

# San Quentin News



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Photo by Sam Hearn

Ruth Sanchez and Stephanie Hammond meeting inside the San Quentin newsroom

## S.Q. Inmates Lend a Hand To NorCal Special Olympics

By Rahsaan Thomas  
Sports Editor

Inmates inside San Quentin State Prison are currently supporting the Special Olympics Northern California Program and looking for more ways to do it.

"The inmate population is very cutting edge when it comes to fund raising...other

programs want to mirror what I do with you. You're doing the food sales," said Ruth Sanchez, the senior development director for the Special Olympics Northern Region.

Sanchez visited San Quentin on Jan. 6 to thank inmates for what they have raised so far and to discuss further ways to con-

See *S.Q.* on Page 5

## Searching for Fungus

By Juan Haines  
Managing Editor

At a cost of \$5.4 million, state prison officials have conducted a voluntary screening of California inmates to find out who has been exposed to the soil-borne fungus that causes valley fever.

Experts say that people who have already been exposed to

the fungus are generally immune to repeat infections.

Prison officials are planning to transfer those who have been previously exposed to the fungus to two facilities where 83 percent of valley fever cases in the California prison system oc-

See *Searching* on Page 8



Photo courtesy of CDCR

Pleasant Valley State Prison

## Watani Leaves San Quentin Again...This Time It's Legit

By Arnulfo T. Garcia  
Editor-in-Chief

One of the few men ever to escape San Quentin State Prison walked out legitimately this

time, after a long stint in the same prison.

In 1974, Watani Stiner fled the U.S. as a fugitive and lived in South America for the next two decades before turning himself

into U.S. authorities.

"There was a civil war going on in Suriname," Stiner said. "All the chaos and turmoil going

See *Watani* on Page 4



File Photo

Watani Stiner standing in front of U.C. Berkeley's Sproul Hall

## Legislators Call for More Spending On Treating Mentally Ill Prisoners

By Salvador Solorio  
Journalism Guild Writer

Some Democrats in the California legislature say the prison system needs to spend more on treating mentally ill prison-

ers and increasing rehabilitation options, according to the Associated Press.

State Democrats are driving legislation for state corrections to spend more money on mental health services. Legislators

seek to improve treatment and to increase rehabilitation options as a means to deal with lawsuits over inadequate treatment and services.

See *Legislators* on Page 6

## California's Recidivism Rate Declines In the Three Years Since Realignment

By Kevin D. Sawyer  
Journalism Guild Chairman

A recent study finds that the number of inmates released from state prison in California and returned to custody has declined since the implementation of Realignment (AB 109).

Three years after the program to send some parole violators and non-violent, non-serious offenders to local correction authorities, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) researched the effectiveness of Realignment to see if recidivism in the state had been reduced.

"Prior to the implementation of California's 2011 public safety realignment (AB 109), the state's prison system had one of the nation's highest recidivism rates," PPIC reported.

"Authorities frequently used parole revocations rather than new criminal prosecutions to re-



Photo courtesy of CDCR

Attorney General Kamala Harris

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# San Quentin's First Female Officer Behind the Walls

In the early 70s, Wendy Woods' life was in turmoil. She was a young mother, with three children ages 1, 5 and 7, in the middle of a divorce, and her job in the visitor center with the California Youth Authority near Sonoma was ending due to the facility's closure. All these circumstances led her to work for San Quentin.

"It was supposed to be a lateral transfer," Woods explained to Morgan Voorhis of the Sierra Star, "but I was thrown into the sea of male inmates and correctional officers, and was told I would be working the same positions as the male officers ... that because the Equal Opportunity Rights had passed, I would become the first female officer hired there ... their first guinea pig."

"That first week was the worst. They used every tactic they could to scare us off," Woods continued. "They sent us all over the prison, into the towers, put us on every shift. They sent us to blocks and told us that we had to shower the inmates. It's only because the inmates threw such a fit that we were pulled from that duty."

Woods, who was simply looking for a job to support herself and her children, ended up working at San Quentin for 2 1/2 half years. The sole female guard, Woods stood out, and was an easy target for both the guards and inmates. However, once the inmates realized the guards wanted her gone, they became her allies ... her protectors.

Woods worked towers, gun walls (guarding the walls perimeter, where she would sit for eight hours, with her Colt 45, Remington Rifle and a shotgun), and in the armory.

"A lot of the guards thought I was a woman's liber, thought I was going to go after the easier jobs. Some of the games the guards would play" Woods said.

By this time, Woods had not only become the darling of the local media, but the national media, as well. She appeared on the television show, "To Tell the Truth" on April 4, 1973; and "What's My Line" on June 14, 1973. She received huge sacks of "fan" mail - some congratulating her and others wondering why she would ever want to work at Big Q in the first

place.

Woods drove out the gate one day following her shift and decided again that she would never return. She called the following day, using her two weeks vacation as her notice. Shortly after leaving, she heard, through the media, that one of the more compassionate correctional officers had been beaten to death by the inmates after he discovered drugs. Woods took a moment to thank God that she had made it out alive, despite her constant exposure to some of society's most hardened criminals.

Woods saw a lot of things during her brief stint - the gas chamber, the old dungeon used for solitary confinement in the late 1800s, where an inmate was alone with nothing more than a "pot to pee in."

Since quitting, she has never had contact with anyone associated with the prison. Post San Quentin, Woods took a year to recuperate, working as a freelance artist for children's books. She finished her education, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Human Relations and Administration from the University of San Francisco. She then worked as a mental health clinician and after retiring, relocated to the

Mountain Area to be closer to her grandchildren.

At 72 years of age, Woods now has time for writing, painting, and gardening. She is very active as a volunteer in the clothing ministry at the United Methodist Church and has written a book, *Flowers and Guns*, which offers a humorous slant on her experiences as the first female guard to work at San Quentin. The book is dedicated to Jordan, and Mountain Area book signings are being scheduled.

"I paved a trail for women at San Quentin, and now there are women in the Special Squad Team, which deals with escapes. They are the super cops of the prison," Woods said. "Even though I have slowed down a bit, I still enjoy being busy. I have always believed that one should at least accomplish something while still here on the planet."

"She had to absorb a lot of criticism from a lot of people," former Captain of the Guards, William Merkle, who hired Woods, once said. "I have to give her credit for that. The sex barrier that she broke will never be rebuilt."

The total number of female peace officers today is 142 out of 937 total custody staff members.



**Prisoners United in the Craft of Journalism**  
In collaboration with students from the,



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The San Quentin News encourages inmates, free staff, custody staff, volunteers and others outside the institution to submit articles. All submissions become property of the San Quentin News.

Please use the following criteria when submitting:

- Limit your articles to no more than 350 words.
- Know that articles will be edited for content and length.
- The newspaper is not a medium to file grievances. (For that, use the prison appeals process.) We encourage submitting articles that are newsworthy and encompass issues that will have an impact on the prison populace.
- Please do not use offensive language in your submissions.
- Poems and art work (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

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Ex- Correctional Officer Wendy Woods holding her book "Flowers and Guns"

Photo courtesy of Morgan Voorhis

# FBI Reports 4-Year Drop in Violent And Property Crimes

‘Violent crimes dropped from about 1,325,000 in 2009 to 1,163,146 in 2013’

By Charles David Henry  
Journalism Guild Writer

Violent and property crimes were down significantly for four years in America, according to an FBI report.

The estimated number of violent crimes dropped from about 1,325,000 in 2009 to 1,163,146 in 2013, the report shows. Property crimes dropped from about 9,300,000 in 2009 to 8,632,512 in 2013.

The FBI reported the estimated number of violent crimes decreased 4.4 percent in 2013 when compared to 2012. The 2012 figures were slightly ahead of the 2011 total – the only hike in the four-year period.

The estimated number of property crimes was also down 4.1 percent from 2012 to 2013, the latest period for which data was available.

Statistics used by the FBI come from 18,415 city, county, state, tribal, campus and federal law enforcement agencies. Violent crimes contained in the report include murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson.

The primary goal of this report is to “assess and monitor the nature and type of crime in the nation and to generate reliable information for use in the law enforcement administra-

tion, operations and management,” the report states.

Legislators, criminologist, sociologists, municipal planners, the media and students of the criminal justice system collect statistics for research and planning. However, users of this information are warned not to use it if making direct comparisons between municipalities.

According to the report, “Valid assessments are only possible with an understanding of various factors affecting each jurisdiction.”

During 2013, the highest number of arrests was for drug abuse violations (estimated at 1,051,043), larceny-theft

(1,231,580) and driving under the influence (1,166,824).

Law enforcement agencies made an estimated 11,302,102 arrests (including 480,360 for violent crimes and 1,559,284 for property crimes), according to the FBI report.

There were an estimated 14,196 murders committed in 2013.

Aggravated assault accounted for the largest percentage of violent crimes reported: 724,149 or 62.3 percent.

Firearms were used in 69 percent of the nation’s murders, 40 percent of robberies and 21.6 percent of aggravated assaults.

An estimated 79,770 rapes were reported.

Victims of burglaries suffered an estimated \$4.5 billion in property losses and burglaries of residential properties accounted for 74 percent of total reported.

Larceny-thefts accounted for the largest percentage of property crimes reported to law enforcement: 69.6 percent. The average value of property taken during larceny thefts was \$1,259.

An estimated 699,594 motor vehicles were reported stolen, and 73.9 percent or those were cars. (Other types of stolen vehicles, included trucks, sport utility vehicles, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles.)

## Wall Street Journal Reports Judges Using Risk Assessment Measures Before Deciding Criminal Sentences

By Chung Kao  
Journalism Guild Writer

Judges around the country are turning to risk-evaluation tools in making sentencing decisions, says the *Wall Street Journal*.

“Risk-evaluation tools have emerged as a centerpiece of efforts to reduce the U.S. inmate population,” reported Joe Palazzolo in a recent article of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Palazzolo said the increasing use of risk assessment measures “reflects a broad effort to bring a more scientific approach to

decisions made by judges, parole officers and corrections officials.”

“The measures vary widely but generally are based on an offender’s criminal history and, in addition to age and sex, may include marital status, employment and education,” said Palazzolo, citing Professor Sonja Starr of the University of Michigan.

Criminal-justice experts consider attributes such as age or sex to be strong predictors of whether an offender is likely to commit a crime in the future.

“But the adoption of (risk-eval-

uation) tools has sparked a debate over which factors are acceptable,” Palazzolo wrote.

For example, Pennsylvania uses county of residence as one of the factors considered in sentencing, and Missouri uses education level and employment.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder was quoted by Palazzolo saying that basing sentencing on factors such as a defendant’s education level “may exacerbate unwarranted and unjust disparities.”

Starr believes the disparities created by risk measures are evi-

dent. “When it comes down to it, these assessments stand for the proposition that judges should sentence people longer because they were in foster care as children or had too many bouts of unemployment,” she said.

There is no research yet on whether the use of risk evaluations in sentencing has aggravated racial disparities.

On the other hand, Professor Christopher Slobogin of Vanderbilt University believes the alternative was potentially worse. “At least these risk-assessment instruments don’t ex-

PLICITLY focus on race or poverty, unlike what might occur in a sentencing regime where judges are making risk assessments based on seat-of-the-pants evaluations,” he said.

In Nebraska, U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf posed the question, “If race, gender or age are predictive as validated by good empirical analysis, and we truly care about public safety while at the same time depopulating our prisons, why wouldn’t a rational sentencing system freely use race, gender or age as predictor of future criminality?”

## Report: Feds Shift Toward Cutting High Prison Population and Costs

Wesley R. Eisiminger  
Journalism Guild Writer

The federal prison system is trying to cut its dangerously overcrowded facilities and the cost of running them, according to a report from a nonpartisan research and educational organization.

“The federal prison population has escalated from under 25,000 inmates in 1980 to over 219,000 today,” noted the non-profit Urban Institute.

The report blamed much of the overcrowding on the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984. It led to mandatory prison sentences for drug offenses, which previously included fines and/or

probation, not prison.

The result: great expense to taxpayers. It costs \$29,000 per year for each federal prisoner. The 2014 budget is \$6.9 billion. Note: California’s cost per inmate is more than \$60,000 or \$10.4 billion a year.

To cut costs, the federal system could look at reducing mandatory minimum drug sentencing by “only accepting certain types of drug cases, diverting cases to states and reducing drug prosecution in other ways,” says the report, dated November 2013.

“Reducing the number of drug offenders is the quickest way to yield an impact on both population and cost,” the report says.

This could be accomplished by instructing prosecutors to modify charging practices, and by amending statutory penalties.

Lowering the number of drug offenders entering federal prison by 10 percent would save \$644 million over a 10-year period; reducing drug sentences by 10 percent would save \$538 over 10 years, the report states.

The federal government could also look at the early release of elderly and terminally ill inmates and the transfer of foreign national inmates to their native countries. About a quarter of the federal prisoners are not U.S. citizens. Expanding elderly and compassionate release and doubling international transfers



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

Lompoc Federal Prison

would reduce spending by almost \$15 million, says the report.

“To yield a meaningful impact on population and cost, a mix of

reforms to sentencing, prosecution and early release policies are required,” the Urban Institute concludes.

## Groups Work Together to Stop Architects’ Unethical Prison Designs

A group of planners and designers is working to prevent architects from designing prison spaces for executions and solitary confinement.

The goal is to prevent architects from designing spaces “for killing, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment,” explained San Francisco-based architect Raphael Sperry. He leads the group called Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility.

### CODE OF ETHICS

The group is asking the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to change its Code of

ethics to prohibit the design of spaces intended for executions and prolonged solitary confinement, as in supermax prisons, according to Martin C. Pedersen, author of a Point of View article in the Dec. 11, 2013, *Metropolis* blog.

Sperry said the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture in 2011 defined solitary confinement as a human right violation if done to youth, the mentally ill or anyone else for over 15 days.

Intentionally killing people, even in a state-ordered execution, deprives people of their more fundamental human right-

life itself, Pedersen wrote.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The AIA’s current code requires members to “uphold human rights in all their professional endeavors.” However, the organization has no enforceable rules to provide discipline if a member designs a space intended to violate human rights, Sperry said.

Getting the AIA to commit to this code would “put the architectural profession on the same level as all U.S. medical associations the prohibit their members’ participation in executions, torture and cruel, inhuman and de-

grading treatment,” Sperry said.

“It would also help to slow or halt the progress of specific projects that will injure or kill people, and at the broader level help to shift public perceptions of our justice system away from ever-harsher methods of punishment towards approaches that emphasize public safety and community restoration,” he commented.

### SUPER MAX PRISONS

Sperry said for a currently accepted punitive practice to be found cruel and unusual, the court must cite an evolving standard of decency towards a

mature society. If architects collectively say that we have reappraised the dozens of supermax prisons built in recent decades and that we won’t build places like that any more, what could be a clearer evolution of decency than that?”

The San Francisco AIA chapter became the first to formally endorse the group’s proposal. There have been endorsements by Amnesty International, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, the American Civil Liberties Union and DesignCorps, among other groups.

