagnosed. Screens are recommended based on your age, health history and family health history. The advice listed below is based on guidelines designed by the American Academy of Family Physicians and the U.S. Preventive Health Task Force. They are guidelines for how often you should see your health care provider for routine exams and tests. These schedules should be used for "well care." If you have any ongoing health problems, you will need checkups more often.

A dental exam should be done every 6 months to 1 year in all men.

Blood pressure and weight should be checked every 2-3 years in healthy men age 18-39, and every year for men age 40 and over.

Cholesterol should be checked every 5 years starting at age 35, or earlier in men with risk factors for heart disease.

Blood sugar should be checked every 3 years to look for diabetes.

Men over 40 may need to have exams of the skin to look for skin cancer, they should ask their doctor if this is necessary.

Men over 50 should have their stool tested for blood every year and/or a colonoscopy (using a camera to look into the colon) every 10 years. Both of these tests are used to search for colon cancer.

There is a lot of debate about the need for prostate cancer screening with a "PSA" blood test. Men over 50 should ask

their doctor if they need this test.

Men over 50 should have a check for hearing and an eye exam every 1 to 3 years.

All men should be screened for HIV even if they don't have any risk factors, according to the Center for Disease Control.

People with diabetes and high blood pressure are recommended to have additional screening tests, because they are at higher risk to get certain diseases, such as, heart attacks, blindness and kidney disease. In Diabetics, a Hemoglobin A1C (blood test) is needed every 6 months and a foot exam should be done at each doctor visit. In both diabetics and people with high blood pressure a screen for protein in the urine is needed. This test looks for early kidney damage. A cholesterol test and an eye exam should be done once per year in people with diabetes or high blood pressure.

What immunizations do I need to get?

As an adult, you should have the shots listed below:

- \* flu shot every year, especially if you are over 50 years old

- \* tetanus (Td) booster shot every 10 years

- \* varicella (chickenpox) shot twice in your lifetime. You need this shot if you have never had a varicella (chickenpox) shot and you do not know if you ever had chickenpox disease.

- \* pneumonia shot at age 65 or sooner if you have a chronic disease like diabetes.

If you have questions or health concerns, feel free to fill out a 7362, request for health care services, to discuss these matters with your primary care provider.

**The health care staff is looking forward to this improvement and is excited about getting into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

medications you are prescribed by your Primary Care Provider. It will not change where you pick up your medications or how the medications are administered. What the software will do is improve the health care services to the entire population. The medical staff will be able to better track all of your medication needs as well as to respond quicker to any problems related to medication administration. The health care staff is looking forward to this improvement and is excited about getting into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## HEALTH CARE DUCATS

Inmate movement throughout the institution is scheduled via the inmate ducat system, including health care appointments. Our health care staff submits their list of inmate-patients they want to see each day to the Inmate Assignment Office. Inmate Assignments generates the ducats issued to each inmate-patient.

Once you receive the health care ducat, it is your responsibility to report to the health care appointment at the designated time. All health care ducats are priority ducats and allow you to leave your assignment or not report to your assignment in order to report to your health care appointment

## CONDOMS ON THE LINE?

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

On Sept. 01, 2008, Solano State Prison will be a part of a year-long pilot project dispensing condoms to prisoners.

In one of those examples of when the right hand isn't agreeing with the left, prisoners will be permitted to have in your possession a "sealed" condom, but, should the seal be broken, the prisoner will be subject to a write-up. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed a bill which would have required California prisons to allow non-profit and public health agencies to distribute "sexual barrier protection devices."

Much opposition comes from many in the prison administration who see it as an easy step to authorizing same-sex prisoners to engage in sexual activities. Yet, infection rates of HIV and STD's in state and federal prisons are five times greater than in the free population. The non-profit "Center for Health Justice" has been asked to facilitate the program. Condom machines will be placed in "discrete" locations at the prison.

## HEALTH FACTS

From: Minnesota Correctional Facility  
Oak Park Heights

Each year the number of emergency rooms shrinks. This is true in spite of a rising need for more emergency care. Patients are waiting an alarming 36 percent longer than they did in 1997.

The makers of Vytarin, a cholesterol drug, have completed a two year study on the drug's effectiveness. It was concluded that the drug failed to benefit patients at all. It is being investigated by authorities to determine if the long delay in announcing the findings was financially motivated. An estimated five million patients have been taking the drug.

## THE SQ PROBLEM OF INTEGRATION

Kenneth R. Brydon

On August 14, 2008, the following administrative staff were present at the Town Hall meeting in the Protestant chapel: Warden Robert Ayers Jr., Chief Deputy Warden Max Lemon, Associate Warden John Curzon, Community Resource Manager Laura Bowman, Captain Cahayla, Captain Dorsey, Lieutenant Luna, and Sergeant Lowe (aka, "Smokey"). The question being addressed was "how" integration is going to happen at San Quentin. 30 questions were submitted to the administration in advance that were given to the MAC by prisoners in the general population. The questions and the administration's answers were handed out to the audience. MAC Chairman, Sammy Johnson, read the questions and Chief Dep. Warden Lemon was designated to read off the answers and further explain them for the purposes of clarity and for subsequent airing on SQTV.

The following is a summary of the answers to these questions:

- Progressive disciplinary action will be taken on those who refuse to comply.
- Case factors and prior prison conduct will be used, when and where verified.
- If you have a cellmate when this is implemented, you'll keep him.
- There will be no accommodations for religious beliefs, or sexual orientation.
- A bed can be lost, even if returned to the prison the same day from the hospital.
- A bed can be lost if out to court for less than a day.
- This is not intended to ignite a racial incident.
- MAC will continue to have representatives from each race.
- Lock downs will be accommodated.

Those with ADA issues will continue to be accommodated.

During the Town Hall meeting, there was an opportunity given for individuals from the population to step up to an open-mic to ask more questions. Robert Beckett asked the question that was given the most applause by the audience of over 300: "Why wasn't this begun at

the Level IV Prisons where the real problems are going to be?" Warden Ayers chose to respond to the question, saying that he agreed in substance that it is a problem. And he felt that it would have been better to begin there, rather than at a Level II prison. He spoke about those prisoners on an "Honor Yard" in Lancaster Prison, who, if they were removed from the program due to disciplinary action, were subject to retaliation for the positive choices

and that he ought to have the choice to decide whom he would cell-up with.

Of very clear concern to the many Lifers interviewed, was the issue of trust. A White Lifer explained, "I've got no problem with living with another race, but if I came home to find some knuckle-head sitting on my bed, drinking my coffee, eating my food, and reading a letter from my wife (while looking at her photo), it's going to be a problem..." Another Lifer stated that he felt that there should be some chance for guys, who at least have a lot of clean time (time without any disciplinary problems), to be able to get some sort of a "convenience move" if they have a person they simply aren't compatible with.

They are all concerned that, should they be confronted with a person from another race who lacks in respect for them, and a fight comes from it, they'll find themselves confronted with others of the same race coming to their aid. "They want to just look at the race," said a Black man, "and that we should get along as they do in the rest of society, but, in that society, they wouldn't live with a person who has nothing in common with them."

The resulting problem of being confronted with a person whom we refuse to share space with, then results in disciplinary action being taken. Lifers, with decades of "clean time," are suddenly placed in the position of having to face a Parole Board that now views them as being "anti-social." Meanwhile, they may well already be on a baseball team, in a group, and working with that same race year after year.

