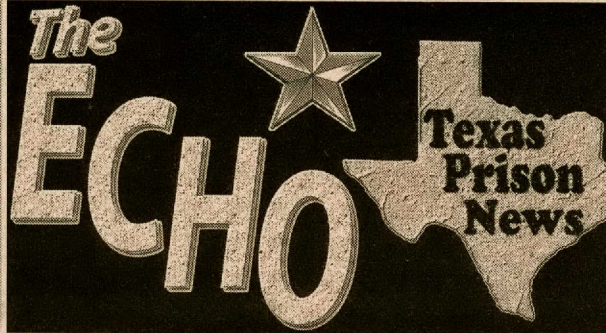


Common sense is  
not so common.  
— Voltaire



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See  
Give  
Romo  
a  
chance

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Published Since 1928

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Distributed Free to Texas Prisoners

## TDCJ encourages family members to participate in Public Awareness Corrections Today (PACT) Conference

### Families invited March 24th

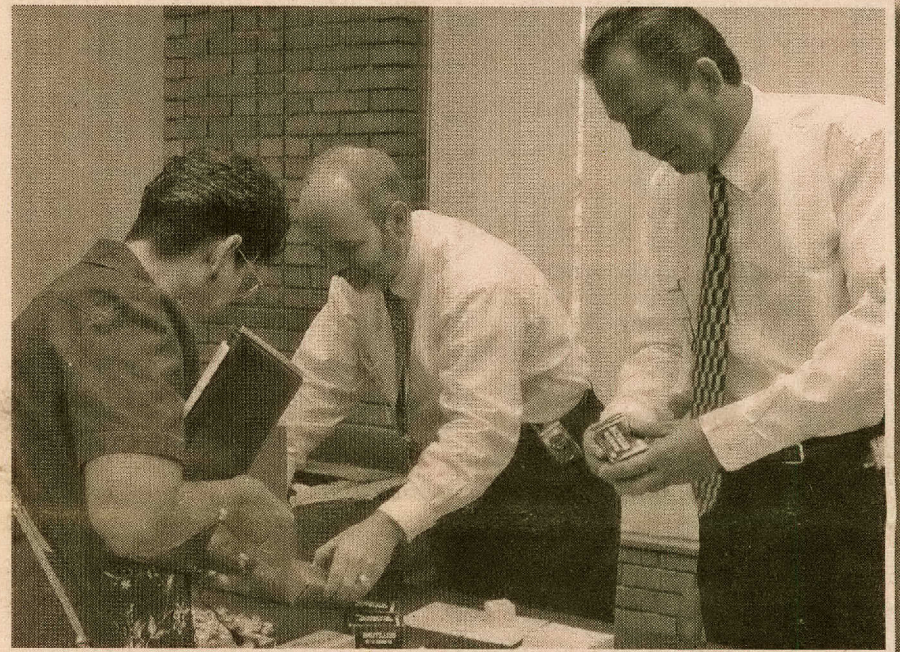
The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) will be hosting a free informational conference for offenders' families and members of the general public on March 24, 2012. The Public Awareness - Corrections Today (PACT) Conference will be held at the Sam Houston State University Criminal Justice Center in Huntsville, Texas, and will be coordinated by the TDCJ Ombudsman Program.

The conference, which begins at 9 a.m., will consist of presentations from several TDCJ divisions. Throughout the day,

agency staff will be available to interact with participants. Resource tables will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., with brochures and other helpful information available.

*Additional conference information for participants will be available on the TDCJ website, [www.tdcj.state.tx.us](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us), and in unit visitation areas.*

*Editor's Note: Please share this information with family members and friends who might be interested in finding out more about the agency.* ε



TDCJ employees share information with a participant at a PACT conference.

## Seminary program begins on Darrington

By Jeremy Busby, Staff Writer  
and Michael Ingram, Darrington Unit Reporter

Some say it has been a long time coming. Others think the timing is just perfect. Nevertheless, the nondenominational seminary program has begun in TDCJ.

The inaugural class of offenders prayed, sang and smiled as they began their journey that will culminate in their receiving a bachelor of science degree from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS), now sponsoring their program at the Darrington Unit. The inaugural convocation was attended by more than 250 people from around the state. Most notably in attendance were Senators Dan Patrick and John Whitmire, along with TDCJ Executive Director Brad Livingston.