—By Charles David Henry

# Justice Dept. Claims Systematic Adolescent Abuse at Rikers Island

## 'Adolescent inmates at Rikers are not adequately protected from harm'

By **Rahsaan Thomas**  
Staff Writer

Adolescent inmates are systematically abused by guards and fellow prisoners in New York City's Rikers Island, violating their constitutional rights, a U.S. Justice Department report concludes.

"We conclude that there is a pattern and practice of conduct at Rikers that violates the constitutional rights of adolescent inmates," the Aug. 4 report states. "In particular, we find that adolescent inmates at Rikers are not adequately protected from harm, including serious physical harm from the rampant use of unnecessary and excessive force by DOC (Department of Corrections) staff.

"In addition, adolescent inmates are not adequately protected from harm caused by violence inflicted by other inmates, including inmate-on-inmate fights.

"Indeed, we find that a deep-seated culture of violence is pervasive throughout the ad-

olescent facilities at Rikers, and DOC staff routinely utilize force not as a last resort, but instead as a means to control the adolescent population and punish disorderly or disrespectful behavior," the report states.

The report concludes "DOC relies far too heavily on punitive segregation as a disciplinary measure, placing adolescent inmates — many of whom are mentally ill — in what amounts to solitary confinement at an alarming rate and for excessive periods of time."

The situation violates "the Eighth Amendment and the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution," the report also states.

The violent culture has re-

sulted in adolescents receiving a large number of serious injuries, including broken jaws, broken orbital bones, broken noses, long bone fractures and lacerations necessitating stitches.

DOJ focused its investigation on Rikers Island routines and behavior from 2011-2013.



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

Rikers Island City Jail

They reviewed hundreds of reports, toured the jails with a use of force expert consultant, watched surveillance video when available, interviewed 46 adolescent inmates and interviewed several NYC Department of Correction staff members.

The DOJ found force is used against adolescents at an alarming rate and violent inmate-on-inmate fights and assaults are commonplace, resulting in a striking number of serious injuries; and correction officers resort to "headshots," or blows to an inmate's head or facial area. Correction officers attempt to justify use of force by yelling, "stop resisting," even when the adolescent has been completely subdued or was never resisting in the first

place. Use of force is particularly common in areas without video surveillance cameras.

Recent reforms are inadequate, the report says. Reforms include:

- Additional staff added to adolescent housing areas
- Additional management

positions, including the newly created position Deputy Warden for Adolescents.

--A hotline for prisoners to report violence anonymously

"Although these initiatives are laudable, they have thus far done little to meaningfully reduce violence among the adolescent inmate population," the report says.

"The larger problem, however, is that by and large these reforms do not address — or even attempt to address — the core problem and the heart of our findings: use of excessive and unnecessary force by correction officers against adolescent inmates and the lack of accountability for such conduct."

The DOJ report recommends several measures to deal with the constitutional deficiencies. They include:

- Housing adolescents where they can be directly supervised
- Increase cameras
- Clarify use of force directive
- Ensure prompt use of force reporting.

## Watani Stiner Leaves San Quentin as a Free Citizen After 21 Years

Continued from Page 1

on made me worry for the safety of my family. I walked into the U.S. embassy to negotiate my surrender for the love of my children."

### THE STINERS:

Stiner, who was a columnist for the *San Quentin News* before he paroled, was born in Texas on Jan. 30, 1948. He was the son of Jorge and Lula Mae Stiner. He has two brothers and two sisters.

Stiner said when he was 7 years old his mother wanted a change, so the family took a Greyhound bus to Los Angeles.

He said after arriving in the projects of Watts, he was excited to get back to school. Watts, he says, was a lot different from Texas.

Stiner said his father, a mathematics professor, taught at various black schools while his mother worked as a nurse. However, Stiner said his father's alcoholism eventually broke his family apart.

"Just when I thought I was settled into school, my mother took our family to the west side of Los Angeles," Stiner said.

After moving to West Los Angeles, Stiner said his other siblings from Texas joined the family.

Two months before graduating from Manuel Arts High School, Stiner said he married Hodari, his high school sweetheart. They had two children,

Larry Jr. and Lionel. "I was a very proud father," he said.

To support his family, in 1967, Stiner said he got a job at Douglas Aircraft.

### CONFLICT, REVOLUTIONARIES AND WAR:

"We not only made airplanes but bombs that were sent to Vietnam," Stiner said. "At that time, I was also taking classes at UCLA studying cinema photography and Political Science."

Stiner said as he became more educated, his political beliefs changed.

"I began to disagree with what Douglas Aircraft was doing," Stiner said. He said after two years of working at Douglas, he quit and got involved in a movement that led to the shootout on the UCLA campus. Stiner said after being convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, his brother received life sentences, while another defendant was sent to the Youth Authority.

Stiner said that once in the prison system, he and his brother were separated. Watani was sent to Soledad Prison and George to San Quentin.

He said everything changed two years later when in 1971, a Soledad prison guard was murdered and the Soledad Brothers went on trial for his murder. He said Soledad was completely locked down and a large number of blacks, considered revolutionaries, were transferred to other prisons.

Stiner was sent to San Quentin's Adjustment Center also known as "the hole." Records show that the Stiner brothers should not be housed in the same prison, but no other prison would accept him, Stiner said. After two months in segregation, he was released to the gen-

eral population. constant fear. So, they devised a plan to escape from San Quentin. The plan was successful in 1974.

### ON THE RUN:

In South America, Stiner said, he established a new identity, a new life and settled down

ed and away from his children, perhaps for the rest of his natural life, he says it was a sacrifice he could live with.

### BACK IN THE HOLE:

When he was returned to San Quentin, he was told he was going to Pelican Bay State Prison; the prison officials call a prison for the "worst of the worst." However his attorney arranged for him to be housed at San Quentin pending the outcome of the escape charges. During that time, he was returned to the Adjustment Center. After being found guilty of escape, the subsequent time added to his sentence was run concurrent to his life sentence.

Stiner spent 21 years back in prison since his surrender.

He said that he lived in agony because it took another 11 years to bring his kids to the United States, an agreement he made with them. He smiles and proudly says "Three of my children have successfully graduated from college with their Bachelors of Arts degree."

He spent most of his time back in prison working clerk positions, and in the library looking for ways to hold the government accountable for their agreement with him.

### The OG:

Watani eventually became a staff member for *San Quentin News* and had this urge to reach out to the young troubled kids in order that they not get caught up in and pursue a negative life style. The OG Perspective Column was created.

"To stumble is not to fall only to move forward faster," Stiner said, referring to an African proverb that has inspired him to never accept failure and help change lives in a positive direction. "For the love of my children, it was worth it."

Stiner's future includes getting his memoirs published, a fascinating story about crime murder, and redemption.



Photo courtesy of Peter Merts

Watani Stiner on San Quentin's Lower Yard

eral population.

For the next three years, he would share the same cell with George. However, Stiner said they both felt that because of the incident at Soledad, their lives were in danger. He said that at the time, they believed a squad was formed to destroy all revolutionaries.

He said they were living in

and had seven children.

"It was difficult not having contact with my high school sweetheart and our two kids," Stiner said. "This was a pain I lived with every day. While living in Suriname, every time I saw my children, I was reminded of my two sons in America." Love is powerful, Stiner said, "especially when two innocent kids have no idea what happen to their daddy."

Stiner said after authorities in the U.S. embassy confirmed he was and in fact convicted for the UCLA incident and in fact escaped from San Quentin Prison, a negotiated agreement was made that for his surrender, his children would be able to come to the U.S. along with him.

Stiner said that although he knew, he would be incarcerat-

### Website Offers Help to Families of Those Incarcerated

A new and free search engine, [www.PrisonPath.com](http://www.PrisonPath.com), provides information for the public. The site helps users in clarifying confusion and fear of the unknown when a loved one is charged and arrested, or sentenced to imprisonment in the United States. PrisonPath provides information including the ability to find a person incarcerated, visitation rules, contact numbers, and more about every American prisons or jails. It also allows families and friends of inmates to communicate with each other on a specific page.

# Five Men Graduate From Intense VOEG Program

By Tommy Bryant  
Journalism Guild Writer

Five men graduated from a special program where they spent 18 months learning more about themselves and the impact their crimes had on themselves and others.

"It gets real hot in that room at times learning to communicate honestly and to relate empathy," said Wayne Boatwright, one of the H-Unit graduates of the Victim Offender Education Group (VOEG) program.

Inmate facilitator Benny Gray stated the course gives inmates "good tools for the street." It also helps them realize that "healing goes on for the victim's family and friends for life."

Joel McCarter said he learned to "Face what you did and no longer hide from it."

He noted that six men orig-

inally in the class dropped out. "This class is not for everyone; you have to be determined ... many sign up but cannot face the reality," according to McCarter.

***"It gets real hot in that room at times learning to communicate honestly and to relate empathy"***

"The group gets even closer when you can trust everyone beyond the classroom," McCarter added.

Rodney Goldston commented, "You start to realize everyone's a victim from your actions and must hold yourself accountable that you

harmed a lot of people. VOEG is not a cure-all, but it gives you another option not to lash out."

Robert Randall recalls, "It's not easy facing up to what you have done to others; you want to tap out at times but you must ... stay with it."

Instructor Jim Ward remembers, "Robert could not sit still; he walked around like a nervous cat but was able to peel back the street crud eventually and settle into the reality of the group. Benny needed to be completed, and working as a facilitator helped him take responsibility.

"Joel's biggest challenge was calming down, losing the anger within, eventually becoming loose and relaxed."

Ward also said, "After 18 months, Rodney is now able to smile and has relieved a lot of the depression."



Photo courtesy of Peter Merts

Wayne Boatwright before the creative writing annual read

## Gov. Brown Signs Law to Deal With Criminal Records

By Thomas Gardner  
Journalism Guild Writer

Gov. Jerry Brown has signed legislation aimed at eliminating obstacles faced by people with criminal records applying for certified nursing assistant licenses.

The measure, Senate Bill 1384, removes the requirement that the state Depart-

ment of Public Health deny certified nursing assistant licenses for applicants who have certain convictions on their records.

Sen. Holly Mitchell, D-Los Angeles, introduced the bill. It was supported by the San Francisco-based civil rights organization Equal Rights Advocates but was opposed by the health department, ac-

ording to a report by Sam Levin of The East Bay Blog News, Seven Days.

The bill removes the practice of automatic rejections, or mandatory denials, while keeping in place the department's ability to deny individuals found not suitable for certification, Levin reported.

"The blanket exclusion of women who apply for CNA

jobs solely on the basis of their conviction history means that they are being punished once again after they have served their time. These are women who ... are rehabilitated, and who are trying to make a living wage to support their families," Mitchell said in a statement.

Under current law, there are approximately 70 offenses, some non-violent, that lead to an automatic rejection of nursing assistant license, Levin notes.

Supporters of SB 1384 call it a reform and point out that a key element to reducing recidivism is access to employment, and that past criminal convictions do not necessarily dictate that a prospective employee's performance will be less than satisfactory, adds Levin.

"SB 1384 would limit (the

health department's) ability to deny a nursing assistant application ... and removes (its) ability to adequately protect patients," says an opposition letter signed by Monica Wagoner, a deputy health department director, according to Levin.

Levin adds some SB 1384 supporters pointed out that many healthcare professions, such as dentists and mental health workers, are not automatically denied licenses or certifications as result of a conviction.

"SB 1384 gives people the chance to prove — through character and employment references, certificates of training and treatment, and other relevant evidence — that they have overcome the significant life obstacles that led to their convictions," Mitchell noted.

## San Quentin Inmates Support NorCal Special Olympics

Continued from Page 1

tribute.

Sanchez has found prisoners eager to support. In six months, almost \$80,000 was raised from California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation inmates in 15 different prisons to support the 30,000 Special Olympic athletes of California.

Northern California has 16,750 special athletes who compete year round in 11 sports.

Southern California has 11,000. The sports include basketball, track and field swimming, floor hockey, golf, bowling, bocce, volleyball, softball, and tennis.

"Inmates approach us about their cousins and family members who have special needs... that's the connection. They want to help," said Sanchez. "I've learned so much in the last six months... I see the common theme of hope in special needs athletes and inmates."

Further ways to support, in addition to food sales, were discussed. They included organizing ice-water "plunges" and setting up a website for family members to contribute.

The money would go to sponsor athletes with special needs like Special Olympic champion Stephanie Hammond, who

used sports to overcome being bullied. A bully broke her leg in six places. She was introverted and home-schooled afterwards. Then she discovered sports and blossomed.

"I try to not to let bullying bother me. It just makes me stronger," said Hammond. "Now I'm a global ambassador, CDCR ambassador, law enforcement ambassador, and I travel all over the nation. I've been to 25 states," said Hammond.

Hammond wore about seven of the nearly 1,000 medals she earned during her 17 years competing in Special Olympic basketball, bocce ball, and bowling. Hammond plans to start soccer in September. Her favorite sport is basketball. She's the starting point guard for a coed team with only four girls and averages 20 points a game.

"Some of my medals are in the governor's mansion," said Sanchez.

Eunice Shriver was heavily involved in special needs issues. Her son, Tim Shriver, took over after she died.

Sanchez is driven to help develop the Special Olympics because of her son, who has special needs. She has watched him develop self-confidence and get a job after having played in the

events.

"Every time I help an athlete win an award or another race, I'm helping my son," said Sanchez.

Corrections in Arizona raised over a half-million dollars. Then CDCR's Jeffery Beard offered support. Sanchez decided to go further and extended her hand for donations from the inmate population.

"We are all humans; we all have feelings...we aren't different from each other. We just have difference circumstances," said Sanchez.

Avenal, Solano, and Mule Creek State Prisons have been very supportive, Sanchez noted.

"I went to Avenal State Prison, and 50-plus inmates had at least 30 questions. 'Thank you for not judging us and letting us feel connected,' they told me," said Sanchez. "Inmates send cards; they support. Avenal wants us to come back."

Other current sponsors included major corporations like Chevron and Kaiser Permanente, law enforcement, CDCR, inmate populations, and the community.

"Thank you CDCR and inmates for supporting us. Without ya'll, this wouldn't be possible. You are making a difference for 30,000 athletes," said Hammond.

## Kathrin Spears Ventures Inside San Quentin

By Michael Panella  
Contributing Writer

One of Marin County's top elected officials says more people should visit San Quentin State Prison for new insights into the men inside.

"I'm walking out of here with a different perspective of prison and wish more guests could experience this interaction," said county Board of Supervisors President Kathrin Spears.

She came inside the prison with Leslie Lava, a long-time San Quentin tennis program supporter. She was on hand to watch the Inside Tennis Team in action on June 14.

"I had a fantastic time and some great conversations with players who are talented and intelligent," said Spears.

Lava has not visited San



File Photo

Kathrin Spears

Quentin for some time but said she was "thrilled to be back," and has "missed playing tennis with the team."

Sears, who admits that she last played "22 years ago," picked up a racquet and did something she'd never done before — hit tennis balls in San Quentin. "It was enlightening and fun," she said.

## EDITORIAL

By **Arnulfo T. Garcia**  
Editor-in-Chief

How many knew that before 1994 that all illegal immigrants were allowed to have access to a driver's license regardless of any immigration status.

When that law changed all those that followed, the laws were now receiving punishment by paying a fine or having your vehicle confiscated for driving illegally without a driver's license.