Many of North Block Lifers see that, having shown themselves to be highly responsible, they will now be forced to live shoulder to shoulder with a person who's failed to take responsibility for his own life. From everything in the news, integration is coming, and from it, some difficult questions have yet to be considered. Balancing the inevitable change of life, with the need for a degree of certainty in the way things will operate, isn't yet clear.

*From everything in the news, integration is coming, and from it, some difficult questions have yet to be considered.*

they had made.

What mostly came from the number of people who spoke was that this process didn't make any sense to them, and that there seemed to be more being put into the policy than what the settlement indicated. Chief Dep. Warden Lemon stated that the terms of the settlement were being followed. Warden Ayers interjected that if these terms were not acceptable, then individuals ought to appeal the decision.

An interview of prisoners on the Lower Yard from differing races resulted in some interesting commentary on the issues. Most of the problems didn't focus on the race of the individual, but more on the issues of values and respect.

A Lifer, who lives near the Lieutenant/Sergeant's office stated: "They've already got enough people coming up to complain about the cellie they got." He went on to say that the amount of problems, "With your own race," that are already a part of trying to live in a cell the size of a closet, would be 10-times worse if they added in another race. It was not the color of the skin which concerned most, but the values that the person held.

A Black Lifer, having served over 30 years, said, "If the guy comes in my cell, of any race, bringing with him stupidity (drug & alcohol use, weapons, gang-activity), he's coming right back out!" This was the sentiment of a Hispanic Lifer, who, with over 20 years served, said that he understood that the integration was not supposed to be "forced,"

## TOWN HALL COMMENTARY

By: Pastor Morris Curry  
Protestant Chapel Chaplain

On Thursday August 14, 2008, the San Quentin Garden Chapel was used to hold a Town Hall meeting with the administration. I was in attendance of this, and I came away wondering why a few people were enslaving the majority? What I mean by that, is that I saw, as a child of the 60s, a few people ruling the majority. This was pretty much the same situation in South Africa. This idea that segregation is a good thing is a Satanic and evil ideology of separation.

These people have found a way to rule others and make them do things that they ordinarily wouldn't do in public. Why didn't someone step up and tell us that we're not going to allow these individuals to tell us what we're to do?

Don't you want to leave prison? Are you saying that you don't care that your families are waiting for you? I cannot count the number of men who came in to me in private, and told me they want to get out of the gangs. They know the life style they're living is wrong, but they don't believe they can back away from it. From what I see, this is the time and place for them to do it. There are only a few people benefiting from this arrangement, and the rest are suffering by it.

## Executions Resume

Reprinted by permission from:  
Coalition For Prisoner's Rights

On April 16, 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that lethal injection as practiced in Kentucky is not "cruel and unusual punishment" under the U.S. Constitution. The case is *Baze v. Rees*, no. 07-5439. Yet, this year, when the second place horse in the Kentucky Derby broke both front ankles and was euthanized, Supreme Court Justice Stevens remarked to a large group of lawyers that the horse probably died more humanely than do death row prisoners in Kentucky.

Just weeks later a federal judge in Delaware stayed executions there so she could consider the constitutionality of Delaware's lethal injection procedures. By May 23, 2008, there had been two executions, one each in Georgia and Mississippi. Another May execution was scheduled in Virginia. Seven executions were scheduled for June and another six for July. Half of those to be executed are in Texas.

Coalition for Prisoner's Rights, PO Box 1911, Santa Fe, NM 87504

## "DIRTY BIRD!"

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

What do you get when you mix a drunk with a knife trying to teach a parrot to speak obscenities? You get a guy doing jail time and a parrot who slurs the "sh" pronunciations!

On Tuesday, July 22, Aaron McCoy was at the Salvation Army Thrift Shop trying to teach a bird how to speak all those "foul" words. Seeing that Mr. McCoy had a nine inch knife tucked into his waist band, the store employees called the police. The bird corrupter was arrested without incident; no word on whether the parrot's beak needed to be washed out with soap.

## "CAN I SEE SOME IDENTIFICATION, PLEASE?"

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

Once paroled from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, rebuilding a new life becomes a never ending request to show valid identification. Going to the DMV to try and get identification, immediately makes you suspect of being a terrorist who is attempting to "hide out" until called upon to blow up something. Assembly Bill 2099 may change all of that, providing everyone who is walking out the door with a valid ID.

Frank Russell, director of education, vocations and offender programs in CDCR, acknowledges that there is a serious gap in the parole process here. He stated that the most critical time of release, is in the first hours and days following release. Getting a job, applying for assistance, and the hundred other daily events people deal with, all begin with an ID.

Assemblywoman Loni Hancock argues that identification is the "sensible" thing to do and removes obstacles in the way of parolees. A test program has been proposed for Folsom State Prison, at a cost of \$55,000. Ms. Hancock points out that if it helps two inmates to stay out, then the state will have saved \$71,000.

Fair play is primarily not blaming others for anything that is wrong with us. - Eric Hoffer

Vitality shows not only in the ability to persist, but also in the ability to start over. - F. Scott Fitzgerald

The ultimate result of shielding men from the effects of folly is to fill the world with fools. - Herbert Spencer

### PRISONER RESOURCES

(Publishes stories, poetry)  
CALIFORNIA PRISON  
FOCUS  
2940 16<sup>th</sup> St. #B-5  
San Francisco, CA 94103

(Writing Contest, Handbook)  
PEN AMERICAN CENTER  
Prison Writing Program  
588 Broadway  
New York, NY 10012

(Free Koran & Islamic Books)  
ALAVI FOUNDATION  
500 5<sup>TH</sup> AVE - STE 2310  
New York, NY 10110

(Bible & Bible Studies)  
"Pastor Melissa Scott" Ministry  
P.O. Box #1  
Los Angeles, CA 90053

(Christian Books)  
HARVEST TIME BOOKS  
PO Box 300  
Altamont, TN 37301

(Spirituality - Bo Lozoff)  
HUMAN KINDNESS  
FOUNDATION  
PO Box 61619  
Durham, NC 27705

(Jewish Materials)  
JEWISH SERVICES  
PO Box 85840  
Seattle, WA 98145-1840

(Meditation Courses)  
PRISON PROJECT SYDA  
PO Box 99140  
Emeryville, CA 94662

SEND IN YOUR  
SUGGESTIONS!

(Buddhist Meditation)  
UPAYA OUTREACH  
1404 Cerro Gordo Rd.  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

(Prevention & Treatments)  
HIV/HEP C IN PRISON COM-  
MITTEE  
California Prison Focus  
2940 16<sup>th</sup> St #307  
San Francisco, CA 94103

(Comprehensive Legal Issues)  
PRISON LEGAL NEWS  
2400 NW 80<sup>TH</sup> St. PMB #148  
Seattle, WA 98117  
\$18/yr or \$9/half-yr.

(Free Pen Pal listing)  
Prison World Magazine  
P.O. Box 380  
Powder Springs, GA 30127

# Reconnecting

By: Troy Williams



Troy Williams, Kenny Stallings, Buckshot Maples, Chris Shurn, Marv Andrews

Twenty-five years ago my mind did not fully grasp a connection to all of humanity. I could neither recognize potential nor power in the image that I viewed in the mirror. This hurt, angry and misguided child, traumatized by a host of environmental failures, was a lost-boy in America.