Initially, the program will enroll 40 offenders who have at least 10 years left on their sentence before being eligible for parole and are major case free. Once these offenders complete the 125-credit-hour program, they'll be assigned to another TDCJ unit to minister to the needs of other offenders.

Modeled after a similar program in Louisiana, this nondenominational program has been credited with reducing the level of violence in prisons by as much as 70 percent, according to the Associated Press.

"There's always been an emphasis on the importance of transforming

lives of people best as you could," said Paige Patterson, the president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "We're all in it together, studying to allow the Word of God to produce fruits of the spirit."

Seminarians are excited about the opportunity to receive an education and spiritual growth.

"Most of us in here haven't done anything good in our lives," one of the new participants said. "It's [the seminary program] life changing. It's like there's still hope." Approximately 600 offenders submitted applications for the program.

Each seminarian received a new leather-bound Bible inscribed with his name. The seminarians will be required to commit themselves to their studies and stay clear of any trouble. Although SWBTS is a Baptist Seminary, an offender does not have to subscribe to any particular faith to be accepted. Offenders understand that all classes will be taught by Baptist seminary professors, using Christian principles. In the first class, there are nine Roman Catholics and three Muslims. Depending on the success of this class, a second class will begin next year and then continue annually.

The cost to taxpayers is zero, as private grants and donations pay all expenses of the seminary. Windham School District prepares offenders so they are academically eligible to participate.

SEMINARY continued on page 5

# The ECHO

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• 16 PAGES •

PUBLISHED FOR 83 YEARS, SINCE 1928

## — MANAGEMENT —

**Debbie Roberts – Publisher**

Don Keil – Managing Editor

Mary Partida – Administrative Assistant

Offender Jeremy Busby – Staff Writer & Layout

Offender Todd Carman – Staff Writer & Layout

Offender Nathan Ray – Design & Layout

Offender Robert Smith – Design & Layout

## — UNIT REPORTERS —

Allred Unit – Vernon Lee Jeffries Sr.

Clemens Unit – Richard Luna

Clements Unit – Wylie Bone

Coffield Unit – Gregory Bryant

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Offenders can write **The ECHO** by truck mail.

ISSN 1530-7298.



## Letter to the Editor,

Shame on *The Echo* for publishing the article “Troublemaker” in the September issue.

I am 65 years old, and I have been reading *The Echo* for 47 years or since I first came to prison in 1964. It’s a good paper and if I hadn’t have been such a knucklehead when I was younger, I could have stayed in the freeworld and become somebody respectable and productive by just reading *The Echo* and following the sound advice they have printed over the years. However, this “Troublemaker” of last September served no purpose and I will tell you why.

He was whining about being on lockdown and not eating a hot meal, not being able to make commissary, not being able to take a hot shower and not being able to go to school. If you were thinking about being a good citizen, you should have thought about it before breaking the law in the freeworld. It’s too late now to start crying because some knuckleheads want to make some alcohol or smoke or whatever they want to do. This place isn’t a monastery for monks. TDCJ is the place where they lock up people who break the law. That is why we are all here—because we all broke the law. Some of us get tired of all this stuff. We all get tired of it. But like I said, this is prison and you can always expect inmates to keep breaking the rules.

I’ve been here in death row over 28 years. I have over 40 assaults and used to think that I would never change. But death row is a place like no other in prison, because death row is “slow” compared to general population. Death row gives a man a lot of time to think. I’ve changed. I am honestly a changed man. I didn’t change to prepare myself for the freeworld because I expect to be executed.

While I am alive I will never commit another act of violence ever again nor break the TDCJ rules intentionally. I am going on seven years without breaking the rules or getting a write up.

Just because I have reformed, I can’t expect everybody else to reform, too. Look, man, just in the last six months, I’ve been gassed numerous times and I haven’t done anything to bring the gas. It’s the other knuckleheads highjacking the day rooms and refusing to come out peacefully until they gas them. I don’t expect anybody to change just because I am here. If they gas me again tomorrow I will just cover my nose and mouth with a towel and hope it doesn’t make me sick.

For the author of the article “Troublemaker,” next time you hit the streets, stay in the freeworld and don’t come back to prison griping about law breakers not snitching on themselves.