The Safe and responsible Driver Act (AB 60) brought relief for all those who were driving illegally when it was passed in 2013. Now with driver's license, regardless of immigration status you can safely drive your children to school and your selves to work.

According to DMV There are many ways AB 60 license can be offered to you.

Is the test offered in English? No, the test can be administered in an auto format, or in an interview with DMV examiner, by request.

How can you get help practicing for the driving test? The DMV website outlines the driving maneuvers that will be tested. You can also take driver training (behind the wheel) classes in California secondary schools (high schools, technical schools, or adult schools) or at a state-licensed professional driv-

ing school.

Can I use an interpreter for the driving road test? No you will need to be able to respond to driving instructions in English, including pointing to safety features of your vehicle and performing driving maneuvers. DMV examiners have experience administering tests to applicants with limited English proficiency, and will also use hands signals and gestures to the extent that is safe. However you should practice responding to driving in English to pass the test.

What happens if I fail the test? You three chances to pass the test or the road test.

***"You can use an AB60 license to drive, and to identify yourself to police officers, e.g. in a traffic stop"***

What kind of license can I get through AB 60? Can I also drive a truck or a motorcycle with AM 60? AB 60 allows you to apply for all non-commercial driver's licenses offered through the DMV. This includes Class C (most cars), Class MI/M2 (motorcycles), Noncommercial Class A or B (travel trailers,

## Immigrants Gain Accessibility To California Driver's License

some RVs).

What documents do I need to show to get an AB 60 license? Every applicant will need documents to prove (1) his or her identity (2) residency in the State of California. At this time, it is a good idea to gather and update your documents, such as a consular ID card or passport, utility bill, or lease agreement, medical records, tax return, record of a financial institution, or school records, note that the applicant will be allowed to use documents under spouse's name as proof of residency, but not others in shared residences. If your documents have expired, you should visit your consulate to renew them as this process can take some time.

How can I use my AB 60 license? You can use an AB60 license to drive, and to identify yourself to police officers, e.g. in a traffic stop. It is unlawful for businesses, landlords, government agencies or activity that receives state funds to discriminate against you based on the type of license you have. driver's licenses do not give you a right to vote and do not make you eligible for any benefits that you were not eligible for without the license. A driver's license does not give you the



Photo courtesy of Peter Merts

Arnulfo Garcia

right to work as an employee. However, if in the future you are granted a status that allows you to work, you will be able to use the driver's license as proof of identity along with a valid work authorization document, when you complete the 1-9 form.

Does AB60 contain protections from discrimination? The law prohibits state or local government agencies, officials, or programs that receive

state funds from discriminating against someone because he or she holds or presents an AB60 license. This includes state and local law enforcement officials. Additionally, AB60 specifies that it shall be a violation of law, including, but not limited to, a violation of the Unrh Civil Rights Act to discriminate against an individual who holds or presents an AB60 driver's license.

Will information I provide to the DMV be confidential? The documents you provide to the DMV to prove your identity, name, residency, and age are not a public recorded and the DMV may not disclose this information, except when requested by a law enforcement agency as part of an investigation.

To complete your application, you must give a thumb print, pass a vision exam, and have your picture taken.

Study for your test, make a driving test appointment, pay any outstanding traffic tickets and be prepared to pay the application fee of \$33.00 and don't forget to smile for your picture.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the C/O saving an inmate's life. What would have happened if the situation was reversed? Would the inmate be required under the inmate's code to let

him die? And if help were to be rendered, what would have happened to the inmate (by the other inmates)? I'm a subscriber, a contributor, and a retired emergency physician. I enjoy the paper.

David S.

## Legislators Focus on Mentally Ill Prisoners

*Continued from Page 1*

Gov. Jerry Brown and county sheriffs want \$500 million in bond money to expand jails for inmates redirected from state prisons under the three-year-old realignment law. State Democrats want counties to spend some of that money on mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities, transitional housing, or other alternatives.

The Democrats' efforts for flexibility in spending is supported by reform groups but is being criticized by California State Sheriff's Association, Republican lawmakers and State Association of Counties.

Sheriff's lobbyist Aaron Maguire points out, "Counties have a huge problem with jails that were constructed decades ago."

Senate Democrats are also seeking \$175 million for programs intended to help mentally ill offenders. Among the proposals is \$12 million to train police to spot warning

signs of mental illness. Elliot Rodger's killing spree at U.C. Santa Barbara after being interviewed by sheriff's deputies demonstrated the need for police training in identifying mentally ill offenders.

Aaron Maguire supported Senate Democrat's proposals for officer training and grants to counties for substance abuse treatment and other programs to help mentally ill offenders.

Recommendations by the Assembly Select Committee on Justice Reinvestment included spending more on rehabilitation, money earmarked for veterans and people with mental illness. Other programs would focus on treating instead of imprisoning drug addicts and youth offenders.

State Senator Jim Beall commented, "It's very clear that we've criminalized the mental health system over the last several decades... We need to have a system that provides mental health treatment not as a criminal act, but as a public health issue."

## Editorial in Spanish

Quando el Acto de Conductores Responsables y Seguros (AB 60) fué implementado el primero de Enero, las licencias de manejo de California se hicieron disponibles para todos los residentes de California sin importar su estado legal de inmigración. Sin embargo, ¿sabía usted que antes de 1994 el estado legal de inmigración del solicitante de licencia de manejo no importaba?

Entre el periodo de 1994 y 1995, la gente que vivió y trabajo en California, pero fueron excluidos de manejar legalmente en el estado, pero simplemente no dejaron de manejar.

Los padres de familia todavía necesitaban llevar a sus hijos a la escuela. Los trabajadores todavía necesitaban ir al trabajo. La carga creada al excluirlos de una licencia de manejar simplemente creo una nueva industria al confiscar sus automóviles y haber sido multados.

Por consiguiente, regresando a 1994 cuando las reglas permitían a residentes aplicar por una licencia de manejo sin importar el estado de inmigración, era sentido común. El cambio de ley termino una carga impuesta sobre ciudadanos y residentes de California que cumplían con la ley.

Aquí hay unas respuestas a preguntas frecuentemente solicitadas sobre la nueva ley:

Antes de ir al Departamento de Vehículos Motorizados (DMV), pague cualquier multa de tráfico pendiente y estudie para el examen de manejo. Hay

suficiente información útil en la página de internet. <http://drive-ca.org/apply/>.

Sería mejor arreglar una cita con el DMV antes de ir para reducir el tiempo de espera.

Necesitaras que completar una forma de aplicación y pagar un pago de \$33.

Asegúrese tener los documentos que comprueban su identidad y residencia de California, como una identificación consular o pasaporte, una factura de utilidades, un contrato de renta, un registro médico, su declaración de impuestos, un registro de una institución financiera, o un registro escolar.

Usted puede usar documentos bajo el nombre de un cónyuge como prueba de residencia pero no otros en residencias compartidas. Si sus documentos se han vencido se deben renovar.

Deberá pasar un examen de vista. Usted tendrá tres oportunidades para pasar un examen escrito que cubre leyes de tráfico.

Posteriormente, necesitaras hacer una cita para el examen de manejar.

Deberá tener prueba de responsabilidad financiera y aseguransa para el auto. Usted tendrá tres oportunidades para pasar el examen de manejo. El sitio de internet del DMV describe las maniobras de manejo que serán examinadas.

Su huella del dedo pulgar y foto será tomada para la licencia.

Deberá ser capaz de responder a instrucciones de manejo

en ingles, incluyendo las que son dirigidas a las características de seguridad de vehiculo y su desempeño en maniobras de manejo.

Los evaluadores del DMV tienen experiencia administrando pruebas a solicitantes quienes tienen habilidad limitada en el ingles. Sin embargo, los solicitantes deben practicar para responder instrucciones en Ingles para pasar el examen.

La nueva ley permite las solicitudes para licencias no-comerciales ofrecidas por el DMV, incluyendo la clase C (la mayoría de carros), Clase MI/M2 (motocicletas), Clase No-comercial A o B (automóvil de remolque, algunos RVs).

Las nuevas licencias son para conducir. Sin embargo, pueden ser utilizadas como identificación para los oficiales de policía.

Es contra la ley para negocios, propietarios, agencias gubernamentales, o actividad que reciba fondos del estado para discriminarlo basado en el tipo de licencia que usted tenga.

El poseer licencia de manejar no le da el derecho a votar.

Los documentos proporcionados al DMV para averiguar su identidad, nombre, residencia, y edad no son registros públicos y el DMV no tiene permitido revelar esta información, excepto cuando son requeridas por una agencia policial como parte de una investigación.

—**Traccion by Miguel Quesada**

# Addressing the Importance of Hygiene Drive

## Kid C.A.T. Speaks

By Emile DeWeaver  
Kid C.A.T. Writer

Kid CAT members collected hygiene donations from inmates in San Quentin for six months, and on the week of Christmas, they gathered with Kid CAT volunteers to make the hygiene kits.

Their efforts are part of the third bi-annual hygiene drive, a movement started by Kid CAT member Mike Nelson. The movement's aim is to provide homeless children with essential hygiene products.

The doors of the ARC Trailer opened at 10am. Men from the yard trickle in and out to donate everything from shower shoes to shampoo, and Kid CAT members thank the men for their generosity. Each hygiene kit is a Ziploc bag filled with ten items: a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, face towel, and other essentials. The hygiene kits will be distributed to homeless children in San Francisco and Marin County.

"It's all about giving back," said Philip Mendez, President of Kid CAT's Public Relations department. "Some people write us off because we're inmates who've done horrible things, but I'm watching these guys come in from the yard to give their canteen to kids, and I love it. Some of these guys make \$10 a month at their prison jobs. Some don't even have jobs; they're drawing birthday cards to hustle up some toothpaste."

"It's not just about doing my time," said Nelson, the Hygiene Drive Coordinator. "I have

work to do. I'm accountable for hurting the community when I was a kid. I think everyone here making kits, everyone donating, we all want to do what we can to restore the community."

Nelson talked about how he learned his sense of responsibility from his grandmother without realizing he was learning from her. When Amber alerts were first airing on TV, Nelson's grandmother spearheaded a movement to fingerprint the children in Canyon Lake. According to Nelson, the collected fingerprints were stored in a data base to help track missing children.

***"I'm accountable for hurting the community when I was a kid. I think everyone here making kits, everyone donating, we all want to do what we can to restore the community"***

Dolan Baird has been a Kid CAT volunteer for more than three years. Baird will load his truck with hygiene kits after the collection and drive them to the agencies that will distribute the kits: Larkin Street, Compass Family Services, Homeless Alliance, and a Marin County agency that is



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Donation of collected cosmetics from inmates in S.Q. for the Hygiene Drive

yet to be determined. Baird said, "The goal is to collect enough product to have a one-for-one exchange, so the kids can come back every week to get more hygiene."

One obstacle to establishing a one-for-one exchange, according to Hygiene Drive Assistant Coordinator Ke Lam, is finding agencies willing to store and distribute the product year-round. Baird, however, said the biggest problem is collecting enough product. Baird collected over 300 kits with Kid CAT last July, but the numbers drastically dropped for the December collection. He explained that the numbers' owed their sharp decline to hurdles that Kid CAT is confident it will surmount in the coming year.

The ARC trailer is filled with optimism for the future, and men begin to talk about the moments that have inspired them

since the first Hygiene Drive in 2013.

"For me, it's just the collaboration between us and our volunteers," said Mendez. "Seeing where the stuff goes, the impact on kids' lives. It's such a beautiful thing."

"The photo of all our products being assembled by the outside community," Lam said. "Volunteers picking up products and organizing." Lam looks toward the door where an inmate lingers outside the doorway, rocking from foot to foot. The newcomer smiles, holds up a deodorant, and asks if he is in the right place to donate hygiene. "Guys on the yard being proud of what we're doing," Lam said before he hurried off to greet the newcomer.

"When John Lam and Vinny started going cell to cell to collect donations," Nelson said, describing Kid CAT's early ef-

orts to build support for the Hygiene Drive.

Baird had a long list of moments. "Seeing the faces of the youth last year, knowing they were going to get a hygiene bag," he said. "Seeing the staff at Outreach. The looks on their faces, knowing they were going to have product to hand out on Height Street, the Tenderloins, Golden Gate Park. Seeing my truck overflowing with product - I had to tie a net over it all. Seeing these guys carrying product from the yard. One guy came in with enough items for a full kit. Another guy brought a bottle because that's all he had."

Kid CAT said their long-term goal for the hygiene drive is to expand out of S.F. to other cities like Los Angeles. Readers interested in more information about the hygiene drive should contact *Kid CAT Speaks* at the San Quentin News.

## 'Coming Together to Break the Cycle of Violence'

Many teens remain in violent relationships to fulfill a sense of security not found in the home

By Nghiep Lam  
Kid C.A.T. Writer

Understanding teen violence is critical to coping with adult violence, President Barack Obama says.

"The consequences of dating violence—spanning impaired development to physical harm—pose a threat to the health and well-being of teens across our nation, and it is essential we come together to break the cycle of violence that burdens too many of our sons and daughters," the president said.

He spoke in connection with proclaiming February as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Teenager dating violence are less likely to make headlines, however the trauma is no less damaging ... and are more likely to struggle in school, develop depression, or turn to drugs or alcohol and are at greater risk of experiencing the same patterns of violence later in life, state President Obama.

The number of teens experiencing dating violence is con-



Official Photo

President Obama

siders the norm of adolescent development, lawmakers and lobbyists states. The result is a lack of services for teens that has been victimized and persecution of the offender. This failure leads to adult crime, experts say.

Many teens remain in violent relationships to fulfill a sense of security not found in the home, states physiologist Judy Chicurel. "Teenage girls that spend more time with their boyfriends will become closer and make more connection with their boyfriends than with their family," physiologist Judy Chicurel says. Peers expect the boyfriend to be the "man" in the relationship that often that not lead him to utilizing violence as a mean to demonstrate his masculinity, Peter J. Burke.

Whereas, a girlfriend is expected to fill the role of a caregiver, supporter, and dependent on her boyfriend. She is afraid if she leave her boyfriend her peers will not accepted her any longer, so she conform to their peer norms, say Gamache.

Kid C.A.T. mission is to in-

spire humanity through education, mentorship, and restorative justice. Addressing teen dating violence is a mission of Kid C.A.T.

The teen that stay in a violent relationship tend to fulfill something he/she did not receive from the family or a loved one, Gamache say. Some teenage girls may not see their relationship as abusive because they interpret violence as a norm way to express love or better known as "normative confusion," advocate of women rights Shari Roan states.

Only 1 in 25 teenagers involved in an abusive relationship will seek help because of the fear of retaliation.

For many years, our legal system has not made any reforms to protect our teens that have been a victim our dating violence. One advocate for youth suggest on form of reforms to help our teens victims of dating violence is expanding state civil and penal domestic violence statutes to include teenagers in dating relationship, youth advocate Kathryn E. Suarez say.