Fifteen years ago my mind did not fully comprehend a purpose in life. I lacked the knowledge, wherewithal and support needed to transcend the conditioned responses shaped within me from adolescence. Still hurt and angry, this confused young man stood at a crossroad with a vision for change but ultimately chose a self-

**Today, it is with great honor, humility and acknowledgement of purpose that I introduce myself as a writer and filmmaker.**

destructive path as a means to get there.

Less than one year ago I was completely disconnected from the means and resources required to fulfill the vision expressed in this article. Today, it is with great honor, humility and acknowledgement of purpose that I introduce myself as a writer and filmmaker.

I've written several short stories and movies scripts. Thanks to the collective imagination of visionaries, I've been given a second chance to mend some of the wounds caused by an unwise crossroad decision.

I often use script development as a way of expressing the creative voice of my imagination. Many writers use different methods to develop a story. I would like to take you on a journey through one of the processes I've used to draft a script for a docudrama.

Before we begin, let me walk you through a few preliminaries. A docudrama is a documentary type film that utilizes re-enactments of real life events. I've got a feel for an interesting story, its contradictions, its characters and their conflicts. I've thought about structure, meaning, and how everything changes over time. I'm ready to take a few notes.

This story is based, in large part, on individual life experiences. In essence, what I present here is a point of view that expresses a vision for transcendence.

The main ideas are framed in the form of questions the film will attempt to answer. Can the School of Hard Knocks produce fruit? How can the imagination be used to reconnect fallen fruit to the tree of humanity?

The binding thread that will run through this film is the concept of imagination. Lesson Six of Napoleon Hill's book entitled "The Law of Success" begins as follows: "IMAGINATION is the workshop of the human mind wherein old ideas and established facts may be reassembled into new combinations and put to new uses." This film will explore how old ideas and established facts have been reassembled, through the workshop of human minds, into new combinations and are now being put to new uses.

After the main ideas have been decided, they must be arranged into sequences. A

sequence is "a series of shots joined by some common elements."

\*Central Idea: We see innocent children playing in a park, adolescents standing on an urban city street corner, news reports of crime levels, robbery up, murder rate up, education spending down, high school drop outs increased. The central idea that the writer wants to make is that our innocent children are being failed. Children are being left behind.

\*Setting: We see a corporate board room, a prison yard, college classrooms barbed wire, camera equipment, school corridor, and video editing suite. Here the attempt is to link prison with the elements of a college that prepares individuals for the corporate world.

\*Action: An inmate leaves a prison cell, checks in with the guard at a desk, walks into a video production class, greets his friends.

\*Mood: Transformation has begun. Camera crews are filming. Inmates dialogue with at-risk youth via cinematic expressions about the consequences of negative behavior. Film screenings and focus groups are conducted. A teenager stands at a fork in a road. Here, the binding element is not just films but also the transcendence and posi-

tive attitude of the people and the setting.

Re-enactments will also be used to unify the sequences and emphasize perspectives.

The chronological progression of this film will be used to show the development of character over time, trials, and tribulation, how the face of prison culture has changed at San Quentin, and how the old ideas of behavior modification and cinematography have been reassembled into a new combination called Positive Image Modification.

Elements of a search motif are also included in the logical progression of this film. There is a deliberate exploration of discovery and inquiry into the effects of Positive Image Modification. The goal is to find solutions to the violence that plagues our communities.

The use of imagination is critical in visualization. The dictionary definition of imagination is, "the act or power of forming a mental image of something not present to the senses or never before wholly perceived in reality. Visualization is the act or process of putting these mental images into visible form.

Here is where we consider the many possibilities of the visual interpretation of a point to be made in a sequence.

For example, the picture of KeKe standing in front of a row of obituaries accompanied by the following audio: "Wise Up. It Ain't Worth It."

This visual is an example of positive change in Mr. Markee Carter and it exemplifies the concept of Positive Image Modification. He is a man who has lived of the brink of self-destruction, sharing the wisdom of his experiences, in essence holding up a sign that reads, "Stop. Wrong way. Do not enter."

This film keeps in mind the cultural and emotional resonance of visualization.

1. Hip hop artist Lazarus (Marvin Mitchell) and Black Myth (Henry Montgomery) sit on a prison yard discussing life.

2. Two young men get into an argument over a CD player.



Prisoners acting out violence intervention on the prison yard.

Several other men join in on each side and everybody squares off to do battle.

3. Lazarus and Black Myth intervene with some con-



Markee (KeeKee) Carter Speaks about the consequences of violence.

scious hip hop lyrics before the men come to blows. "Take two steps to the left to elude death. It's roulette out in them streets so who's next. You choose best to leave the block and lose less than those dudes who bust shots and use meth."

4. Prison riot diverted. The men come together and settle their differences like thinking men.

The cultural and emotional resonance here takes us back to a time when hip hop was an endeavor of consciousness.

The opening of a film must hook the audiences' attention and quickly define what the film is going to be about.

This film will open with a re-dramatization sequence. A small child witnesses violence in the street as he walks home from school, his parents argue and fight in the home as he watches violence on television. The scene cuts to a takeover robbery. Several young men enter a place of business waving guns. "Everybody down. This is a robbery!" Sounds of police sirens echo in the background. These visuals are accompanied by personal testimony.

"November 14, 1994, I was arrested on a 28-count criminal complaint that stemmed from a botched takeover robbery. Facing life in prison, I made a commitment to change. And I did change. January 27, 1995, all charges were dismissed." The scene dissolves to a man talking to a classroom full of students. "If I could do it all over again, I would of done things differently. I would have made different choices. Now, it's time to give back. We can take our experiences and create cinematic expressions that others can learn from so they don't have to make the same mistakes we did."

The title that appears over the man connecting an external microphone to a camera is: Re-Connected.

In order for the rhythm pace of this endeavor to be maintained, it is critical for all members of society to come together collectively as a network. So, whether it's a yard full of convicts who, when the clock strikes 6:10 p.m. on June 18, stop what they are doing and raise their hands in support of Silence the Vio-

lence Day. Or documenting how, after a prison riot, OGs formed a Day of Peace Committee that works to prevent violence. Or the making of a TRUST documentary that reflects the struggle of the work needed to be done. We need and appreciate your continued support. After all the negative press that presents prisoners as monsters it is important that intellectuals give balance to those images youth will model.

Also in the works is a presidential town-hall meeting for the purpose of forming human to human connections in order to explore the fears and possibilities surrounding what



Prisoner participating in a moment of silence on the prison yard.

may very well be America's first African American president. Viewers will see the prison population as a microcosm of America. Through a prisoners perspective the nation will realize how far we have come and how far we need to go. We hope to relay a message of who we think would best serve our disenfranchised communities.

In reality, the climax of this program is only reached with change in our communities. But for the purposes of the film we will end showing youth developing their own cinematic expressions and dialogue that bear witness to positive Image Modification. After all, everybody has a story to tell.

Today, I'm RE-CONNECTED because today I have a sense of purpose. I have a sense of who I am. I have a clear sense of direction. Thanks to the collective effort of visionaries, I can say that I have produced several short movies.

The message to be learned and presented in this article is that film discovers how the workshop of the human minds have been key instruments for reconnecting fallen fruit to the tree of humanity.

# LIVING BETWEEN BREATHS

By STEPHEN LIEBB

For those of us sentenced to a life term, time is inexorable. Years pass and seem to bring us not closer to release while our bodies succumb to age. We are challenged to draw vitality and meaning from our circumstances.