I love *The Echo* and I want to wish everybody in prison a good day from the bottom of my heart.

**Sincerely,**  
**Raymond Martinez**  
**Death Row**

## To the reader,

*There are always at least two points of view of an issue; sometimes three or four or five!*

*Thank you for your opinion on the “Troublemaker” article. We have had several responses to this article – all expressing different views and opinions.*

## Letter to the Editor:

I want to commend *The Echo* for the recent article by Christina Ashcroft (Murray Unit reporter) raising

awareness about male battering of women. The *June 2011 Glamour* stated that each day American males kill four women who are their lovers or family members, and a male batters a woman every 12 seconds. Battering is one of our biggest social problems. TDCJ has a duty to be a positive agent of change in eradicating male violence against women and their children. The article by Ashcroft was a good start.

October was *National Domestic Violence Awareness Month*. However, eliminating male violence against women is something that requires a year-round lifestyle commitment in our violent culture. Researchers have shown that when confronted with their misdeeds, batterers use one of the four following strategies: 1) lying; 2) denial; 3) blaming the victim; and 4) calling the victim crazy, according to the *Citizen’s Commission on Human Rights and Mind Freedom*.

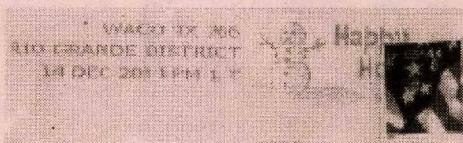
The Wiccan rede states: “Harm none, do what you will.” Mohandas Gandhi, the famous lawyer and Hindu activist of colonized India once said, “Nonviolence is the weapon of the strong!” The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Violence begets more violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already void of stars.”

Kudos, again, to *The Echo*, for taking the first step in making the world safe for every human, regardless of gender.

**Blessed Be,**  
**Cathy Marston**  
**Murray Unit**

## To the reader,

*Thanks for writing and sharing more about this topic. It’s always good to get information out. Also, we are always looking for articles related to our female offenders. We encourage female writers to send us articles.*



**Dear Darby,**

I read your column every issue. You give lots of words of wisdom. I wanted to share some words of support to the brothers that want to get out of here and be free from the chains of the street life. I wrote this letter in hopes that it will lend support to those who, like me, are scarred by the use of "meth." Hopefully you can share the following "Dear Jane" letter with them so they know we must join together and turn our backs on the false truth we lived.

**Dear Meth,**

There was so much love between us, and together you and I were having the time of my life. That is, until you took away my freedom, my family, and all the people I truly loved. You took my life, but guess what? I'm taking it back.

What a fool I was to give up all I did for the pathetic love that was between us. That love only caused me misery and painful sorrow. I'd wake up from a night's sleep, and it was a nightmare because you were in my dream. Why? Because you were in my arms. I should be dreaming of my girl, my mother or my children. Not you. I know you were a gift from the father of lies and I accepted you freely. But now I hate you. I hate you so much!

So consider this my Dear Jane letter to you—all of you; crank, meth, ice, or whatever other future name you may go by in your attempt to take people's lives away. I take back my life, and I will fight you and try to help all those you are attacking. I will fight you with the help of God; the God of Truth and Love. I give my life to Him.

**Sincerely,**  
**Joseph Baker**  
**Robertson Unit**

**Dear Joseph,**

*I applaud your creativity. Sometimes it takes this sort of*

*closure to finally be rid of something. Hopefully your cruel ex-mistress will stay out of your life forever.*

**Dear Darby,**

You used to write about our First Amendment rights and freedom of speech and of the press. Now you are edited very strictly. So could you respond to this statement?

**Joseph Stegner**  
**Terrell Unit**

**Dear Joseph,**

Anyone who believes that *The ECHO* was ever a totally free press probably still believes in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. I think that you and those who think like you need to come to terms with reality. **THIS IS PRISON.** I fully understand that there are some out there who have misguided beliefs about how things used to be in TDCJ. The truth is really quite simple: Prison officials have never allowed *The ECHO* to publish any old thing that they pleased. While the publication has hopefully improved through the years, it is no more or less a censored publication today than it has always been.