# Connecting Through Unusual Circumstances

*'One had murdered the other's uncle, while the nephew vowed one day to avenge his uncle's death'*

By Juan Haines  
Managing Editor

For years, a Christian and a Muslim prisoner lived in the same housing unit, mentoring their fellow convicts; one was a church elder, the other a military veteran and self-help facilitator. Each knew little of the other's past—one had murdered the other's uncle, while the nephew vowed one day to avenge his uncle's death.

When the two eventually met to reconcile the past, more than 100 inmates stood in a prison chapel, clapping hands to the rhythm of a tambourine and singing, "I got a feeling that everything is going to be all right."

"Twenty years ago, I committed a crime. I murdered Mr. Brian Thompson," Derrick Holloway told the audience. His sermon centered on the importance of forgiveness.

Holloway compared un-forgiveness to dropping an anchor and saying, "This is where I'm going to be. Like with brothers and sisters, the justice system, cellies, friends, different faiths. The Lord is challenging us to pick up that anchor, because a storm is coming."

Holloway invited the nephew of the person he murdered to the stage.

Abdul Raheem Thompson-Bonilla walked up to Holloway, embraced him and with tears in his eyes said, "I want him to share some words; it's a funny thing, how men have thoughts and God steps in. God has showed favor on me and opened my heart."

The audience stood up and gave applause.

Thompson-Bonilla told the audience what 18 years of un-forgiving and vengeance could do to a person.

"The longer I held it to myself, the angrier I got. But, God had another plan. I understood that the killing of my brothers stops with me," he said. "I could not deny the favor of forgiveness that God has given me. So, when it came to my brother, Holloway, I looked him in the eye, and told

him that I forgive him."

Holloway went on to talk about the meaning for true forgiveness.

"We need to forgive each other without condition," he said. "to be long-suffering with your brother. If you want forgiveness, you've got to give it. When you sit in that board room, you want forgiveness. We in prison have a way of pushing away some inmates who committed a certain kind of crime, but we have to forgive everyone. In order to

have forgiveness, there must be dialogue. If there's going to be real forgiveness, there must be some type of dialogue. I think that Victims Offender Education Group has it right, when they make people write a forgiveness letter. You have to have a conversation."

Holloway warned of the dangers of not forgiving what a person is not willing to do, or saying, "I'm not going to forgive."

"I believe that many of us, right now are seeing the faces of

those who we are saying, 'I will not forgive.' Like the one who told on me, I would not forgive. My brother, I would not forgive. My pastor, I would not forgive. My enemy, I would not forgive. My wife, I would not forgive. This is not a Christian thing; this is not a religious thing," Holloway said. "It's a human thing. We all need to forgive in order to defeat our enemy."

He said that the enemy keeps the door of un-forgiveness open. "There's a lot of us who have these places of un-forgiveness."

"The foundation of what Christ did was forgiveness. So, if the enemy knows he can shake your foundation of forgiveness, then he has you," Holloway warned. "Father forgive them, because they know not what they do," Holloway read from the Bible.

Holloway invited everyone in the church to come forward if they had issues of un-forgiveness that they'd like to address.

More than half the church went forward as a pastor prayed that they'd find forgiveness in their lives.

"Dear Lord, I give you all the hurt that I've done to others. Today I give it all to you," the pastor said. "Every bit of it. Today, you break the pain and anguish. So that the men here can walk out of here free. No one will leave this place the same."

Thompson-Bonilla thanked everyone who facilitated the meeting, including other veterans and all his Muslim brothers, who he said didn't know the particulars of why they were in church that day.



Photo by Sam Hearn

Abdul Raheem Thompson-Bonilla and Derrick Holloway standing in front of the Adjustment Center

## Searching for Valley Fever Fungus Costs the State \$5.4 million

*Continued from Page 1*

in 2011: Pleasant Valley State Prison (PVSP) and Avenal State Prison (ASP).

Inmates who declined to volunteer for screening "are considered eligible for transfer to the two prisons unless they are in high-risk groups," reported *The Associated Press*.

According to a 2013 federal court order, those who are African American, Filipino, those with diabetes and those with a weakened immune system, are at a higher risk for developing complications from valley fever.

Individuals over the age of 65 have a medical restriction from being housed at ASP and PVSP.

Joyce Hayhoe, a spokeswoman for the federal court-appointed receiver who controls prison medical care, said about 90,000 of the more than 134,000 state inmates would be tested, according to the *AP* report.

Experts from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projected that about 13 percent of the tested inmates will be found to be immune, or about 11,700 inmates, the *AP* reported. The capacity of PVSP and ASP is about 8,200 inmates.

### SAN QUENTIN STATE PRISON-NORTH BLOCK TESTING:

About a week prior to the testing, San Quentin's closed-circuit television system aired an informational video that explained the screening process. However, the full message did not air because the video cut off before its completion.

Prison administrators also passed out a pamphlet to inmates that explained the test was voluntary. If someone declined the test and did not have a current restriction, they would continue to be eligible for transfer to Pleasant Valley or Avenal.

More than 75 percent of the 500 inmates in North Block identified by prison administrators for screening did not volunteer to take the test.

### CELL FEEDING:

January 12 began in North Block with an announcement at about 6:30 a.m. that inmates with diabetes were to be let out of their cells so they could receive their medication.

Normally, after inmates receive their medication, they make their way to the chow hall for breakfast. However, on screening day the diabetics were ordered back to their cells.

About five or six inmates as-

sisted North Block correctional officers in passing out bagged breakfasts and lunches to each cell. Inmates who receive special dietary meals, such as religious diets, had their food delivered to their cells also.

The standard breakfast consisted of cocoa-pop cold cereal, coffee-cake, two boiled eggs, milk, apple juice and instant coffee. The lunch consisted of peanut butter and jelly, four slices of bread, a twin pack of cookies, corn nuts and an instant fruit drink.

### TESTING:

The tests for valley fever began on the first tier at about 11 a.m.

Everyone was ordered to get out of their cells, walk around to the back of North Block and line up according to assigned cell.

Next, people who were on the list for screening were called to a table where a staff member asked whether they wanted to take the test. He then checked off the answer and directed the inmate to another area with about six other staff members.

When the inmates reached the other area, they were asked again if they were going to take the test. When an inmate said "no" he was told, "You will have to sign this refusal slip."

One inmate said, "I am not

refusing to take your test or experiment or whatever this is. I am not *volunteering* to take this test. You can check off whatever you want." The staff member then told the inmate he had to sign the paper. The inmate repeated he was not volunteering to sign anything. The staff member told the inmate, "Just go."

Other inmates who did not volunteer for the test said they did not sign the refusal slip because staff members would not give them a copy of what they were signing, or they could not understand what the content of the refusal slip was.

Testing in North Block ended at about 1:15 p.m.

### WHO VOLUNTEERED?

Inmates who volunteered for testing were taken to a location outside of North Block to receive an injection of the screening solution.

Those who did not volunteer for testing were ordered back to their cells.

Here are the numbers by race of inmates (from second tier to the highest fifth tier) who went to the injection location outside of North Block:

- White: 70
- Black: 9
- Hispanic: 14
- Other: 12

- Total: 105
- Average per tier: 26.25
- Estimated North Block Total: 131

One inmate who took the test said he asked the staff member who was administering the screening test to him, "What is in this?" The person told him what it was, but the inmate said he couldn't understand the words. The inmate said he then asked the staff member if he could take one of the empty boxes. The staff member said, "No." Therefore, the inmate said he wrote down what was on the box — *Immitis spherule-derived*.

### THE RESULTS:

On Jan. 14, North Block was placed on lockdown so that readings could be taken from the inmates who participated in the test.

The breakfast schedule was essentially the same as Jan. 12.

After breakfast, each person was called to the first desk by name and cell so officials could take their reading.

Here is the number of inmates called to the desk:

- First tier: 30
- Second tier: 25
- Third tier: 13
- Fourth tier: 20
- Fifth tier: 24
- Total inmates called: 112



# Leader of *Just Came to Play* Gives Last Concert Before Heading Out the Gate

By Juan Haines  
Managing Editor

An audience of nearly 100 prisoners filled San Quentin's Protestant chapel on Jan. 9 for inmate Reggie Austin's last concert. Austin is bandleader of jazz band, *Just Came to Play*.

A large cloth painting of a trumpeter playing in a nightclub highlighted was the backdrop for the stage.

"I thought the show was great. I've known Reggie since the 80s," said prisoner George Greenwood. "He's always put on a good show and brings out the best in his players. He always brings my spirits up. It was a great way to bring in 2015."

The multi-ethnic audience was not unusual for a San Quentin event. Moreover, the musicians for *Just Came to Play* include African-American, Hispanic, and White players.

Inmates sat leaning forward with their arms on the backs

of the pews, heads bobbing to energetic jazz standards performed by the band, such as *Stolen Moments*, and a post-bop piece called, *Depression*.

"Reggie gave us the sheet music just days before the event," said drummer Dwight Krizman. "Then as we were playing, he conducted us on the fly. That just shows that he trusts us as players and it keeps us on our toes as musicians."

\*\*\*\*\*

Raphaelé "Raffie" Casale, an office technician in the warden's office, sponsors San Quentin's inmate band program.

What does an inmate band program do for the prison?

Talk about what Reggie Austin brings to the band program.

Anything you'd like to add?

\*\*\*\*\*

At one point Austin asked guitar player, Greg Dixon and bass



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Band members: Lee Jaspar and on the guitar and Dwight Krizman playing the drums

player Lee Jaspar to switch instruments to perform *Yellow Jacket*. The pace picked up

and became lively with Jaspar and Dixon carrying out solos. The best way to describe their performance is to say the instruments were talking to each other.

Austin called for the band to play "the soft easy sounds of (John) Coltrane." While the melody was being played, quite conversations could be heard between some inmates, agreeing that jazz brought a relaxing mood in the chapel.

The next tune had an extra swing to its funky beat, seeming to a collaboration of *Take the A Train* and *Watermelon Man*.

The next piece, a *How Inensitive*, a Latin love song, slowed the pace and brought an immediate shout "yeah!" from someone in the crowd. It featured Dixon scatting over smooth guitar playing, which brought a round of applause. This song

highlighted the great and steady rhythm of conga player Jimmy Rojas, bringing two rounds of applause and a standing ovation.

The pace continued with a hard sounding piece, featuring Fasion's spunky trumpet and a raw flaunting bass that brought the crowd to its feet.

The next tune, a Cha-Cha, featured percussionist Jimmy Rojas' ability to hold a steady beat.

The show began right after the evening meal, roughly 6 p.m. and lasted until it was time for the inmates to return to their housing units at 8:30 p.m.

The players, Keyboard, Reginald Austin; Bass, Lee Jaspar; Guitar, Greg Dixon; Congas/Percussions, Jimmy Rojas; Trumpet, Larry "Popeye" Fasion; Keyboard, Allen "Squirrel" Ware; and Drums; Dwight Krizman.



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Squirrel Ware



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Top: Lee Jaspar, Larry "Popeye" Fasion, Jimmy Rojas, Greg "Dee" Dixon, Dwight Krizman  
Bottom: Squirrel Ware, Reggie Austin

# Celebrating Black And the Lesser Known



Dr. Patricia E. Bath (1949-) was nominated to the National Inventors Hall of Fame for inventing a method of eye surgery that has helped blind people regain their sight.



Elijah McCoy (1843-1929) invented the oil-dripping cup for trains. His invention was copied by other inventors, but the copies were inferior causing customers to ask for the real McCoy. This is where the expression "the real McCoy originates from.



George Washington Carver (1860-1943) invented peanut butter and many other products derived from plants.



Jan Ernst Metzinger (1852-1889) invented a machine that increased the speed of shoemaking by 900 percent.



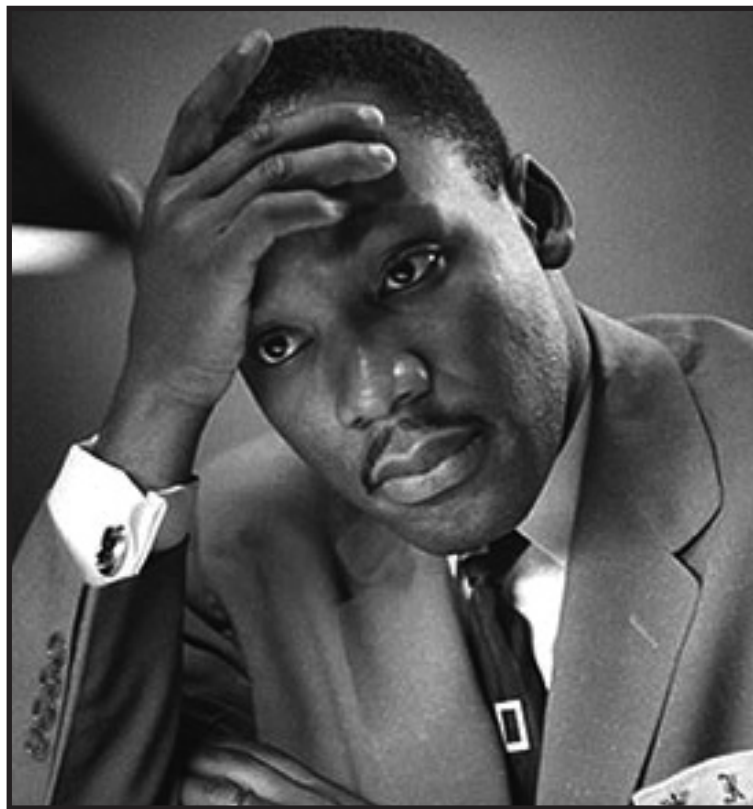
Granville T. Woods (1856-1910) invented a communication system linking trains with stations. He dropped out of school at age ten.

By Aly Tamboura  
Contributing Writer

From the very first footsteps that African slaves made off a Dutch ship at Point Comfort in Hampton Virginia in 1619, continuing on to the first footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's historic crossing of the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma Alabama, and finally to the first footsteps of the protesters in Ferguson, Missouri fed-up with the alarming instances of unarmed black men being fatally gunned down by law enforcement, the accomplishments and triumphs of Black American firsts have often been overshadowed by the horrors of American racism and the history of brutal oppression, disenfranchisement, and marginalization.



February is Black history month, a time reserved to celebrate and acknowledge



Martin Luther King Jr.



Rosa

12 million African slaves who arrived in the new world, of which about 3 percent (300,000) went to American colonies were they contributed in their own way to the building of America.

Black History Month is also time to recognize lesser known Blacks and their compelling firsts in American history. The month allows casting aside the obscuring shadows of history, unveiling Black pioneers and ground breakers, many of whom have gone unrecognized for far too long in America's history books.

Beginning back when the colonies were under Brit-

slave, fought in the ensuing American Revolutionary War.

Later in history, a former slave, George Washington Carver (1841-1943), developed many food products from peanuts, sweet potatoes and soybeans. His scientific discoveries include a rubber substitute, adhesives, dyes, pigments and many other innovative products. Carver was the first Black man to promote his discoveries to poor farmers as alternative crops to cotton. His goal was to liberate them from the slave crop and improve their lives by developing both new sources of food and new income from different crops.

Carver endeavored under the shadow of the 1857 United States Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision, which defined Blacks as non-citizens and held they could never be citizens. This dubious edict stayed in effect through the Civil War and until the 14th Amendment superseded it in 1868.