A King of ancient Israel, Solomon, believed that everything has its perfect time and place. He wrote in Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He has made everything perfect in its time. Also he put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end."

Viktor Frankl, survived imprisonment in Nazi concentration camps and founded a

school of psychodynamics called, "Logotherapy," which states that "meaning" is the central idea of human existence. He concluded that, "it did not really matter what was expected from life, but rather what life expected from us. Our answer must consist, not in talk and meditation, but in right action and right conduct. Life ultimately means taking responsibility to find the right answers to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual."

We know that there is very little we can control or change in our environment. Our inability to change our situation challenges us to change ourselves.

Freedom is restricted by our conditions. But, we remain free to take a stand toward those conditions. Frankl wrote, "It is this spiritual freedom which cannot be taken away and that makes life meaningful and purposeful."

Eternity exists between a single inhalation and exhalation. The Scriptures talk about the power and sanctity of the breath. The verse in Genesis that speaks of the "Spirit of God sweeping over the water," (Genesis 1:2) uses the Hebrew word, "ruach," which is the same word used for life. Job said, "the Spirit (ruach) of God formed me, the breath (neshama) of Shaddai sustains me." Neshama, a word whose

root is used to describe breathing or a breath, is also used to denote a person's soul or life. Genesis 2:7, describing the creation of man, stated, God "blew into his nostrils the breath of life (neshama)."

Through the wise and masterful instruction of James Fox, a Yoga instructor at San Quentin, I have begun to learn about the power of the breath of life. In Yoga, the vital force called "prana" is cultivated and moved through a series of "asanas," physical movements combined with breathing exercises. This practice helps us to live one breath at a time. It is in quietness and stillness that time becomes an ally not a foe. It is in stillness that we begin to realize

the things that are important and those things that really do not matter. The truth that everything can change in a single instant becomes apparent.

Yoga and its emphasis on the power of a single breath promote a respect for life and a profound realization of the destructive force of violence. I have grown to understand that I extinguished the breath of another human being forever and denied him innumerable moments of peace, joy and being. We desire stability of spirit during these times of uncertainty and confusion. Learning to live between the breaths we take each moment is the path to that peace.

## A flame Within *Tony Richard (aka Zakee the Poet)*

**Brothers** Let these words be an in inspiration Because similar situation We all facin Procrastination and same sex relation Is consistently risen among every nation? Locked up in prison Why? From poor decision making, Fast/cars and women we chasin Children having the power of annihilation With Satan instigation Creating stagnation People give Satan a vacation Why are we racin To an illusion Of our final destination Respect god's creation Which is self? Where's the consideration Is there any left I think not But guess what Hell is a place that is extremely hot... Fill to the top With sinners who refuse to stop Graveyards overflowin souls in the wind blowin not knowin Where their really goin That's what I call a lost soul Notice me speakin in a religious aspect Hopin to reach

those who're not there yet, due to the retardation of their mind-set Blind to the fact (that) all water is wet And religion has a strong impact Because it helps to keep people mentality intact Or at least I expect that, now lets reflect back towards the beginning When I mention sinning Why do we always see a Satan Grinning? Because he have everybody thinking they winning When they really losin Constantly sinning With drug abusin Chemical pollution Got us saturated in confusion Institution gangs being breded Women being mistreated But act conceded once they realize how much they needed I'm Knee-high In a puddle of tears I've cried /+from family and friends I lost over the years That's been kilt or died/+ from pain that's been inflicted upon me while I was Young and innocent some it could have

been prevented and some couldn't Some of it should of happened and some of it shouldn't If I could go back and change the things I've done wrong I probably wouldn't Because over the years Bad experiences has ignited my vocal-cords streets is permanently red From all the blood its absorbed family scared to let they children play outside Because they feel it's not safe outside anymore They fear that a stray bullet Might claim they Childs life And before their Child get a chance to live They die (Damn that ain't right) The hope for are youth dreams for the future Is very very slim Because they grow up watching gangsta movies And the wanna be just like them They can't be like daddy Because daddy never around Daddy in jail Or most likely Six feet in the ground...

## I come from... *By CAMISHA FATIMAH (Facilitator of Keepin' It Real)*

I come from... a handful of fist fights, in between confrontational nights. I come from... violence, physical pain, anger, revenge and resentment. I come from... feeling misunderstood most of my life. I come from... a defensive nature you would NOT believe. I come from... killing babies inside of me. I come from... late night walks in my neighborhood by myself, testing my survival skills. I come from... filling the emptiness within myself with drugs, men, money, food and anything else. I come from... insecurities about me. Simply being me. Without focusing on the complexities of me. The multilayer's of me.

I ALSO come from... picketing coffee beans in Hawaii. I come from...traveling to distant lands through far off seas. I come from... working a construction job with a group of framers rebuilding Marin City. I come from...not eating grapes and strawberries during my childhood, cause of the constant picketing. I come from... the Jewish Community Center where I took tap, dance, jazz,

capiorera, gymnastics and swimming classes just to name a few I come from... two parents who were always in the public eye striving for the rights of human kind. I come from... being a baby.

And now I am a woman a culmination of all these things and more. I share these things with you because now I see. I am not just one thing. You are not just one thing. I am a culmination of a whole lot of things being. People influencing me. Helping me, get closer to the essential me. We are reflections of each other. If we were smart, we would learn from one another. In every exchange with others, seeing an opportunity for blessings. Growth, development and a chance to let go of all negativity, making room for positivity. Let's let the positivity overwhelm us. Just like we let people's response to us overwhelm us. Positivity can overwhelm us just like the anger, violence, pain, arrogance and ignorance overwhelmed us in the past. This is our pathway to get free. Free from ALL negativity. So

that when triggers appear and shatan gets near...

When the crossroads are here...we only have a second. No time for fear. When one second can change MANY future years. When we come to these crossroads we are equip and ready. To make clear, the real life of, no fear. Just sober decisions. Good decisions, not only for ourselves, but for all those who are near. *Good choices are easy. Greatness is here. Inside each and everyone of us.* And what are we doing if we are not tapping into that greatness. Every second, every minute, every hour of every day. Getting closer to our essential way. Put our hang ups on the shelf. Take a breathe, think and move. Do it movin'. Closer to who we really are, not limited to our current condition, not being our experiences. **But ALL are. Who we were and who we want to be.** And let's LIVE in that, B! Be that! "All you can be" like they say in the army. Because I am a reflection of you. And you are a reflection of me. **And together we can ALL get free.**

## Tobias Wolff at San Quentin

*Continued from page #1*

Four Lifers, Felix Lucero, J.B. Wells, Joseph Diggs, and myself were asked to sit down with Wolff on July 21, 2008 and address questions to him.

Those on The Row and North Block may have already had a chance to see the taped interview done with him. For a person who's able to fill a huge auditorium to hear him speak, Wolff showed himself to be very down to earth. For all you people thinking of writing your own memoir, "This Boy's Life" paved the way for what is now "The" way a memoir should be written. He turned the telling of one's life story from a boring dictation into an emotion-filled account that brings the reader in to relive the experience with him.

Wolff sat down with me after taping the interview, and gave me a chance to ask him some questions for SQ News. J.B. Wells also participated, and asked questions of his own. The most current of his many publications is "Our Story Begins," a collection of short stories. In the category of short literary fiction, Wolff has won many awards; and has frequently been published in the New Yorker magazine. His writing is a personal favorite of this writer.