When you came to prison, you forfeited certain rights under the Constitution. Oddly enough, inmates never seem to argue over the idea that their Fourth Amendment rights (search and seizure) are completely lost when they come to prison. Gone also are your rights to receive certain publications (when was the last time you saw a *PENTHOUSE?*), which falls under the First Amendment. You can't vote until you're off paper, and you'll likely never be able to legally own a gun. These are rights that one gives up when he or she chooses to commit a crime. By and large, the forfeiture of these rights is understood and, to an extent, completely accepted by prison inmates. But tell them that they cannot have

some of their ideas published in a prison newspaper, and all of a sudden they become constitutional scholars!

Well, here's a thought; learn to write better while you're in prison, get out (and stay out!) and then submit your ideas to an uncensored publication. Or better still, start a blog after you are released. But you really need to get over the ridiculous idea that once upon a time (in a galaxy far, far away?) *The ECHO* was an uncensored press that allowed inmates to say any and everything they wanted. It never was; it isn't now; and it never will be.

**Dear Darby,**

You know, I've never even considered writing to you. The reason I'm doing it is in hopes of encouraging other inmates who have just started this "new wave" tradition. Really there isn't much respect anymore in prison. All inmates are ready to defend their wrong actions. They seem to be in a hurry to fight over the simplest things. After five times in and out of the system, I have been allowed to participate in the faith-based dorm at Ferguson. This unit has always had a bad reputation, but the chaplaincy department has done an awesome job of turning this place around. Sure many of us still struggle when it comes to trying to rehabilitate ourselves.

This doesn't mean we've got to be robots, but it's time that we face the truth that we need a divine intervention because our way doesn't work. So find things that will be of benefit

**DEAR DARBY**  
**LETTERS TO THE OL' THANG**

to you once you're released.

**Paul Gonzales**  
**Ferguson Unit**

**Dear Paul,**

If only I had a nickel for everyone who has told me that there is no longer any respect shown in prison. But in a weird way, that could be a good thing. You see, when prison ceased being the more violent environment that it may once have been, much of the behavior that would have resulted in serious repercussions started to be tolerated.

Since just about any action in here has an effect on someone, the perception is often going to be that the perpetrator of an act is being disrespectful to someone. I say this is a good thing, because rather than taking the animalistic approach of dealing with everything in a physical way, the "new wave" offender chooses to talk about it with someone else, write about it to Darby, or simply pray for the perpetrator.

Since such responses are acceptable in the free world (where the old-school approach was definitely not), the disrespect shown by some in here may actually be helping others to stay out of prison. It may be helping people develop tolerance. You see, when you get out and get back behind the wheel of a car, it's probably not going to be socially acceptable if you apply old-school prison reactions to someone cutting you off on the highway or driving too slowly. By learning to control your emotions in here when an immature individual does something childishly disrespectful, you may actually be taking a bite out of "road rage."

So, the next time that someone does something blatantly rude in front of you, don't get mad. Instead, offer him or her a silent thank you, because he or she is actually helping you to grow—both emotionally and spiritually.


**HEALTH NEWS — NUTRITION — MEDICAL UPDATES**


# Things you need to know about HPV

By William Chaplar  
Former Staff Writer

These days, in TDCJ, it's pretty hard to find many offenders who haven't been exposed to the Wall Talk curriculum presented by peer educators. Some of those who have taken the class may have been plagued by nightmares about those graphic photos of genital warts passed around for the class. Whether such photos were meant to be informative or simply serve as a deterrent is not for me to say. Most of those who saw them may have viewed them in the same light as I did—as being isolated, worst-case scenarios of contracting the virus.

In actuality, there was very little attention paid to the human papilloma virus (HPV). That's probably as it should be. The Wall Talk curriculum covered a lot of information, and things like hepatitis and diabetes probably needed the lion's share of the allotted time. HPV is worthy of note because it is actually far more prevalent than the other diseases and infections covered by peer educators. Something most of us probably do not know is that HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. In fact, 75 – 80 percent of sexually active men and women will probably acquire genital HPV infection at some point in their lifetime. Do I have your attention yet?

I'm not implying that three quarters of the nation's population will end up posing for those disgusting pictures. In fact, most HPV infections will be rapidly cleared by the immune system. Female readers may be interested in knowing that, while HPV is a cause of nearly all cases of cervical cancer, most infections in young females are temporary and have little long-term significance. Indeed, 70 percent of infections are gone in one year and 90 percent

are gone in two years. So the idea that HPV automatically equates to cervical cancer is somewhat inaccurate.