With new but limited legal and constitutional protection, a blossoming of Black cultural achievement soon followed. In 1870, Hiram Revels became the first African-American Senator in the United States Congress. Revels, who represented the southern state of Mississippi during the period of post-Civil War Reconstruction, tried to bring improvements to Black communities, openly stating that he "...wanted to assist [Black men] in acquiring property, and in becoming intelligent, enlightened citizens..." His ambitions, along with Black political progress, were soon shattered by Jim Crow laws--local ordinances and state laws enacted and enforced between 1876 and 1965, mandating segregation and promoting the notion that Blacks were inferior to whites. Under Jim Crow

laws, Blacks faced years of violence and intimidation resulting in systemic disadvantages in education, social status, and economic opportunities that still plagued Black Communities today.

Even under the yoke of the Jim Crow restrictions, Blacks continued their contributions to America. While institutional and individual violence against Blacks intensified, so did Black ingenuity and accomplishment, from patents to politics and patriots.

In 1821, Thomas L. Jennings became the first African-American patent holder for a dry cleaning process. Sarah E. Goode followed in 1885 with a patent for a bed



Black heroes like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Rosa Parks and so many others. Along with the well-known heroes are the 9.4 to

ish rule, the first casualty of the Boston Massacre was a free Black tradesman named Crispus Attucks. Following the massacre, approximately 5,000 Blacks, both free and



Ertha Kit Standing in front of

# Black History Month

## Known Black Heroes



Parks



Thurgood Marshall

education ruling was a pivotal moment in American race relations. Though Blacks' struggle for Civil Rights began decades earlier, it hurled the nation into the better known era of Civil Rights battles, such a voting rights of the 1950s and 60s.

The era also gave rise to the trail blazers of the 1960s such as Patricia Harris, who became the first Black female ambassador to Luxembourg in 1965.

Other lesser known Black Americans have made significant contributions to American society, which range from the inventions of everyday household devices to major scientific discoveries in fields including physics, biology, mathematics, medical, nucle-



ar and space sciences. Blacks have also shaped American culture through their contri-



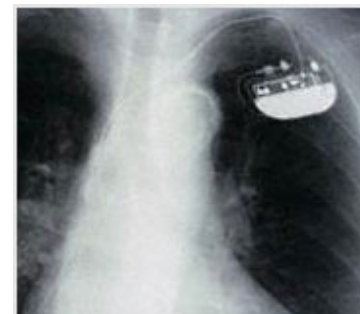
Lewis Latimer (1848-1928) is credited with inventing the carbon filament in light bulbs, while working in the laboratories of both Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell.



Madam C. J. Walker (1867-1919) invented a hair growing lotion and became the first African-American millionaire.



Garrett Morgan (1877-1963) is the inventor of the gas mask and the first traffic signal.



Otis Boykin (1920-1982) is the inventor of the pacemaker and electronic guidance devices used in missiles.



Lonnie G. Johnson (1949-) is the inventor of the Supersoaker watergun.

that folded into a cabinet.

Educational barriers were also broken by men such as: Edward A. Bouchet, who in 1863 became the first Black man to receive a Ph.D. from Yale University; and Daniel Hale Williams, was a pioneer in open heart surgery. Black women also made strides in education. In 1921 three women, Sadie Tanner Mossell, Georgia Simpson and Eva Beatrice Dykes became the first Black women to earn Ph.Ds.

Charles Hamilton Houston became the first Black editor of the Harvard Law Review. Barack Obama would later become the Harvard Law Review's first Black president, as well as the first African-Amer-

ican to become the President of the United States.

Houston later founded a law school which would educate the most famous Black jurist, Thurgood Marshall, who tirelessly fought to undermine the Jim Crow system in the courts and go on to be the first Black United States Supreme Court Justice.

Black achievements of the time angered the segregated South, which answered with a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. Between 1890 and 1940, millions of Black Americans were terrorized under the guise of racial suppression. Extra-judicial mob violence was responsible for the murder of at least 5,000 Black men, women and children, according to newspaper records kept at the Tuskegee Institute. Indeed, all of these murder victims should be included in the history of Black heroes.

As Blacks were being murdered in America, Black lawyers like Hamilton and Marshall were the first Black men to fight for civil rights and for an end to lynching in the American court system, filing ground breaking lawsuits.

As the legal cases were gaining traction, Black men fought in two world wars. Some 350,000 Blacks served on the Western Front during World War I. Corporal Freddie Stowers of the 371st Infantry Regiment, the only Black soldier honored by the United States for his actions in World War I, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Eugene Jacques Bullard, served in the French Flying Corps and received France's highest award: the Legion of Honor.

During World War II over 1.5 million Blacks wore the American uniform in segregated units, such as the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen and

the U.S. 761st Tank Battalion. More than 700 Black soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice surrendering their lives to liberate Europe. During the war, Benjamin O. Davis became the first Black General serving from 1940-1948.

Partly based on the valor of Black soldiers during World War II, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 ending discrimination in the armed forces leading to the first desegregated military units in the early 1950s.

In 1954, James Meredith, became the first Black student at the University of Mississippi after the Supreme Court



handed down Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. The landmark decision was the result of consolidating the lawsuits engineered by Marshall and others, years earlier.

The Brown v. Board of Ed-

butions in art, music, food and athletics.

The fact is America the Great would not be so great without contributions from Blacks.

# Kathleen Jackson Promotes *Bind the Testimony*, The Work of 15 Inmates in Her Writing Class

By Joan Lisetor  
San Quentin News Adviser

More than 100 people crowded into Book Passage in Corte Madera on Jan. 24 to hear Kathleen Jackson and celebrate the book produced by the men in her Christian Creative Writing Class and, she said, to celebrate the men.

The book, *Bind the Testimony*, is the work of the 15 inmates who attend the weekly class she has been teaching for two years at San Quentin Prison. Each story in the book is a testament to how each man came to Christ.

***“Let me explain lifers. They are talented people who want to give back, people who have turned their lives around”***

Jackson, a retired English teacher, volunteers at San Quentin as a facilitator, sponsor, and mentor for several groups, including House of Healing, CGA (Criminal and Gang Members Anonymous,) VOEG (Victim Offender Education Group, and TRUST (Teaching Responsibility Utilizing Sociological Training.) She is a member of the Garden Chapel Drama Team and the Citizens Advisory Committee to the Warden.

She told of her own conversion to Christianity, prompted by the men in the basic English class she was then teaching at San Quentin. They convinced her to initiate the Christian Writing class, where they would write poetry and essays -- but no sermons.

Jackson asked people in the



audience to give one word that to them describes a lifer. Among the more than 30 words shouted from the audience: criminal, tough, endurance, lost, guilty, scary, abused, tragic, Karma, teachers, gentle, misunderstood, redemption, friendly, trapped, disabled, lonely, misguided, isolated, tattooed, bored, sad, human, and then came a voice from the back of the room. “Paroled,” said Troy Williams, who was a lifer, who recently paroled from San Quentin after 18 years in prison.

Jackson invited Williams to the speakers’ podium. As he stood next to her she said, “Let me explain lifers. They are talented people who want to give back, people who have turned their lives around.” Williams said he basically agreed with the list, then spoke of his own turn around and his appreciation for the many programs available to inmates at the prison.

Jackson read an excerpt from the book from a testimony, *Please God Abandon Me*, saying it was difficult to select just one. Next she told a story of a former student in the Christian Creative Writing class, who she referred to as unselfishness because he requested a transfer to Old Folsom Prison to be closer to his ailing mother, knowing his imprisonment would be more difficult than it had been at San Quentin.

The presentation ended with a video shot at San Quentin, showing men in the class reading excerpts from their testimonies. Following the presentation, Jackson signed copies of *Bind the Testimony*. As people waited in line, most helped themselves to the current issue of the *San Quentin News*, which were stacked on a table.

File Photo

Kathleen Jackson speaking to the crowd about the anthology



File Photo

File Photo

The crowd listening as the event took place

Troy Williams speaking about Kathleen’s hard work

# Remembering Dr. King, Ferguson And Moving Forward (Part 2)

By Watani Stiner  
Staff Writer

## An 'OG's' Perspective

"I would be the first to say that I am still committed to militant, powerful, massive, non-violence as the most potent weapon in grappling with the problem from a direct action point of view. I'm absolutely convinced that a riot merely intensifies the fears of the white community while relieving the guilt. And I feel that we must always work with an effective, powerful weapon and method that brings about tangible results. But it is not enough for me to stand before you tonight and condemn riots. It would be morally irresponsible for me to do that without, at the same time, condemning the contingent, intolerable conditions that exist in our society. These conditions are the things that cause individuals to feel that they have no other alternative than to engage in violent rebellions to get attention. And I must say tonight that a riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it America has failed to hear? It has failed to hear that the plight of the (African American) poor has worsened over the last twelve or fifteen years. It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met. And it has failed to hear that large segments of white society are more concerned about tranquility and the status quo than about justice and humanity."

"I would like to talk ... about some of the things that must be done if we are to solve this problem. ...The first thing I would like to mention is that there must be a recognition on the part of everybody in this nation that

America is still a racist country. Now however unpleasant that sounds, it is the truth. And we will never solve the problem of racism until there is a recognition of the fact that racism still stands at the center of so much of our nation and we must see racism for what it is. It is the myth of an inferior people.

...Secondly, we've got to get rid of two or three myths that still pervade our nation. One is the myth of time. I'm sure you've heard this notion. It is the notion that only time can solve the problem of racial injustice. And I've heard it from many sincere people. They've said to (Blacks) and/to his allies in the white community you should slow up, you're pushing things too fast, only time can solve the problem. And if you'll just be nice and patient and continue to pray, in a hundred or two hundred years the problem will work itself out. ...Somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability, it comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals who are willing to be co-workers with God and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. And so we must always help time and realize that the time is always right to do right.

Now there is another myth and that is the notion that legislation can't solve the problem, that you've got to change the

heart, and naturally I believe in changing the heart. I happen to be a Baptist preacher and that puts me in the heart-changing business and Sunday after Sunday I'm preaching about conversion and the need for the new birth and re-generation... But after saying that, let me point out the other side. It may be true that morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law can't make a man love me, but it can restrain him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important also.

...I want to deal with another myth briefly which concerns me and I want to talk about it very honestly and that is over-reliance on the bootstrap philosophy. Now certainly it's very important for people to engage in self-help programs and do all they can to lift themselves by their own bootstraps. ...While America refused to do anything for the Black man [after the Civil War], the nation, through an act of Congress, was giving away millions of acres of land in the west and the mid-west, which meant that it was willing to undergird its White peasants from Europe with an economic floor. Not only did they give the land, they built land grant colleges for them to learn how to farm. Not only that, it provided county agents to further their expertise in farming and went beyond this and came

to the point of providing low interest rates for these persons so that they could mechanize their farms, and today many of these persons are being paid millions of dollars a year in federal subsidies not to farm and these are so often the very people saying to the Black man that he must lift himself by his own bootstraps. ...Senator Eastlands, incidentally, who says this all the time gets a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars a year, not to farm on various area of his plantation down in Mississippi. And yet he feels that we must do everything for ourselves. Well, that appears to me to be a kind of socialism for the rich and rugged hard individualistic capitalism for the poor.

... It has been my experience in these years that I've been in the struggle for justice, that things just don't happen until the issue is dramatized in a massive direct-action way. I never will forget when we came through Washington in 1964.... I stopped by to see President Johnson. We... got to the point of talking about voting rights. The President was concerned about voting, but he said Martin, I can't get this through in this session of Congress. ... if I push a voting rights bill now, I'll lose the support of seven congressmen that I sorely need for the particular things ... and we just can't get it s. Well, I went on to say to the President that I felt that we had to do something about it and two weeks later we started

a movement in Selma, Alabama. We started dramatizing the issue of the denial of the right to vote and I submit to you that three months later as a result of that Selma movement, the same President who said to me that we could not get a voting rights bill in that session of Congress was on the television singing ... "we shall overcome" and calling for the passage of a voting rights bill ... it just doesn't come about without pressure.

So, to summarize Martin Luther King, Jr.'s advice on how to move forward: 1. Always take the "high plane of dignity and discipline"—the ends and the means must be in unity; we must utilize "soul force" to accomplish our goals. 2. Acknowledge, as Barack Obama said, that this country is rooted in racism, condemn the intolerable conditions that exist in our society, educate yourself, speak up and acknowledge that the "promises of freedom and justice have not been met." It is commonly recognized that when a wrong has been done, a vital aspect of healing is for the wrong to be clearly stated and understood by all involved. 3. Recognize that time alone will not heal this wound; "the time is always right to do right." 4. Laws are not the ultimate solution, but good laws help and are worth working for. 5. Blaming Black people for not getting their act together is not only not helpful, it is disingenuous and not honest about the resources available to others. 6. Keep the pressure on, keep speaking and staying involved in the work of healing in whatever way you can—don't give up, give out, and give in!

## Study Reveals: Youth Incarceration Declines

By Kris Himmelberger  
Contributing Writer

Incarceration of youth declined steeply after a two-decade surge, reports the National Council on Crime & Delinquency (NCCD).

The 2014 NCCD report cites data from the U.S. Justice Department, which reveals the rate of juvenile "confinement" dropped 41 percent between 2001 and 2011.

By asking stakeholders in juvenile justice to describe the method by which they reduced juvenile confinement in their jurisdictions, the authors list:

- Increased local control that moves supervision responsibilities for some youth from the states to county agencies.
- Provide funding streams and incentives to pay for these shifts in responsibility.
- Make categories of crimes such as misdemeanors and status offenses ineligible for incarceration in state facilities.
- Require juvenile justice systems to employ the best practices identified by research.
- Require placement of youth in the least restrictive environments.

However, the stakeholders believed that further improvement could be made. Some of their recommendations:

- Increasing federal funding for juvenile justice. The report's authors note, "Public opinion research has shown support for paying more in taxes for rehabilitative services for young people, especially when compared to youth incarceration."
- Develop legislation that reallocates funds from closed facilities to youth in the community.
- Support community-based organizations with innovation funds.
- Use performance measures that fit the context of community-based organizations.
- Include community-based organizations, families and youth.

According to the report, "when young people are incarcerated, they lose critical connections to their families, becoming more likely to commit new crimes and less likely to reconnect to school and work."

- Review and reduce the number of out-of-home placements. "Juvenile departments should try to support and strengthen

relationships between youth and their families, making out-of-home placement the exception rather than the rule... Alternatives include placement with extended family members that can help transition youth back to their primary families as soon as possible," notes the report.

- Build a local placement continuum. The authors believe "systems should fund networks of local nonprofit placements for youth in their home communities; make a reduction in state placements a benchmark for success in provider contracts; target the treatment needs of youth who might otherwise be locked up, and use halfway houses, treatment centers and local facilities as alternatives to placements far from home."
- Reduce lengths of stay at various points in the system. Stakeholders are beginning to recognize that mandatory minimum sentences that "keep young people incarcerated longer than necessary" are not effective. One Northeastern stakeholder demands that his state "ask the question every day, why is this kid still there and what the hell are we doing about it?"
- Develop stronger partner-

ships with families and service providers.