Wolff was asked about what he might share with anyone who is setting out to become an accomplished writer. He spoke of the need for patience, and that (writers) tend to be better critics than writers of our own work. He told of working for six months on one short story, and that a month's effort in revision and editing is typical.

For those searching for authors to inspire them, he recommended Ernest Hemingway for his simplicity of style. Wolff also recommended Richard Price who wrote: "Lush Life, Clockers," and "Wanderers" He believes that the greatest American writer was F. Scott Fitzgerald. When asked to give a shout out to everyone, Wolff said that, "Even though you're living in a hard grim situation, take hope, and find goodness. Don't concentrate on the shadows."

On Aug 17, 2008, Wolff returned. Courtesy of Patten College University coordinator Jennifer Scaife, invited the writer back here to read. Choosing "Pharoses' Army," he presented a chapter that talked of his experience in Vietnam as a Lieutenant, and how fate seemed to pass him by that otherwise might have meant him dying in battle. The crowded Arts in Corrections room gave him a loud applause for some inspiring writing. At the end, he mentioned that he'll be donating to the San Quentin Library a selection of his work. We hope to see him back here again soon.

## SUDOKU

*Puzzle by: George Lowe*

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

## VIETNAM VETERANS GROUP OF SAN QUENTIN

Fernando A. Lemus (Outside Coordinator)

### Who are we?

In 1987, the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin ("V.V.G.S.Q.") was formed to help Vietnam Veterans incarcerated at San Quentin begin pursuing a vision of recovery from trauma and other things in life that affect the way human beings react and behave. The V.V.G.S.Q. became an inmate activity group and its membership includes all veterans who have served honorably in the United States Armed Forces and received discharges under honorable conditions.

The group has since expanded its vision to holding fund drives to support worthy community causes that directly affect veterans and charitable causes within the community. These causes include a Scholarship Award, Operation M.O.M., and the Christmas Toy Drive.

In 1998, the V.V.G.S.Q. set up a seminar with the California Department of Veterans Affairs and the North Bay Vets center. From this seminar, the Veterans Issues Group (V.I.G.) was conceived and implemented at San Quentin.

Under the direction of professional staff, individualized, comprehensive and integrated services to veterans takes place every Wednesday evening in the Education module for the sole purpose of successful reintegration into society. Additionally, the V.I.G. program reaches incarcerated veterans with viable programs for reentering society, and to assist group members in contacting various resources to accomplish these objectives.

Furthermore, the V.V.G.S.Q. is involved with various projects and activities, such as the R.E.A.L. choices program, to reach and educate adolescent lives to be productive members of society. Team "C" of the Choices program is made up of members of the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin.

Another activity the V.V.G.S.Q. supports is Operation M.O.M.. Operation M.O.M.

is a non-profit organization that supports our troops deployed throughout the world. The V.V.G.S.Q. supports Operation M.O.M. with cash, material donations, clerical assistance and packing care packages with food, hygiene, and clothing packages. Also, we assist Operation M.O.M. with custom declarations, labels and mail out donation requests.

The Toy program is very dear to our group, too. We have always supported the San Quentin Toy program with donations and helping the program. This year, 2008, will be the 20th year of the program. The warden has authorized the V.V.G.S.Q. to sponsor this worthy program.

Recently, the V.V.G.S.Q. decided to support "Tabs for Tots" as well ("Tabs," as in soda can tabs). Tabs for Tots are supported through the Vietnam Veterans of the Vietnam War ("V.Vn.W.") Post FLI-02 in Belle Glade, FL and the V.V.G.S.Q. is CAI-01, the first chapter in California that the V.Vn.W. chartered into their organization. The proceeds from our fundraising will assist Ronald McDonald charities with their efforts to help sick children diagnosed with cancer and their families.

Finally, the Stamps for Soldiers and Color Guard are operated by the V.V.G.S.Q.

Stamps for Soldiers are cancelled stamps which are collected from mainline, Condemned Row and R/C prisoners. After collecting the stamps, they are sent to disabled veterans. The disabled veterans peel off the stamps as a form of physical therapy and create "collages" and other works of art.

The V.V.G.S.Q. provides a color guard at the GED and college graduation, the September 11 remembrance and other functions as requested by custody staff and/or non-custody staff.



## GETTING PERSPECTIVE

By: Collette Carroll

What can **IMPACT** do for you? **Incarcerated Men Putting Away Childish Things** can change your life! **IMPACT** is the largest self-help program at San Quentin, serving approx 100 men from the Mainline and 45 men in H-Unit every Monday night.

How will this program change your life? Through **IMPACT** you will learn about you, about who you really are. You will be provided with skills to identify things you need to do to be successful both inside prison and upon release. You will learn such things as What is a Man? (about Mr. BS) about Image vs Reality, you will learn about Addictions, Violence Prevention, Relationships, Financial Literacy and much more. This is a program for those that are serious about making a commitment to **AIR** (Accountability, Integrity and Responsibility) and to a road to a better life.

What is so different about our program? Firstly, **IMPACT** is facilitated (not taught) by fellow inmates, inmates who have gone through over 160 hours of **IMPACT** training in order to help us all learn the skills to succeed in life. **IMPACT** uses its own copyrighted manuals and PowerPoint presentations, each week moving through the Modules and Sessions of the program. Our evening starts

with the whole group working together on the current Session and then we break-out into small groups to discuss in depth the issues and exercises presented that night. This is an opportunity to share and learn in an intimate personal setting. **IMPACT** is a strictly confidential program – what's said in **IMPACT**, stays in **IMPACT**.

Men of San Quentin who have been through our program are now on the streets successfully contributing to their families and communities. These men are teaching **IMPACT** at the CDCR Dept of Juvenile Justice throughout the state (and being paid by the CDCR) these men are Drug & Alcohol Counselors, Plumbers, Sheet Metal workers, and Heavy Equipment Operators. These men, to a one, attribute their success on the streets to what they learned through **IMPACT**. To quote one individual, "if it hadn't been for the things I learned through **IMPACT** and other programs at San Quentin I would not have been able to handle the extreme family pressures I've been under since returning to society. I now understand the importance of having this as my strength to draw from when in a high pressure situation". –ex-San Quentin inmate paroled after serving 10 yrs.

Want to know if **IMPACT** is

right for you? Ask around, there is someone near you who has been through our program they will not hesitate to tell you how it has changed their lives, their relationships with fellow inmates and with their families and staff.

I can explain the benefits of **IMPACT** but I believe hearing it from someone who has been where you are can explain it better:

"Parole was something that I never thought would be possible. Yet, today, I'm convinced that as we accept the challenge to looking beyond our past and anticipate a redefined future, our goal of making a positive **IMPACT** on others will unfold before our eyes. Are you willing to accept that challenge? Then prepare to meet the new you!" Edward Ramirez, Lifer - Paroled 2005

"Our acknowledgement of the reality of injustice in our lives is not enough to gain our freedom. We must find the courage to transform our eager yet passive desire for change into concrete action that will most assuredly free us. Project **IMPACT** provided the concepts I needed in order to **ACCEPT** the challenge and fight for my life. It is with gratitude today that I work alongside you." Bryan A. Smith, Lifer - Paroled 2007

"In life there are opportunities that we must take advantage of that will ensure a better future; **IMPACT** is one such opportunity; Take It!". A. Leonard Neal, Served 24 yrs 11 mths 7 days - Paroled 2005

**IMPACT** is ready – are You???

### PRISON PHONE RATES DROPPING

While Arnie (Governor Schwarzenegger) hasn't shown too many places where he's been on our side, he did sign off on a bill written by Senator Mike Machado that will cut prices over half by the end of January 2011. Since many people won't write, staying in touch with many family members is only possible by phone.