The majority of the 200 known types of HPV cause no symptoms in most people. Interestingly enough, those strains of the virus that cause cervical cancer do not usually cause genital warts.

While my purpose here is to clear up some of the mystery associated with this virus, it is certainly not my intent to minimize its potential for altering lives. While it may not be as devastating as the photos seem to indicate, it *does* come with its own form of devastation. For example, in 2002, an estimated 561,200 new cancer cases worldwide were attributed to HPV, making it one of the most prominent infectious causes of cancer.

From a prevention standpoint, it should be thoroughly understood that condoms do not completely protect users from the virus because infected areas may not be totally covered. Since the warts are transmitted through direct contact, any that are not covered by a condom can transmit the virus.

CDC states that at least 50 percent of the sexually active adults acquire an HPV infection at some point in their lives.

References: [HPVinfo.com](http://HPVinfo.com)

[Web-MD](http://Web-MD)

[MayoClinic.com](http://MayoClinic.com)

[Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia)



## Healthy eating controls cholesterol

By Jeremy Busby  
Staff writer

Cholesterol is often overlooked by most of us in prison. We tend to focus on more prominent diseases like HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and tuberculosis because we feel they are the deadlier diseases. Although I hate to be the bearer of bad news, bad cholesterol has the potential to be just as deadly!

Just as the contraction of HIV may lead to the deadly AIDS disease, bad cholesterol leads to heart disease. While cholesterol is a steroid of fat produced in the liver and intestine, playing a valuable role within the functions of the bodily fluids, it can also damage arteries if levels are too high. In the liver, cholesterol is transformed into bile which helps transform fat-soluble vitamins like Vitamin A, D, E and K. These vitamins are essential to the function of the digestive tract.

Cholesterol is present in most food, so it is almost impossible to maintain a diet

without consuming it. However, the amount of cholesterol consumed is not as important as the amount of fat eaten with the cholesterol, especially the saturated fat and trans fat. Most of the junk food purchased from the unit's commissary has an enormous amount of saturated and trans fat. There is a significant amount of fat in the cheese, eggs, beef, pork and chicken served in the dining hall. When someone's cholesterol is borderline high, they should act by reducing total fat intake.

A new study at *St. Michael's Hospital, University of Toronto*, has shown that heart-healthy diets can lower bad cholesterol dramatically. It is well known that certain foods like nuts, oatmeal and soy products help lower cholesterol. Nutrition experts have added various fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains to the list if they are eaten with other foods that are low in saturated fat. Most of these items can be found in meals in the dining hall. Beans

and vegetables are served with at least two meals a day. The wheat breads that are served with most meals and the cold cereals that are served with the morning meals are jam-packed with whole grains. Fruit is served on a daily basis. So the decision to pass up beans for more chicken and skip out on breakfast could have a negative effect on cholesterol levels.

By consuming the right food, cholesterol levels can be controlled and people can avoid becoming dependent upon medications. Lowering cholesterol levels decreases the risk of heart attacks and other diseases associated with the cardiovascular system. Eating healthy can have a positive influence on cholesterol.

References: [USA Today](http://USA Today)

[Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia)

[Web-MD](http://Web-MD)

[MayoClinic.com](http://MayoClinic.com)



# AGENCY INFO — POLICY UPDATES — LEGAL NEWS




## Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman

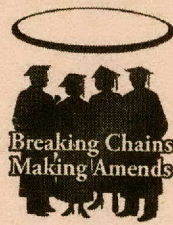
In 2007, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Ombudsman was established by the 80th Legislature (Texas Government Code §§501.171- .178) and was appointed by the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ). The PREA Ombudsman provides offenders, family and friends of offenders and the general public an independent office to report sexual assaults occurring in Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) correctional facilities, and to ensure the impartial resolution of complaints of allegations of sexual assault. The PREA Ombudsman reports directly to the TBCJ chairman and may be contacted at the following address:

### PREA Ombudsman

P.O. Box 99

Huntsville, Texas 77342

Due to the serious nature of sexual assaults, and in accordance with TDCJ policy on "Zero-Tolerance" against sexual assaults, offenders knowledgeable of an offender-on-offender or staff-on-offender sexual assault that occurs within a TDCJ correctional facility are encouraged to immediately report the allegation to the facility administration or the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). E



## Scholarship fund seeking offender donations

Staff Report

The Breaking Chains-Making Amends Scholarship Foundation is actively seeking donations from offenders and others to provide scholarships to children and grandchildren of offenders currently or previously confined in TDCJ, as well as children and grandchildren of crime victims. Donations received from offenders and others will help break the cycle of crime by giving children hope for the future through the promise of higher education.