- Reduce supervision for youth who do not need it. "Using risk assessments, departments can identify those youth who are at high, moderate and low risk of committing new offenses ... Lowest-risk youth can be diverted from the system entirely or placed on case loads that require very few contact hours with probation officers."
- Reduce revocations that lead to re-incarceration by using response grids. "When a violation has occurred only once and is minor, supervision staff might have the youth write a letter of apology rather than return to court for a formal punishment."
- Work and engage with families and communities in a restorative manner. The report states, "Systems and government should create paid advocate positions to bridge the gap between marginalized families and the juvenile justice system."
- Build capacity for reform and fund communities most impacted. This would help eliminate the racial and ethnic disparities that the author reports "have grown considerably." Out-of-home placements

of youth of color grew from 10 percent of dispositions to 14 percent while the rate of White youth fell from 2.6 percent to 1.1 percent.

White youth also benefited when it came to probation. The rate fell from 24.1 percent to 11 percent. When it came to secure facilities, that rate grew to 3 percent whereas youth of color sentenced to probation remained the same, and sentencing to secure facilities doubled to 22.4 percent.

When it came to gender differences, girls fared better than boys. The number of girls held in placement remained the same, and those sentenced to secure confinement grew from 1.9 percent to 4.5 percent, while the percentage of boys in confinement grew from 15.7 percent to 23.7 percent.

California has made an enormous stride in juvenile justice. A decade ago it housed 10,000 youth. Today it houses 800.

"This is not the time for supporters of juvenile justice reform to become complacent. Rather, it is time to learn from the most promising jurisdictions and deepen reforms," concluded the authors.

# ‘Smart on Crime’ Aims To Reduce Repeat Offenders

By James R. Abernathy Jr.  
Journalism Guild Writer

A new “smart on crime” approach in California is aimed at deterring repeated criminal behavior while creating significant savings in taxpayers’ dollars.

“Such an approach will not only hold offenders accountable for their actions, it will make our communities safer by taking steps to ensure that they don’t commit new crimes,” California Attorney General Kamala D. Harris wrote in an opinion piece published June 5 by the *Huffington Post*.

She said she believes “the way our system deals with low-level, non-violent and non-serious offenders wastes resources needed to fight more serious crime.”

Harris said she formed the Division of Recidivism Reduction and Re-entry (DR3) in the California Department of Justice to support the “smart on crime” strategy.

DR3 has three primary goals: to identify effective initiatives and evidence-based best practices to reduce recidivism; to use innovative technology to measure those initiatives and assess outcomes; and to identify public and private funding sources for those initiatives.

In June, 2014, DR3’s first pilot program, Back on Track

– LA, was launched in partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and Probation Department along with various other public and private-sector entities.

Back on Track – LA is an offspring of the original San Francisco-based Back on Track initiative developed by Harris while serving as district attorney of San Francisco, in

which offenders were held accountable for their behavior and personal responsibility. In exchange, they participated in re-entry and life skills training and employment opportunities to reduce the chances of reverting to a life of crime upon their release.

Back on Track – LA is scheduled to be up and running this fall. It is a re-entry initiative

## Attorney General’s Office Argues Against The Release of Nonviolent Criminals

By David Eugene Archer Sr.  
Journalism Guild Writer

Lawyers for the California Attorney General’s Office have argued in court against the release of eligible nonviolent prisoners from California’s overcrowded prisons “because the state wanted to keep them as a labor force,” according to news reports.

Attorney General Kamala Harris said she was shocked when she read a news story in November about the filing.

“I will be very candid with you ... I was shocked, and I’m looking into it to see if the way it was characterized in the paper is actually how it occurred in court,” Harris told BuzzFeed News in an interview. “I was very troubled by what I read. I just need to find out what did we

actually say in court.”

A week earlier, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that attorneys in Harris’s office had argued that the state could not release the prisoners it had agreed to release. The federal judges hearing the case rejected the argument.

The *Times* stated the attorneys argued that, “if forced to release these inmates early, prisons would lose an important labor pool.” Those prisoners earn wages that range from 8 cents to 37 cents per hour.

The attorneys representing plaintiffs in the prison-overcrowding lawsuit scoffed at the state’s argument.

“They could hire public employees to perform tasks like garbage collection, garage work and recycling; if they deplete the

targeting non-violent offenders in the Los Angeles County jail system. Using evidence-based practices, the initiative will combine in-custody educational opportunities with employment services, life skills training and referrals to key services such as housing and health care.

In addition, participants will create personal responsibility plans. Furthermore, coaches will guide them and hold them accountable to benchmarks and expectations.

“We can no longer afford to ignore our incarceration problem — the financial and societal costs for victims and taxpay-

ers are too high ... Initiatives like Back on Track – LA are critical to stopping the revolving door between our jails and prisons and our communities,” said Harris.

California spends an estimated \$13 billion per year on criminal justice. The average cost to jail an offender for one year is \$43,000, whereas Back on Track costs taxpayers less than \$5,000 per person.

“Through this initiative, participants will make the transition from a former life of crime to being productive, contributing members to their communities and families.”

fire crews in order to staff their garage crews, that would be their own choice,” they responded in their filing.

“The record contains no evidence that defendants cannot implement the required parole process by that date, 11 months after they agreed to do so ‘promptly,’” the judges wrote.

In a Sept. 30 filing in the case, signed by Deputy Attorney General Patrick McKinney but under Harris’ name, the state argued, “Extending 2-for-1 credits to all minimum custody inmates at this time would severely impact fire camp participation – a dangerous outcome while California is in the middle of a difficult fire season and severe drought.”

Approximately 4,400 California prisoners help the state battle wild fires, at wages of about \$2 a

day, *BuzzFeed* reported.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2011 that California’s prisons were so overcrowded that the conditions violated the Constitution’s prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment. California has since been under federal court supervision to reduce prison population.

In February, the state agreed to release nonviolent prisoners with two felonies who had served half of their sentences, *BuzzFeed* reported.

On Feb. 10, 2014, the federal three-judge court gave CDCR the order that minimum-custody inmates will be eligible to earn two-for-one good time credits to the extent such credits do not deplete participation in fire camps where inmates also earn two-for-one good time credits.

## Declining Recidivism Rate in California Thanks to Realignment

*‘Recidivism is a fundamentally important issue if we are to be smart on crime’*

Continued from Page 1

turn parolees arrested for technical parole violations,” PPIC reported.

The report said it did not see huge changes in the arrest or conviction rates of released offenders, which offers evidence that “offender behavior has not changed substantially.”

PPIC reported the law, post-Realignment, makes it difficult to return some released inmates to state prison.

It was reported by PPIC that “Realignment has, as intended, led to a considerable 33 percentage point drop in the proportion of released inmates who are returned to state prison. This demonstrates that realignment has made substantial progress in one of its main goals: reducing the use of prison as a sanction for parole violations and minor criminal offenses.”

According to PPIC, the law (AB 109) has “ceased the flow of released inmates back to prison. As a result, prison and state parole populations have dropped dramatically.”

The report said that prior to Realignment many parole violators “would probably be in prison,” but they are “no longer behind bars.”

In contrast to these findings, PPIC found the number of offenders arrested multiple times increased by 7 percent. “These higher multiple arrest rates may reflect the substantial increase

in the time released offenders spend on the streets – a result of counties’ limited jail capacity.”

PPIC reported that the reform now increases the “street time” of former prisoners.

**“Realignment has all but ended the state’s practice of returning parolees to prison via the parole board”**

According to PPIC, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) reported offender arrest and conviction rates “apparently declined in each month of the post-realignment period.”

“Prisoners released post-realignment are less likely to be like the pre-reform ‘frequent flyers’ who cycled in and out of prison on parole revocations,” PPIC reported.

According to the report, California’s high return to custody, its recidivism rate, was due in large part to parole violations. “Realignment has all but ended the state’s practice of returning parolees to prison via the parole board.”

Attorney General Kamala Harris, in a recent notice to the state’s sheriffs, police chiefs,



Official Photo

Kamala Harris addressing the media

probation departments, district attorneys and other stakeholders, stressed the need for the state to assess strategies to reduce recidivism. She outlined her proposed statewide definition of recidivism as an arrest resulting in a charge filed by a prosecutor within three years of an individual’s release from incarceration or placement on supervision for a previous criminal conviction.

“Universally defining recidivism is a fundamentally important issue if we are to be smart on crime,” Harris said.

The news release said Harris created a recidivism reduction pilot program in Los Angeles County called Back on Track LA. While working as San Francisco’s district attorney, Harris in 2005 started the reentry program, Back on Track, to reduce recidivism rates among low-level, non-violent drug offenders.

Among several of PPIC’s other findings:

The reduction of inmate rates of return to state custody within a year of offenders’ release declined slightly; and post-realignment conviction increased by 1.2 percent, most being higher felony conviction rates.

“These efforts are necessary to reducing recidivism and relieving pressures on state prisons and county jails – which will ultimately allow California to reach its federally mandated prison population threshold,” the report concluded.

## BOOK REVIEW

# The Fantasy Life Of An Uncertain Teenager

By Juan Haines  
Managing Editor

Take it from someone who, as a child, believed that he could walk through walls to enjoy the surreal and dreamlike nature of adolescence, self-identity, and the need to be loved that *Flight*, brings to readers.

Author, Sherman Alexie, has taken a moment in time, and redefined how to use it for storytelling by implanting readers into the life of a mixed-race teenager who doesn't know his father and his mother has died.

Zit's fantasy is obviously just that. There's no way that people travel to these alternative universes, these fictitious worlds that in no way could logically

exist.

Here's protagonist Zits' mindset when he enters his first fantasy world, of discovering who he is and why he's on this planet:

I turn around to look at myself in the mirror. I expect to see me pretending to be Clint Eastwood. But instead I am looking at a face that is not my own.

I had to digest what was happening in this story. I thought, "Okay, this is a fantasy novel, maybe he's just dreaming, or something." Many fantasy novels that tend to begin like that—this out of body experience.

My first fantasy novel, *Lord Fouls Bane*, created this world in which the protagonist en-

dured an adventure, quest-like. When I finally caught on to what was happening, I was pleasantly surprised and thought creating a fantasy world is a great way to say things about how to construct commentary on sociological phenomenon or tell a story of self-discovery.

But, in *Flight*, the protagonist, a teenager, is not only disadvantaged by age, in and out of foster care, and a part of American history, not so pretty to tell, and to have direct roots to it, Zits has to deal with all the everyday facets of growing up and maturing in today's society.

It's hard not to have empathy for Zits.

But, as his character develops, his behavior is all over the place.



It

varies from offensively horrific to incredibly moral.

This left me mixed about how to explain him.

Trying to comprehend his first bad act, the killing of an innocent person, makes one think, is that forgivable?

However, before answering the question, Alexie tricks us by quickly transferring the so-called protagonists to another

world at the very point of judgment. All is forgotten to the characters in the next world, but Zits is forced to drag his past actions into this new life, a life of kindness and compassion.

Zits, now regretting what he has done have an opportunity to do things differently in this world. So, when defending a young Indian boy from the massacre of the American cavalry, he said:

I remember I used to be like that little boy, holding tightly on to anybody who showed me even the tiniest bit of love. I haven't been like that in a long time.

Zits was giving what he wanted out of life.

In and out of different worlds, Alexis takes the reader.

In the end, readers learn the value of family, maturity, and self-discovery.

I'd recommend reading *Flight* for two reasons. One, it's literary value to tell a story by use of fantasy and that it's 18 chapters uses brevity at its best.

# The Harsh Reality of Life Under Slavery

By San Quentin Reviews

*12 Years a Slave* is the *Roots* of this generation. Being snatched vividly from a picturesque free-man's life, then forced into the back lashing cruelty of slavery is depicted so harshly that some prisoners wanted the film taken off the institutional channel. The Steve McQueen directed film based on Solomon Northup's memoir, is a shocking reminder of the devaluation of human life that still goes on today.

In 1841 Blackman Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor) is tricked out of freedom in Saratoga, NY, lured by money. He accompanies two White men (Scoot McNairy and Taran Killam) to Washington, D.C., to play violin in a cir-



cus. Once there, they drug him during a lavish meal. Northup awakes in chains and is sold into slavery, despite protesting that he isn't a slave. He is beaten Koonta Kintay style until he accepts the name Platt and shuts up about his true identity.

While enslaved, he is bounced around plantations until landing with cruel slave master Edwin Epps (Michael Fassbender) who is ironically a Christian. Epps subjects Northup to beatings everyday he fails to pick enough cotton. Epps repeatedly rapes

Patsy (Lupita Nyong'o), who is also humiliated and attacked by Epps' jealous wife (Sarah Paulson).

All the while Northup searches for a sympathetic ear to get word to his family and have them send proof of his true station.

San Quentin's reviews, Juan Meza, Emile DeWeaver, Raasaan Thomas, and special guest Jarvis "Lady J" Clark sat down to discuss the film's parallels to incarceration, also known as modern day slavery.

Meza: In *12 Years a Slave*, they called us property, so they could beat a man because slaves aren't complete men. It's the same with us. We are called subhuman in the eyes of much of society. Therefore, it's okay to mistreat state property. They put two of us in a cell made for one. It's the same thing as slaves lying on the floor, no privacy.

Thomas: God created all men equal, but they don't see us as equal. They considered slaves 3/5 of a man. Today is the same, they mass incarcerate us.

Clark: Slavery was worst for women. A transgender is treated the same as Patsy -- subservient to all men, not just white men -- third class citizens.

Meza: The difference between

a slave and convicts is society believes inmates have given up their right to be human because they committed a crime.

Thomas: It's crazy that he could prove he was a freeman but couldn't get anybody to listen. Many of us are like that. We are innocent, but it was okay to railroad us because we are all criminals in their eyes. No one listens to our claims.

Meza: There's a fear to listening. We, as inmates, can suffer an injustice, we can talk to people, but they're afraid of repercussions, harassment, and getting involved.

DeWeaver: No one is going to risk standing up for someone they inherently feel is less than human.

# How Many Prisoners Express Their Love

By Angelo Falcone  
Journalism Guild Writer

The month of February is the shortest month of the year. It has exactly four weeks — 28 days (except 29 days in Leap Years, every four years). Yet, it has many celebrations and observances.

The NFL Super Bowl was on Sunday, Feb. 1; Abraham Lincoln's birthday on Thursday, Feb. 12; Valentine's Day on Saturday, Feb. 14; Lincoln and Washington's birthdays are jointly celebrated on President's Day, Monday, Feb. 16; Chinese New Year on Thursday, Feb. 19, and George Washington's birthday on Sunday, Feb. 22. Catholics celebrate the Presentation of the Lord on Monday Feb. 2, and Ash Wednesday on Feb. 18.

According to the 2013 World Almanac, February celebrates Black History Month, American Heart Month, Library Lovers Month, Youth Leadership Month and Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket

Month.

There are two astrological signs in February: Aquarius, the Water Bearer (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) and Pisces, the Fish (Feb. 19 to March 20).

During the second month of the year, Valentine's Day is when many people take some time off from their busy schedules to celebrate with someone they love.

Many of the men in blue have hard and demanding jobs to earn the money to pay for cards, paper and stamps to express their love the old-fashioned way: snail mail. Many families also accept the 15-minute collect calls that are available to the men on the mainline.