### BROTHERS IN PEN:

"A Means of Escape"

By: Zoe Mullery

A second anthology of short stories, written by prisoners here at San Quentin State Prison is now out in print. Some stories are fiction, some memoir/creative non-fiction, and some a combination. The subject matter here is as wide as the imagination. This is a culmination of over a year's work of labor by prisoners, many of them Lifers, all serious writers.

Copies are available from: "brothersinpen.wordpress.com" All proceeds from the sale of this book go through the William James Association to support the Creative Writing class through the Arts-in-Corrections program. The first anthology, "Brothers in Pen," is also still available.

### SQ NEWS MAIL FROM COALINGA PRISON!

Dennis Thomas, G18063

Your paper is a great miracle, a light in a dark world. I just got to prison, first arrest, first time in jail, first time in prison; looking at two "25-to-Life" sentences, consecutive. I'm appealing and Marcia Clark of "OJ Simpson" fame is my state appointed attorney. This is a totally new and scary world. My new cellie just came from "SQ" and had your "Vol. 2008, No. 1." I read the San Quentin News from cover to cover, and learned more in 1/2 hour than I have in 99 days in Wasco & Pleasant Valley Prisons. We don't have a paper, or even a pamphlet here at "PVSP," and I would like any and all information you can send me on starting one here!

Dennis:

The DOM states that a prison may publish an Institution Newspaper. We encourage any and all would be Editors to speak to the institution's education department. We hope this will provide you with meaning and purpose, while enjoying a good source of information.

### SQ Digital TV

By: Kenneth Brydon

The switch over from analog to digital signal scheduled for February 2009 is little more than a minor inconvenience for San Quentin. In order to receive the benefits of the broadcasting change, the viewer's television must be "Digital Signal Ready." If your set was purchased recently, you already have a set ready to receive the new signal.

Quentin is installing converters on their antenna, which will allow older televisions to receive the new signal. But, we will not receive the enhanced picture benefits on our old sets.

The "benefits" are primarily a picture that's crisper. People behind the first major change in broadcasting since the advent of the color TV say that all the colors will be richer and deeper.

Ronnie Sanders (1EY55) asks: "What's the name of the company that provides our cable," and, "Why can't we purchase ESPN2, AMC, HBO..." The first answer, Ronnie, is that we provide our own cable service. What we receive are the "free" broadcasts anyone with an antenna get. Hope that coming improvements will give you a bit more selection in viewing options, stay healthy, Ronnie.

### CENTERFORCE INSIDE/OUT SUMMIT 2008

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

On October 6 & 7, 2008, at the Double Tree Sonoma Wine Country, in Rohnert Park, California, "Centerforce Inside/Out" summit will once again happen. Last year's event was sold out and covered many aspects of the difficulties that face California and the rest of the country in developing a more comprehensive method of crime prevention and fair and just treatment of prisoners.

This year's summit will do much the same, providing education, insight, inspiration and a proactive focus network. For two days more than 400 people are expected to gather to confront the incarceration crisis and engage in an energetic forum on discovering solutions for the impact of incarceration on individuals, families, and communities.

Sessions at this year's summit will include: Sentencing Reform, Incarceration Medicine, and 15 workshops falling into four main topics: "Going In," "Being In," "Getting Out," and "Staying Out." Speakers are yet to be determined. For more information, one can log on to: [www.centerforce.org](http://www.centerforce.org). Or call: 415-456-9980.

## Flag Football's "Blues Brothers"

By: Big Will Packer

Someone asked me today why it is that we don't have more than one football team here in SQ(?). He went further to say he thought it would be more competitive if there were. I could have responded simply by saying the same reason there's only one baseball, and one basketball team; but I didn't. I tried to explain to him that we, the Blues Brothers, have a mission, and gave him a brief description of what that objective is. The discussion suggests to me a misconception of our program by the general population. My name is William, "Big Will" Packer, and I'm the Head Coach of the Blues Brothers and I'd like to give you all a broader, better understanding of what we're all about.

This is our fourth season coming up under the sponsorship of Kent Philpott and Stan Damas. Their commitment of time and energy has made it possible for us to do what we love, and excel at it. This will be our third season with me as Coach. Under my direction we enjoy a 15-0 record, and we of course look forward to another undefeated season. Critics of our program are quick to point out that we are bigger, stronger, quicker, faster and better than the teams that come in to play us. They talk as if we should be ashamed of these facts.

They're wrong, and we're not ashamed.

What our detractors seem to be unaware of are the hours of conditioning and practicing we put in each season to protect our house. The reason we outclass the teams that come in to play us is due to our dedication to the discipline of football, and our development of the exceptional talents we've been blessed with. Our players are committed to doing the work necessary to be good, and quite frankly, better than the teams that come in to play us. We take pride in the tradition we've established, and we are dedicated to the fulfillment of our goals.

As much as building character is an important part of our mission, so is building bridges to the outside. We've been blessed with the unique opportunity to play football develop friendships and fellowship with some pretty amazing people. Our aim is to continue to maintain these relationships, and provide the best entertainment possible throughout the season for our fans. Our ultimate goal is to one day develop a talent who will someday make it to the professional league, that we can all take pride and pleasure in watching him play. God bless you all, and I look forward to seeing you on the sidelines in September.

## SPORTS TRIVIA

All of Roger Clemmon's Yankee jerseys have been removed from the racks in the baseball museum in New Jersey due to zero sales. Demand for his memorabilia has nearly disappeared. His rookie baseball card is selling for just 10 percent of its asking price.

Every NBA player is randomly drug tested four times during each basketball season.

Actor/Comedian Billy Crystal signed a one-day contract with the New York Yankees. He batted in a scheduled exhibition game against the Pittsburgh Pirates. The 60 year-old Crystal missed a hit down the right field line by mere inches.

Sports Illustrated predicted Tiger Woods will win the Grand Slam this year.

Two brothers who co-owned a small shoe manufacturing business in a tiny German town couldn't get along, so they parted ways. They both became wildly successful. One started a brand called "Adidas" and the other a brand named "Puma."

17-year-old Rachel Flanders rowed across the Atlantic Ocean single handedly.

QB Carson Palmer's younger brother, Jordan, signed a two year contract with the Bengals to back up Carson. Jordan set records for passing yards and touchdowns at the University of Texas, El Paso.

## San Quentin Warriors

*Eyes are always open for new talent*

By George Lamb  
and  
Shaun Payton

The San Quentin Warriors basketball team has a very colorful history. I've been here for eight years, played for the first four, and was sidelined by injuries in the middle of the fifth. After being out for two seasons, and in the middle of my comeback, I was recruited by the team to assume the role of "Head coach." With only 7 wins and 11 losses, we were in trouble, and in danger of having our first losing season only to finish 18 and 14.

This year began with a real training camp, which included a rigorous strength and conditioning focus; we also had actual tryouts. However, we've evolved as a program and are much more oriented spiritually that in time past; I couldn't cut people. Instead, it an attempt to honor our program as a "Sports Ministry," we decided to establish a practice squad. We want men! It's obvious that we all need growth and development, therefore giving up on people is not an option. It does hurt when I see men who could be great give up on themselves!