Donations to this fund should be forwarded to:

**Breaking Chains-Making Amends Scholarship Foundation**  
P.O. Box 10769  
Huntsville, TX  
77340

Or

**Breaking Chains-Making Amends Scholarship Foundation**  
1211 Financial Plaza  
Huntsville, TX  
77340

Offenders confined within a TDCJ prison can donate to the Breaking Chains-Making Amends Scholarship Foundation through their trust fund. Offenders must fill out two I-25s, have a stamped envelope addressed to P.O. Box 10769, Huntsville, Texas 77340 and an I-60 or any sheet of paper stating the purpose of the withdrawal in order to make a donation. This must be processed by the unit trust fund officer. E

## Offender Grievance Procedures

The Offender Grievance Office has submitted the following reminders. For more information, please contact your unit grievance investigator.

1. Offender grievances are to be placed in the grievance boxes located throughout the unit or given directly to grievance staff. Grievances sent directly to the Central Grievance Office will be returned to the offender unprocessed with directions on how to correctly submit the grievance.
2. Time Limits: Step 1 grievances - 40 days; Step 1 disciplinary appeals-30 days; Step 2 grievances - 35 days; Step 2 disciplinary appeals-30 days; Step 2 medical grievances - 45 days (emergency medical grievances/multiple issue medical grievances are still 35 days).
3. There are 11 screening criteria listed on the back of the Step 1 grievance form which may be used by grievance staff to return the grievance to the offender unprocessed. An offender will have 15 days from the date the grievance was screened to make corrections and resubmit to grievance staff.
4. Three of the screening criteria cannot be corrected: #1 Grievable time period has expired; #8 The issue presented is not grievable (**except a disciplinary appeal submitted prior to a hearing being held**), and #9 Redundant - the issue presented in the grievance has already been addressed on a previous grievance. E

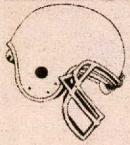
SEMINARY continued from page 1

### Requirements for admission:

- Offender must have a GED or high school diploma.
- Offender must have at least 10 years remaining on their sentence before initial parole eligibility. This is to insure that the offender will have six years of service as a seminary graduate within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
- Offender must have a G3/S3 (or better) level of security.
- Offender must not have any minor disciplinary cases in the last six months.
- Offender must not have any major disciplinary cases in the last 12 months. Some more serious offenses require a three-year waiting period.
- Offender may have any religious affiliation or none at all.
- Offender must have good reading and writing skills. An EA score of 11.0 or better is required, as recorded by Windham School District.
- Offender must understand that the seminary is a totally voluntary unit program.
- Offender must have a recommendation from a work supervisor, volunteer, education representative or chaplain.
- Offender must have earned the "Certificate in Biblical Studies", the seminary's pre-qualifying curriculum, and have obtained the recommendation of the instructor prior to final admission.

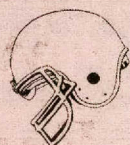
### For questions, please contact:

The Darrington Bible College Director  
59 Darrington Road  
Rosharon, Texas 77583 E



## Just a game

By William Chaplar  
Former Staff Writer



Now that the NFL lockout is history, perhaps it's time to ask just what would have happened if the National Football League *didn't* have a season. In prison, an NFL season is, without a doubt, the most important event of the year. But do *all* Americans live for football?

During the lockout—which most football fans viewed as a sign of the apocalypse—the U.S. women's soccer team played in the World Cup of soccer. (You know, that *other* football?) The American team made it to the finals, but suffered an agonizing loss to Japan. At the end of the game, I sat and listened as several of the people, who'd only recently been diehard fans of the U.S. team, started berating the way the ladies played. Others made disparaging remarks about the Japanese team. One individual, however, when asked what had happened, gave an extremely mature response. He said, "The United States won the silver medal."