"Asked on the Line" conducted brief interviews with 12 men on the mainline and asked, "Who is the person or people

you love the most? If you only had 30 seconds to give them a message, what would you say?"

Many of the men paused before answering. Some closed their eyes and thought for a minute.

Rafael Cabral said the people he loves the most are his children, his siblings, and his parents. He would tell them, "Los quiero much y espero en Dios estar afuera con ustedes." (I love you all very much, and I hope to God to be out with all of you.)

Jesus Flores said he would tell his daughter and granddaughter, "Con todo mi corazon, les deseo mucha salud y felicidad. Los quiero mucho." (With all my heart, I wish you much health and happiness. I love you very much.)

Philip Senegal would tell his

family, "I love you, and I miss y'all" (blowing them a kiss.)

Sadiq Siiieq said he would tell his family, "I love you, I miss you. I would be so happy just to see you. I would be so elated."

Mouhannad Albukhari said if he could, he would hug his family and say, "I love you. It has been so long!"

Walter Johnson would tell his family, "I love you. I am thinking about all of you. You are always on my mind. You are all on my wall of fame." Johnson said that he has a "wall of fame" in his cell with photos of his family.

Antwan Brown would tell his family members, "Stay connected to God. Stay positive. Never allow your emotions to take you down the wrong path."

Stephen Pascascio would

send his son a message. "Son, I love you with all of my heart. I am here to support you in whatever you need. I am so happy and grateful to the Lord for being your dad."

Raymond Bodine said he would send a message to his wife and three daughters. "I've missed you all this time. I'd like to communicate and reconcile with you."

Mesro Coles-El said the he would send a message to all of the children in his family. "Never give up hope and always do your best to make a better world."

Lorenzo Romero said he would send a message to his son. "I would cry," said Romero. "I would ask him for forgiveness and for not being there for him during his hard times, during his short-comings and when he had problems. I am sorry, son."

Joel Moore said he would send this message to his family: "Jesus loves us, and through Him, all things are possible."

**1. Sacramento** — A federal court overseer says a practice of withholding calls and visits at a new Death Row psychiatric unit can discourage inmates from seeking treatment, The Associated Press reports. The state opened the 39-bed unit at San Quentin State Prison in October 2014 in response to a judge's ruling, citing the lack of proper mental health treatment for inmates. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is re-examining its policy of automatically blocking family contacts for newly admitted patients.

**2. Cheyenne, Wyo.** — A state lawmaker is pushing a bill to allow the use of firing squads to execute condemned inmates even though a recent federal court decision leaves no one in the state on Death Row, The Associated Press reports. Sen. Bruce Burns, R-Sheridan, sponsored a similar firing squad bill that failed to pass in the legislative session last year. He maintains that Wyoming needs to make the firing squad option legal in case it cannot obtain the necessary drugs to perform lethal injections.

**3. Albuquerque, N.M.** — An inmate "buried alive" in solitary confinement for seven years is being denied showers, exercise and proper medical care, according to a federal lawsuit, The Associated Press reports. A lawyer for Justin Hinz says the 39-year-old prisoner is trapped in a windowless cell at the Penitentiary of New Mexico in Santa Fe and is deteriorating mentally because of the conditions. The New Mexico Department of Corrections strongly denies the accusations.

**4. Dallas** — Rickey Dale Wyatt spent 31 years incarcerated for



a rape he always maintained he did not commit. Wyatt was released from prison at the age of 56 in January 2012, The Dallas Morning News reports. But when he was released, he was not proclaimed innocent. Court papers with evidence clearing his name were filed on Christmas Eve.

**5. Montgomery, Ala.** — A state task force is weighing ideas to reduce prison overcrowding, such as sentencing changes, building new facilities to house inmates and increased resources for probation and parole The Associated Press reports. Alabama has the fourth-highest incarceration rate in the country. State prisons house about 25,000 inmates, nearly twice the number they were built to hold.

**6. Cleveland, Ohio** — Kwame Ajamu spent nearly 40 years of his life as a convicted felon for a murder that he, his brother and a friend did not commit, The Associated Press reports. A judge dismissed aggravated murder and robbery charges against Ajamu, who was convicted under the name Ronnie Bridgeman. Ajamu, Wiley Bridgeman and Ricky Jackson were sentenced to death in 1975 for the slaying of a businessman. All three were exonerated after prosecutors learned from a key witness who, as a 12-year-old boy, was coerced by police into identifying the three as the killers.

**7. Cleveland, Ohio** — Anthony Lemons, 40, was imprisoned for a 1994 murder that author-

ities said was a dispute over drug money. Lemons continually denied involvement and was released on parole in December 2012. Prosecutors dropped the charges against him but stopped short of conceding his innocence. He was acquitted of the charges in December. Lemons said he will pursue state compensation for wrongful imprisonment and would use any such payment to start a program to help released inmates transition back to life outside prison, The Associated Press reports.

**8. Lyndon, Vt.** — A former church is being converted to a community center, with the help of some prison inmates at the Northeast Correctional Facility in St. Johnsbury, The Associated

Press reports. The church steeple leaned and the interior was dilapidated. A nonprofit group called the Upright Steeple Society tackled the project, raising \$350,000 to restore the building. The group plans to feature family and arts events at the center.

**9. Montpelier, Vt.** — Criminal justice reform advocates and family members of inmates urged state lawmakers to stop sending inmates out-of-state to for-profit prisons, The Associated Press reports. A new report highlights the costs and consequences of sending inmates to private prisons out of state. The report says an over-reliance on out-of-state private prisons cuts ties between prisoners and families, which strains the families emotionally, financially and, furthermore, increases recidivism. About 400 Vermont inmates are incarcerated out of state, mostly in Kentucky.

**10. New York** — Derrick Hamilton, 46, was sentenced to 25 years in prison in 1991 for the fatal shooting of Nathaniel Cash. Cash's girlfriend testified against Hamilton. However, Hamilton always declared his innocence. Cash's girlfriend later recanted her testimony and Hamilton was released early in 2011, The Associated Press reports. Judge Raymond Guzman declared Hamilton exonerated in January.

**11. New York** — In 2009 a U.S. federal judge cleared Fernando Bermudez of fatally shooting 16-year-old Raymond Blount during a fight in Manhattan's Greenwich Village neighborhood in 1991, Reuters reports. Bermudez spent 18 years in prison and was compensated \$4.75 million in a wrongful conviction settlement with the state.

## We Can Use Your Help

The San Quentin News is not supported financially by the California prison system and depends on outside assistance. If you would like to help, there are two ways, both of which are tax-deductible. To contribute with a check, send it to Prison Media Project, c/o Media Alliance, 1904 Franklin Street, No. 818, Oakland, CA 94612. Do not use this address for general correspondence. Instead, write to the San Quentin News, 1 Main Street, San Quentin, CA 94964. To contribute with a credit card, go to our website, [www.sanquentinnews.com](http://www.sanquentinnews.com), click on Support, and then on that page go to the bottom paragraph and click on Here. That will take you to the page where you can use a credit card. A special thanks goes to Marin Sun Printing in San Rafael where our paper is printed.

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# Arts & Entertainment

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Mrs. Laila Taylor, London, U.K.

*The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be either good or evil. -Hannah Arendt*



Ms. Olivia Taylor in London, U.K

## Sudoku Corner

### Last Issue's Sudoku Solution

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

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

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

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

## Snippets

During the desolate period of World War II many people were only allowed to have 4 ounces of sugar per week as what was considered their rations.

Earning a place in history, Rosa Parks was the first woman and second African-American to be laid to rest in the state at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda in Washington D.C. after she passed away.

Very well known at the time of her era, Harriet Tubman lead more than 300 slaves to freedom. Many slave owners wanted her captured, so they put up \$40,000 as a reward.

One lady name Lucy Burns was considered a prominent and militant suffragist who constantly fought the cause in Great Britain and the U.S. She spent more time in prison than any other suffragist at that time.

The legendary Trung Sisters are the source of inspiration and courage to some Vietnamese soldiers. Many soldiers stay carry a picture of them in their wallet.

Eternal union for dedicated couples who still believes that the vein if the ring finger on the left hand runs directly to the heart.

# African-American Contributions to Sports

## SPORTS

By **Rahsaan Thomas**  
Sports Editor

American sports excluded Blacks for many years until pioneers broke through. Black History Month of February is a time to remember their extraordinary achievements across the athletic spectrum. Here are some examples, mostly from Wikipedia:

**In Basketball:**

Wilt Chamberlain was the NBA scoring champion from 1959-1965 and still holds the record for the most points scored in one game. He tallied 100 as a Philadelphia 76ers against the New York Knicks on March 2, 1962, in Hershey, Pa. Wilt hit 36 of 63 from the field, and made 28 of 32 free throws. Chamberlain's 4,029 regular-season points made him the only player to break the 4,000-point barrier.

John B. McLendon was the first Black coach for a professional basketball team with the ABL Cleveland Pipers in 1962 and then the ABA Denver Rockets in '69.

The Celtics drafted Chuck Cooper in the 1950 second round, making him the first Black player in the NBA. Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton and Earl Lloyd were also drafted into the NBA that year.

In 1966, Bill Russell became the first Black coach of a NBA team for the Boston Celtics.

Daryl Dawkins was the first Black man to be drafted into the NBA straight out of high school. He went from Maynard Evans High School in Orlando to the Philadelphia 76ers in the 1975 NBA Draft as the fifth overall pick.

**In Baseball:**



Ora Washington on the right holding her trophy

The Cuban Giants were the first Black professional basketball team. They were formed by men who worked as waiters in New York's Babylon Hotel back in 1895, according to 1999 Facts About Blacks, page 129.

In 1903, Dan McClellan, as a Cuban Giant, pitched the earliest known perfect game in Black baseball against a semi-pro team.

In 1952, Brooklyn Dodger Joseph Black became the first Black pitcher to win a World Series game.

James "Junior" Gilliam was the first Black coach of the Los Angeles Dodgers. He started with them as a second and third

baseman and was named 1953 National League Rookie of the Year. He was player-coach in 1964 and became a full-time coach in 1967. The Dodgers won pennants in 1974, 1977 and 1978 with Gilliam.

On April 14, 1955, Elston Howard played catcher for the Yankees, becoming their first Black player. He was a Yankee from 1955-1967 and coached them from 1967-1968, after playing for the Red Sox for one year.

**In Football:**

In 1946, Kenny Washington became the first Black professional football player as a Cleve-

land Ram. He played for UCLA and was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1956.

Emlen Tunnell was the first Black to play for the New York Giants in 1948. He was also the first Black to be inducted into the Professional Football Hall of Fame in 1967.

Ernie Davis was the first Black man to win a Heisman Trophy in 1961 as a football running back with Syracuse University.

**In Tennis:**

In 1968, Arthur Ashe won the United States Amateur Championships and the first U.S. Open of the open era. He became the first Black male to capture the title and the only player to have won both the amateur and open national championships in the same year. He was the world's No. 1 professional tennis player.

Before the Williams sisters, there was Ora Washington, the first Black woman to win the American Tennis Association singles title in 1929. She won it eight times in nine years and 12 straight double championships.

Washington also played basketball for the Germantown Hornets, who won a national female title in 1930. She was inducted into the Temple University Sports Hall of Fame in the 1980s and the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Tenn. in 2009.

**In Boxing:**

Jack Johnson became the first Black heavy weight champ by defeating Tommy Burns on Dec. 26, 1908, according to 1999 Facts About Blacks.

Theodore "Tiger" Flowers became the first Black middleweight champ in 1926, after defeating Harry Greb. The Bleacher Report named him the third-greatest southpaw in boxing history.

Muhammad Ali, formerly known as Cassius Clay, is generally considered the greatest heavyweight fighter in history. He was named Sportsman of the Century by Sports Illustrated and Sports Personality of the Century by the BBC. He defeated Sonny Liston in 1964 to become heavyweight champion. He remains the only three-time Lineal World Heavyweight Champ, having won the honor in 1964, 1974 and 1978. Ali was the Undisputed Heavyweight Champion of the World in 1964 from February to September.

**In the Olympics:**

George C. Poag was the first Black Olympian to win bronze medals in both the 200-meter and 400-meter hurdles in the 1904 Olympic games, according to the African-American Registry.

De Hart Hubbard was the first Black athlete to win the Olympic Broad Jump in Paris in 1924 according to 1999 Facts About Blacks, Second Edition By Raymond M. Corbin.

Eddie Tolan was the first Black to win an Olympic gold medal in the 100-meter dash back in 1932.

**In Golf and Hockey:**

Charles Sifford was the first Black member of the professional Golfers Association. (1999 Facts About Blacks, page 136)

Alton White is best known for being the second player of African descent, after Willie O'Ree, to have played on a professional major league ice hockey team and for being the first hockey player of African descent to score 20 goals in a single season for a major league team. He scored 21 goals and had 21 assists for the Los Angeles Sharks during the 1972-73 season. He started with the New York Raiders in 1965.

## 13 New San Quentin Kings Dressed Up and Ready for Action

After two grueling days of tryouts, 13 men emerged with the privilege of wearing San Quentin Kings' jerseys for the 2015 season.

This year's Kings are: Thad Fleeton, Oris "Pep" Williams, Tare "Cancun" Beltran, Charles "Pookie" Sylvester, Demond Lewis, Brian Asey, Jeffery "Mailman" Ratchford, Marcus Cosby, P. "Strange" Walker, Aubra-Lamont "Coo-coo" McNeely, Kenneth Donaghe, Larry "TY" Jones, and David Bennett.

Former King Timothy Thompson is the team general manager this year. Andre Yancy is the equipment manager.

Twenty-two men tried out for the over 40-year-old basketball team on Jan. 24 and 25.

"I'm looking for dudes that play together and have a positive attitude," said Kings' head coach Orlando Harris.

"It's going to be hard to make that 13-man roster. I'm glad I don't have to make the decision," said inmate Robert Butler, 56. "You have enough talent for two Kings' teams."

Very few former players' spots were secure. Everyone had to come out and compete for a spot.

"A couple of former Kings

are shoo-ins, but nobody's name is etched in stone," said Harris during the first day of tryouts. "Give me a reason to keep you...take somebody's spot."

New prospects John Wang, David Bennett, Donaghe, Marcus Cosby and Richard Silk, came out to the tryouts. Former Kings from years past Butler and Paul Oliver showed up to try and get back on the team.

"I made the team last year, so I'm coming out to do it again," said R. Silk. "I want to be a King for the camaraderie."

"I was on the first Kings team in 2010-2011. The old coaches back then were Al and then Robert Lee," said Butler. "I have some free time; might as well spend it staying in shape."

"I'm taking Strange's spot. He's my nemesis," said J. Ratchford, 52.

P. "Strange" Walker is 45 and the Kings' starting center.

"I'm giving the Kings one more shot in my golden years," said Oliver, who is in his late 50s. "Being a King is about bringing together a core group of brothers to accomplish wins and doing it together as a team

is the best way."

Tryouts consisted of several full-court games, which gave each player a chance to showcase his skill in a real game situation.