Players come and go over the course of the season, which began May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. We are presently 10 and 5, with 18 games left on our schedule. We have had only one cancellation due to the Hitland Yard Ministry (which we fully supported). Our coaching staff includes me (George Lamb), and there are a number of men who are on the inside in addition to a few folks from the outside who support our program; to them all we say is: "Thanks!" They will receive mention by name over the course of the season, as these "Warrior Reports" continue.

*On behalf of the San Quentin Warriors, my name is Shuan Payton, and I joined the team in 2007. In the beginning it was just about basketball for me, but I came to realize that it wasn't only about playing ball, but it was also about communication,*

discipline, respect and trust. But most of all, it was about "God." All of these things mean a lot to me. I've never been on a team that prayed before the game and shared testimonies and had devotionals at halftime.

Since I've been on the team, I've made plenty of mistakes and wrong decisions that could have been prevented. Those mistakes and poor decisions have taken me to the "hole" a couple of times, but, when I returned, I was still a part of the team. I've had time to reflect while on the side lines observing what I was missing as I served my suspensions. Men in prison go through things, but having teammates who will make the journey with you and sometimes carry you through to the other side, makes victory on all levels of life sweeter!

It's a new season, and our team is younger and more talented than we were last year. We're capable of winning every game. Our losses have been very close, and always a result of having key players missing; not excuses, just facts. We've lost a few players to parole and are expecting to lose a few more before the end of the season. So, eyes are always open for new talent. We have a core group who are expected to remain through the end of the season; we're good and our goal is still the same...WIN!

All of the teams we play are from the outside. College teams, men's leagues, and church league teams; so interacting with them is great – they show us love, respect and a considerable amount of support (including donation of equipment!). They grow and are blessed as we grow and are blessed. Thanks to my teammates, and our coaching staff, as well as all those in support; especially "Huggie," and to the administration for allowing the program to realize the successes we all enjoy. To the fans who love us, "Good-looking," and to those who don't, "Stop-hating!" Just kidding – pray for us!

## "BOSTON" MARATHON MAN

By: Kenneth R. Brydon

On Sept. 01, 2008, Ron Goodman plans to run the distance and time that would qualify him for the Boston Marathon. A part of the 1,000-Mile Club at San Quentin, Goodman is running approximately 60 miles a week in preparation for the 26.2 miles he hopes to run in under 3 hours, 15 minutes.

About four years ago, while serving time at Folsom Prison, Goodman became serious about the discipline of running. He feels that it helps build character. "The Club is about learning discipline and healthy training," says Goodman. His accomplishments also extend to painting and art, where he is a featured artist in displays of prison artwork in community shows.

The 1,000-Mile Club, sponsored by Laura Bowman, teaches all aspects of running from beginner to advanced. People who wish to learn how to start running, or to make the most of the sport, will receive good tips by the club's coach, Frank Ruona. At 63 years old, Mr. Ruona would still have just about all the guys around this joint eating his dust.

The average distance of the 20 club members, is 10 to 15 miles per week. Getting on the track is a good way to relieve stress, get the blood pressure down, sleep better, and get an endorphin high that'll make peeing in a bottle no big deal!

## San Quentin Pirates The Forgotten

*Everyone has heard of the San Quentin Giants, well, almost.  
One team that is not illuminated is the San Quentin Pirates  
softball team.*

By Ron Martin

Quiet as it's kept, a lot of fans and prisoners come out regularly on Sunday afternoon to umpire, cheer, and sometimes express the intention of playing.

The San Quentin Pirates played hardball in 2006 and 2007, coached by Kent Philpott. Stan-the-Man is the trusty bench coach, and two men in blue, Frankie Smith, and Will Packer, assisted in the management. Briefly, in 2007, they had a fast pitch league. So behind the scenes there are some very talented players having fun making great plays and hitting their fair share of home runs (the pinnacle of the game). Mr. Rich and Bob Mayer, the San Quentin Pirates sponsors and coaches from the free world, obtained the helm of the team in 2006, and make it possible for the men to play in a league all of their own. These sponsors take time out of their

busy lives, and for this we thank them deeply.

Big Dan, prisoner/assistant coach, protects the dish at home; Big Ron Dalton" is anchored to 1<sup>st</sup>, and has a snow shovel for a scoop. Anyone on the yard who follows sports has witnessed the notorious long ball hitting Southpaw in action Ke Lam, (a.k.a. "Mighty Mouse") exhibits inhumanly long ball power to both sides of the diamond. "Lam patrols centerfield with excellent speed and an accurate arm – his territory is known as the "No-fly-zone."

John Harper, our surefielding 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman secures the hot corner. Kevin Carr patrols left field with a strong arm and swings hard at the plate. Big Shawn, who just joined, plays right-center, and can place the ball with authority anywhere. Little Laos patrols a dangerous right

field, with mixed terrain, and sprays the ball all over.

Paul Jordan plays the hot spot at short, and leads the team in averages with his phenomenal bat. Fernando Lemus is our utility player covering 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, and pitching; he is an asset to the team. Thacker, Davis, and retired Giants player Dave Marshall play 2<sup>nd</sup> and share time. Marshall is a crafty player who swings left-handed at the plate.

Not to be counted out, Tony, our newest addition, switches off at the mound with Junkyard who has patiently waited on the side until his debut. They both sport a decent bat, and, finally, Big Mario, who was injured and is still on the D.L. has a huge bat with enough pop to all fields, and can play any position. The Pirate Players thank the Athletic Department at SQ.

Editor: Opinion

# When the School of Hard Knocks Produces Fruit

By Michael R. Harris

Seeing the pride on the faces of the men of San Quentin could not compare with the pride held by family members that were in attendance for the 2008 Graduation celebration. This pride was evident by the tears and joy displayed throughout the ceremony. Wives, Mothers, Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Sons and Daughters /Friends in most cases had never seen their loved one complete or graduate from anything before.



Graduation Ceremony 2008

A day to remember. This was not the first time that I had attended a graduation ceremony at San Quentin. Both experiences were quite special in a unique way, but this time I was there to develop a story surrounding the event. So I thought; "life has a funny way of up-staging prepared plans."

So I got there early and started to observe organized chaos playing out; a host of volunteers assisting with the

preparation, men being fitted with graduation robes and family member filing into the chapel where the ceremony took place. And all kinds of supporters; program sponsors,

volunteer teachers from local universities associated with Patten College and the Prison University Project..... SQ staff, program instructors, quest speakers..... the energy was boiling; one would think this was preparation for a major concert. So I'm thinking, who do I interview first - *how am I going to fully capture the essence of this day?* Then, I spotted the SQ film production crew who were also producing a piece surrounding the event for a documentary they were

working on.

Me being a born net-worker, I asked "Can we work together?" Marvin Andrews replied "No problem." And then Troy Williams followed up with "Let's do this." Then there was Lonny Morris, of SQTV, setting up to do film interviews as well. So all I have to do is take notes and be at the right place at the right time and SQ news will be ok. Then Willie Rahman Green walks into the garden chapel area with his family; his wife Mary and their son. Mary had also attended her husband's graduation in 2002 in this same exact chapel. She was also filled with pride and joy this time for an altogether different reason. All attention focused on him as if he was a rock star - with everybody in line to embrace a man who had become a friend/mentor to so many, including me.