Standouts included Thad Fleeton, who appeared unstoppable, Sylvester and newcomers Bennett, Wang, and Donaghe.

"Thad is a beast," said Bennett.

"Bennett impressed me a little bit. He hustles and plays

defense and his manner is cool," Harris said.

"I like Donaghe, but he has to be able to knock down some shots," added Harris. "You need a player like Pookie on your team. He never stops playing. He's the intangible factor."

"He (Wang) has handles, good vision on the court and knows when to make the right pass. He's not greedy and he hustles," said Kings guard Beltran.



No one was cut after the first day.

"I've seen a lot of good things out here," said Harris.

Several players were warned they were "on the bubble." The bubble list included: Jamal Green, Wang, Bennett, Oliver, Butler, Ratchford, and Silk.

Wang wasn't able to make tryouts the next day.

"One problem is I have a visit tomorrow. I have to put family first," said Wang. "It would be a privilege to play for the Kings, but, whether I make it or not, it's a good experience just trying out."

Donaghe gave the coaches what they were looking for on day two.

"Donaghe knocked down all his shots and plays good defense. He played exceptionally well," said Kings' assistant coach Ishmael Freelon. "Cosby and Bennett played well too."

Several players want to be Kings for good reasons.

"I like playing outside teams. It's like a visit - it gives us something to look forward to," said Oliver. "It's like getting mail - it makes you feel better."

—By **Rahsaan Thomas**

# Evolution of Hoop Dreams

By **Rahsaan Thomas**  
Sports Editor

The Christian Sports Ministries basketball program has evolved from a little guy, visiting with his team usually getting beaten badly at basketball, into a stage for former NBA, overseas pros and college players to ball against San Quentin inmates.

It all started 17 years ago with Don Smith, a 5-foot-7 guy who works as an engineering manager at Coherent, a laser company, who loves to play basketball and loves God.

"I played very little b-ball growing up -- just a little in junior high and pickup ball," Smith said. "Sports are just a means to an end and a fun way of doing it."

He first came in as a guest on a visiting basketball team.

"When I saw this place, I knew in my heart it would be a great place to do ministry," said Smith.

Although Smith wasn't very good, Epling liked something about him.

"It turned out Bill worked across the street from me," Smith said. "He invited me to a pickup game."

"An angel put us together," Epling said about Don. "Why else would I invite the worst basketball player ever to play in our league?"

Things came up and Smith wasn't able to consistently sponsor the Green Team, so he asked Epling to seize the reins.

"When Don asked me to take over, he advised me to pray on it. I told him, 'I'm done praying about it. I'm in,'" said Epling.

About eight years ago, Epling brought in Ben Draa, an accountant for the Golden State Warriors organization.

"Draa went to the same high school as my daughter and they were boyfriend and girlfriend for a while," said Epling.

Draa had a great experience

players to compete and get active players to support.

In 2012, Hall of Famer Mark Jackson came in with Myers and others to play and speak some words of encouragement. Drummond Green came along with them, watched the game, and signed autographs.

In 2013, Jackson returned with former Chicago Bull and San Antonio player turned assistant coach Brian Scalabrine, Myers, Kirk and others. They defeated the S.Q. Warriors 134-119 in a game filled with highlights.

On hand for support were active G.S. Warrior Marreese "Mo" Speights.

The 2014 Golden State vs. S.Q. Warriors featured four generations of NBA players.

"I can't be happier that it reached this level," Draa said.

Six-time NBA champion and current Golden State coach Steve Kerr and assistant coach Alvin Gentry coached their team and inspired the prisoners.



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Mark Jackson, Kirk Lacob, Mujahid Harris and Bob Myers battling in 2012 game

this with the prisoners. No way would I be able to do something like this in Nigeria."

Beside the active players were rookies Mitchell Watt from the University of Buffalo, Aaron Craft from Ohio State, and James McAdoo (Tarheels). None of them could risk injury playing on an outdoor court.

For the first time, the S.Q. Warriors actually beat the former NBA players, 92-88 in the Sept. 26 2014 game.

"It was a tough road game. We never get to play at home," Myers joked after the game.

"It's a beautiful thing to see," said Butler "We have the best coach we ever had in Daniel Wright. He's a good PR person and he has the community support. He's given his life to the program—he doesn't do anything else but work and coach the Warriors."

The comical play-by-play announcing of Aaron "Harun" Taylor enhances the game experience.

On one notable 2014 play, Taylor commented "In the face, that was in the face of Luke Walton."

Gentry sees coming into The Q as a chance to aid in rehabilitation.

"One silly mistake shouldn't define your whole life," said Gentry. "This is an opportunity to help with rehabilitation so you guys can be productive in the outside world where it really matters."

Draa became a sponsor for bringing in teams to play the over 40 S.Q. Kings.

The program started with mostly Christian players.

"We used to bring in Mike Allen, a three-time All-American at William Jessie Christian College in San Jose," said Epling.

However, he didn't come in enough to rack in wins, so the Green Team expanded their reach beyond the church.

"We thought the program would be more effective with better competition," said Epling.

Epling was able to recruit better players with his motto, "Get a good player and they'll know good players," but the S.Q. talent still dominated the win column until 2012.

"Bill's teams didn't win nothing when Mujahid and I were playing," said former S.Q. Warrior turned head coach Daniel Wright.

With the program opened up to all basketball players, Epling has been able to recruit pro and college-level talent. This includes Todd Hahs, Griffin Reilly

and Evan Fjelds, who all played pro overseas. Others included David King, a Division 2 college title-winner, and Chris Blee, an All-American who played at Claremont-McKenna with teammate Patrick Lacey.

Lacey has practically reassembled his Claremont-McKenna College team by bringing in Blee, Tejas Gala, Matt Richardson and Beau Heidrich.

"I'm glad we have our Claremont connection," said Lacey.

There's also Tyree McCary, a former All-American forward at Adam State College who plans to play pro in the Philippines next year; Antoine Maddox, who played for Georgia Tech; Ben Ilegbodun, a former Stanford walk-on, and Kyle Fowler, who played for Wake Forest.

Plus, on Oct. 19, a whole Pacific Union College team came in from Napa to play the Warriors.

The Green Team, so called for the color of their jerseys, come in every two weeks during the season. They often play double-headers against the S.Q. Kings too. This year, the Green Team dominated the win column; the Kings are 1-9, the Warriors 5-10 against them.

"This is the best basketball I can find in the Bay Area," said Lacey, who often plays in both games of the doubleheaders. "I can't find a better environment."

Now, Epling has over 40 guys cleared to play in the early Saturday morning games.

"The significance of what goes on attracts the young guys," Smith said. "They normally don't get up on Saturday mornings. They do now because they love the game and the friendships."

"The program is good for all involved," said Smith. "Our guys get a far more accurate picture of what an institution like this is and the people in it. Our culture has distorted the image of the people in prison. Inmates at Quentin are guys who love sports and love their families. It's good for everybody spiritually. It gives them the opportunity to hear our faith-based message and they grow."

The games do have a positive effect on the players.

"They are a blessing," said Anthony Ammons, a S.Q. Warrior forward. "Without realizing it, they have helped me become a better man. Even with serving 102 years to life, they have brought me light and hope for the next day. They allowed me to dream again."



Photo By Sam Hearnes

Coaches Steve Kerr, Daniel Wright and Alvin Gentry

Smith came back with a team of his own—Christian Sports Ministry, aka the Green Team. Neither Smith nor his teammates could compete with the San Quentin talent, but they played for the love of the game and as a way to bring people together to hear the word of God.

Before the start, at halftime and after the game, all involved circled around center court to hear inspirational stories and pray together.

"The God factor -- that's what the circle is all about," said Robert "Bishop" Butler, the Warriors general manager and a San Quentin resident.

Smith met Bill Epling in a church basketball league and their meeting eventually led to bringing in much better players.

and told others about it, including Kirk Lacob, son of the Joe Lacob, who owns the G.S. Warriors. Kirk came to see for himself.

"I love playing basketball," Lacob said. "The shared love for the game is a bonding experience."

Then Lacob brought in Bob Myers, the G.S. Warriors general manager. Myers played for the 1995 UCLA championship team.

"Bob loved it. He came back about five or six times," said Draa.

"It's one of my favorite days of the year," said Myers after a game.

Through Draa, Lacob and Myers, the Green Team has been able to bring in retired NBA

"It's an awesome and amazing environment," Kerr said. "Great chance for human interaction and meeting people from different backgrounds..."

The Golden State players included assistant coaches and former NBA players Luke Walton and Jarron Collins, Golden State general manager Bob Myers, Johnny "Logo" West (Jerry West's son), Chris DeMarco, Nick Uren and Kirk Lacob.

Active Golden State players Marreese "Mo" Speights, Ognjen Kuzmi and Festus Ezeli, provided moral support from the bench.

"I've never done anything like this before. At the end of the day, everybody is happy to have us here," said Ezeli, who is Nigerian. "I'm happy I can share



Photo by Ralpheela Casale

Ben Draa, Chris Blee, DeAndre Jordan, Andre Yancy, Brad Shell, Maurice Hanks, Tejas Gala, Don Smith and Johnathan Cannon listen to Bill Epling's (Red hat) joke

# Happy Valentine's Day

To Brenda,  
My loving wife, Happy  
Valentines Day and Happy  
Anniversary  
-Love Billy

-RayRay W.

love, joy and happiness.  
From Dad.

Auren's and Sky's Queen  
Of Fire, and Earth's, too.

parte de Lupe Aranda con  
amor.

To my love TaReese,  
Every day is  
Valentine's Day  
when I think  
of the love  
we share  
for each  
other, you  
are my true  
soulmate!  
-Reginald  
Hunt Jr.

Alexis  
Happy Birthday Alexis,  
my Valentine Boo, in the  
next life that I'm blessed  
with I want another

Also to my friend in  
Malaga, Spain.  
-Paul Kirwan

-B. Thomas "Sky" Bue-  
naVista

-Lupe Aranda

Ariana,  
Hello my love. Happy  
Valentine's Day to the  
most beautiful daughter in  
the world.

En este día de San  
Valentín que celebramos  
el amor y la amistad, qui-  
ero mandar cordiales salu-  
dos a mi mamá, mi esposa  
y a mis hijos. El amor



Just a note to thank you  
for all that you have  
done for me, for all  
your sacrifices,  
and for your loy-  
alty. Happy  
Valentine's  
Day.  
- F e -  
lease Mc-  
lane



- F e -  
lease Mc-  
lane

es el que per-  
manece  
en mi  
cora-  
zón.  
Por  
eso  
quiero  
decirles  
que los  
amo a to-  
dos sin im-  
portar el lugar  
o la distancia  
ustedes viven con-  
migo, porque los  
tengo en mi corazón. Que  
Dios los bendiga.

Stephanie,  
I wish I could be  
with you this Valentine's  
Day, but since I can't I  
want to take this opportu-  
nity to send you m deepest  
love along with my most  
sensual Valentine's Day  
Kiss. L&L  
-Dwayne Martin

daughter  
wonderful like  
you. You are so pretty and  
I'm proud of who you are  
in various ways, I will love  
you Always, Forever and  
every 14 days.  
-Love Always Daddy

Amada mía, si  
yo pudiera hablar  
todos los idiomas del  
mundo y de los ángeles  
pero no tengo tu amor,  
sería como un metal in-  
servible. Si entendiera  
todos los planes de Dios,  
si tuviera todo el cono-  
cimiento y toda la fe que  
pudiera mover montañas  
pero no tengo tu amor, no

- Love  
Daddy "Je-  
rome Boone"

-Pablo Ramirez

Myrah  
Happy Valentine's Day  
Baby Girl, many hugs and  
kisses, flowers and treats,  
you are the rose of all rose-  
es, chocolate of all sweets,  
wonders of all ideas, bril-  
liant and unique. My love  
for you is eternal and  
evolves with every tick,  
you're the guardian of my  
heart and the soul keeper  
of my existence.  
-Love Always Daddy

To My Proverbs  
31 Girl  
You are  
clothed with  
strength  
and digni-  
ty, and you  
can laugh at  
the days to  
come. I love  
you 'til Heaven  
- then forever.  
-Your Michael



To my daughter Boo  
and Pooh, time is winding  
down on our separa-  
tion. YAHVAH,  
Elohim has been  
good to me. He  
has allowed  
me to learn  
and under-  
stand the  
wrong I have  
done and for  
this I am grate-  
ful happy val-  
entine. I love you  
Daddy.  
-Fredrick Willis

To my little brother  
Ricky and my sister Sarah:  
Although Valentine's  
Day typically involves can-  
dy, balloons, over-priced  
teddy bears, and more can-  
dy, I hope that you two feel  
loved in more ways than  
the superficial. I hope that,  
in spite of our family his-  
tory, you two will grow to  
know love that is uncon-  
ditional and communal.  
Know that you have a sis-  
ter who loves you dearly  
and thinks about you every  
day. Open your hearts to  
love. Your big sister.  
-Sam

The Day I met my wife,  
Monica my whole life  
changed, she moved my  
heart and I still feel it till  
this day.  
-Nicholas

This Valentine's Day is  
like every other Valen-  
tine's Day: "Very Special."  
But what makes Valen-  
tine's Day "Very Special"  
is the

valdría nada. Si entregara  
todo lo que soy como una  
ofrenda para ser quemada  
pero no tengo tu amor,  
no valdría nada. Lo que  
estoy tratando de  
decir, es que  
tú eres todo  
para mi  
Amada  
esposa  
mía.  
-José R.  
Ortega.

Feliz día del amor y la  
amistad. Mando saludos a  
Terecia, Lorena, y Karlita  
por el 14 de

On 12-13-14 my life was  
forever changed. I  
married my best  
friend, my  
soul-mate,  
the love of  
my life.  
Thanks  
baby for  
making  
me the  
happiest  
man alive.  
- Barry  
Spillman

You are the  
true mean-  
ing of  
love,  
the rea-  
son for  
trust  
and the  
great-  
est part  
of respect!  
Happy Val-  
entine's Day  
Mrs. Galvin. I  
love you.  
-Rick Galvin



love  
I receive  
from my sis-  
ter. Happy Valentine's Day  
Sissy.  
-Michael Thomas

Mis palabras y  
corazón hoy día son  
para ti, mi vicha Linda!  
Gracias por ser mi en-  
amorada y dejarme ser tu  
loquito en tu vida.  
Happy Valentines Day,  
Honey.  
-Julio Saca

Febre-  
ro día  
de San  
Valentín, y fe-  
liz cumpleaños a la señora  
Maria en este día tan espe-  
cial hasta Yahualica Jalisco.  
Mi amor y corazón, de

Vanessa,  
My Sweetheart,  
Happy Valentine's  
Day, I hope your gifts  
are sweet and melts your  
heartaches, you're amazing  
young woman, beautiful  
and smart, I will give you  
my soul a million times  
and I love you sweetheart.  
-Love Always Daddy

Melissia A.  
Happy Valentine's Day  
-Love Kaseem  
  
Graciela Miramon-  
tes-Walker,  
Me and you will always  
be. Happy Valentine's Day.

McKenna Grace,  
You fill my heart with

...Thanks, Aurora, for  
reaching way down here  
where no winged beings  
dwell, and being Avanti's