As he approached we embraced and he said "I don't know if I'm going to make it big fellow." His knees buckled. I said "You already have." Overwhelmed by the reality that the last time he in stood in this same exact spot; dressed in blue, just over 90 days ago; and that he had resided in this same

prison for over a decade. *WOW! Oh what difference a day makes!*

Warden Ayers allowed history to be made in San Quentin on this day by giving Mr. Green an opportunity to return shortly after being released from his conviction, which was overturned after 25 years. A man who had always professed his innocence, one of the things that always stood out about Rahman was that he never lost hope, and he kept his dignity and integrity intact even though there were times when it seemed as if justice would never prevail.

Rahman spent the majority of his time working in the prison library teaching and sharing knowledge with others including some of the graduates he spoke in front of at the ceremony. After his speech Rahman went down to the peer education building and spoke in front of a group of men in a pre-release class held by Mr. Shimel and continued his words of wisdom. On his way back he decided to walk instead of riding in the cart with his family. One of his long time

friends Demetrius 'Flip' Daniel recalls when the alarm went off and all the prisoners got down as is customary. Rahman did so as well in his tailored white suit. Flip believed that it was not done because he was brain washed, but, as a gesture of solidarity and love/respect for his brothers in blue. Seeing the faces of the proud families was well worth the price of admission, alone.

But listening to Julio Medina chronicling his journey in becoming a productive citizen was encouraging to say the least. Just to witness a man who had once walked in the same shoes as many of us had. As Medina stood and presented his message of hope to the audience, he enabled us all to envision a snap



Willie Rahman Green

shot of what is possible when you apply yourself and utilize the time to re-educate oneself.

## THANKS FOR CARING

By: W.W. Maclean (4N81)

My son, Will, was senselessly shot and killed on May 24, 2008. I would like to express my appreciation to everyone for their support through this difficult time. The cards, letters, and many acts of kindness came out of the blue. I simply want to thank each of you for reaching out the way you have. Rest in peace, Will, see you on the other side. I miss you and think of you every day.

## Team Exodus

On Saturday, September 06, 2008, West Block Yard will be host to a Resource Fair for the Reception Center prisoners. Numerous booths will be set up providing information for many self-help programs. Hosted by Team Exodus, this is a first-time event in the 20 years of the R/C at San Quentin.

Send Submissions to:  
Education Dept. / SQ News  
Death Row Stories Welcome

### San Quentin News

USPS 4870-700

The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Administration, nor the inmate population, and should be considered solely the opinion of the individual author unless specified.

Permission is granted to reprint articles appearing in the San Quentin News provided credit is given the author and this publication.

Administrative Review...R. Luna  
Principal.....T. Roberts  
Vice Principal..... W. Reeves, Ed. D.  
Print Shop Supervisor...J. Wilkerson  
Inside/Outside Advisor...J. Eagan  
Executive Staff:

K. Brydon Chief Editor  
M. Harris Managing Editor  
A. Tamboura Technical Editor  
D. Marsh Staff Writer

This publication is printed by the students in the San Quentin Vocational Printing Program. Thanks for all the help from everyone!

## The Chance of Hope

By: Felix Lucero

Prison college programs are often viewed with harsh criticism. Supporters contend that they reduce recidivism and increase the quality of life for a group of people who may not have had the best opportunities in life. Critics argue that criminals should be paying their debt to society with separation and self-reflection.

For my first 10 years in prison I learned how to survive and not much else. I read books on philosophy and learned to write my feelings down on paper, but I could never find that intellectual stimulation that was lacking in my life. I didn't even know there was such a thing.

For the past five years I've been enrolled as a student in the Patten University program. The course work, I found, came easy for me; the social interaction was where I felt stunted. Years of isolation had left me socially inadequate. Like a person learning to walk after a serious injury, I had to re-learn

the art of conversation. I had to be reminded that I was human.

My interactions with teachers and students have taught me the difference between charitable narcissism and true service to your fellow human. I believe that higher education is a fundamental human right. If there is a thing called human nature, it has to be the desire to live both physically and spiritually free. Prison is a place filled with hope, laughter, depression and misery. The college program doesn't remove the depravities of prison. But it does offer another way to think about the world, and equips you with the tools to articulate your situation.

An argument can be made that prisons are obsolete. At the same time their presence is as much a part of the landscape as the Pacific coast. Prisons can be institutions that inspire change; they can also be a place where oppression reaches its apex of excellence. Education has the power to transform, not only the human, but the world which we inhabit.



Felix Lucero

MAC Executive Body Members	CDC#	Housing :
Johnson, S.	H-20162	2-N-81L
Sefeldeen, K.	D-65574	1-N-96L
Mancinelli, T.	D-37386	5-N-87U
Tindall, M.K.	C-36349	4-N-37L
Pena, E.	H-77082	3-N-24L

Men's Advisory Councils:	CDC#	Housing	Representing:
Seiler, P.J.	E-16869	2-N-90L	Whites
Pratt, D.	C-2301	4-N-01L	Whites
White, G.	T-75007	5-N-39L	Af-Am.
Vernon, D.	P-41141	4-N-16L	Af-Am.
Ybarra, J.	C-18150	2-N-13L	Mex-Am.
Valdivia, N.	C-29917	3-N-21L	Mex-Am.
Molina, I.	J-71378	4-N-85U	Mex. N.
Pham, V.	J-53985	4-N-35L	Asian/O.
Sinacruz, P.	J-81323	3-N-19L	Pac. I.
Frank, H.	J-80928	3-N-13L	AMI

## Ruling Limits Governor's Discretion to Deny Parole

By David Marsh

The power of the California governor to arbitrarily deny parole to model prisoners has been curbed by the state Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Ronald George, in writing for the 4-3 majority, said the governor must show "some evidence" that a parolee is presently a danger to public safety before overturning a Board of Parole decision to grant parole.

The ruling came in the case of Sandra Davis Lawrence, 61, who has served more than 23 years for the 1971 killing of her lover's wife. The Board of Parole found Lawrence to be a model, well-behaved prisoner who had expressed remorse for the killing. In 2005 she was granted parole for the fourth time in 12 years.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger reversed the panel's decision as he had done on previous occa-

sions. He found the circumstances of the killing, in which Lawrence shot and stabbed Rubye Williams to death, to be of a particularly egregious nature.

The governor's office released a statement condemning the court's ruling as an infringement upon the governor's ability to make rulings designed to protect the public safety.

In a separate but related case, the court used the legal standards previously set forth in its ruling on the Lawrence case to unanimously uphold the governor's power to deny parole when there is a legitimate finding of danger to the public safety. The court upheld Schwarzenegger's denial of parole to Richard Shaputis, convicted of second-degree murder in the 1987 shooting of his wife. Shaputis has refused to accept responsibility for killing Erma Jeanne Shaputis, 47.

## Special Thanks

The students of the Critical Thinking class taught this past semester by the following volunteer/instructors for Patten University: **Fidan Elcioglu, Daniel Immerwahr, and Mike Levien**, wish to thank them for making it possible for us to expand our minds. Not just to think outside the box, but to dare to question the very nature of the box, or boxes, in which we live. We thank you! And to all of the instructors who volunteer their valuable time in order to make the program become a reality for us, our thanks to all of you! Without each of you, none of this would be possible.

Printed by  
*san Quentin Print Shop*