Now, immediately following the game, I was far too depressed to have uttered something so profound. I was probably feeling more down than Hope Solo! I couldn't help, however, but be thoroughly impressed by what this individual had said. Later, as I watched yet another ESPN update on the dreaded NFL lockout, I once again pondered those philosophical words about winning the silver. What if every player in the National Football League could view a loss as "winning the silver"? Would that help those grown men, who get paid absurd amounts of money to play a kid's game, to see how fortunate they are to simply be *allowed* to try?

Every year that I've been in prison, I've heard people saying things like, "He ain't never won a ring." This comment was typically made with regard to a professional football player who had never been on a team that had won the Super Bowl. The only conclusion that I could come to regarding such a statement is that only one game a year actually matters—the Super Bowl. Quite naturally, this makes me wonder why so many people spend so much time watching so many *other* games each season. Couldn't they simply watch the one game that matters and be done with it? Now, however, I view things from a somewhat different perspective. If the players on the losing team of the Super Bowl

perceived themselves as having won the silver, wouldn't their world be a nicer place? And the same could be said about the teams who come up short in both of the conference championship games. Even the divisional playoff games could have teams that won the silver.

While this no doubt sounds ridiculous to most Americans—who, in the words of George S. Patton, "love a winner"—is it really all that crazy? All of those who cannot wrap their minds around such a concept need to ask themselves just what it is they call those contests they obsess over for six months out of every year. A moment's thought will bring one to the inescapable conclusion that they are called games. Not battles; not wars; not conflicts—*games!*

Perhaps taking a cue from NFL wide receiver Terrell Owens might assist American football fans in putting the whole lockout thing into proper perspective. Mr. Owens, after making a reception for a touchdown, actually seems to be having fun in the end zone. The mere idea that he is often criticized—and even punished!—for having fun while playing a game should be considered nothing short of preposterous.

Those who would chastise someone like Owens for having a good time while doing what he loves, probably believe that there's nothing wrong with men making more money for one game than most Americans make in a year. They probably also believe that such individuals should be able to threaten to strike when they don't get their way. However, lumping these individuals into the same category as coal miners or firemen...well, let's just say that Samuel Gompers—the first president of the American Federation of Labor—was probably not thinking of professional athletes when he was fighting to protect the collective bargaining rights of workers.

Perhaps, therefore, the men who play in the National Football League—as well as all of their fans—could learn something from the words of the aforementioned offender: Never stop being upset about winning the silver. When you do, you end up forgetting that it's just a game. It probably wouldn't hurt those of you in prison day rooms to recall this whenever you are about to jeopardize your release over something that is said while you're watching the Cowboys play. It's *just a game!* ε

## Environmental science connects life, attitude

By Jeremy Busby  
Staff writer

"Environmental science is an interdisciplinary study of how nature works and how things in nature are interconnected," says my college advisor in her attempts to convince me to take the class. "Science is science," I politely respond, "and I'm just not a science person." This bantering goes on for nearly 20 minutes before I capitulate and enroll in the class.

Science has always been my least favorite subject. The idea of having to understand the difference between nuclear fission and nuclear fusion makes me cringe. After all, what connection does science have to everyday life anyway? A biotic composition here, some molecules there; what exactly is the significance? All I know is that I dislike science and I am in no way thrilled about having to take this class.

My first day in class, my attitude and demeanor reflect disdain for science. Being one of the last students to arrive, I sit at the very back of the classroom. All of my classmates are busy introducing themselves to the instructor, and there I am sitting at the back of the room having my own self-pity party. I begin to scan the room for a clock, in hopes of counting down the minutes until I could depart from the class. I notice a quote that was written on the chalkboard. The quote was written by someone name Mark Van Doren and states, "students who can begin early in their lives to think of things as connected, even if they change their views every year, have begun the life of learning." Now just wait one second! Is this quote written exclusively for me? Has the counselor given me up to my instructor? Thinking of things as connected? Having begun the life of learning? This all sounds familiar.

The class starts without the instructor making any references to the quote, which cause me more confusion. Once I open the textbook, on the first page is, again, Van Doren's quote. At this moment I begin to reflect on the quote and realize I am causing myself too much distress over a routine college course. Somehow this class is connected to the overall scheme of life, and since I am here for the rest of the semester, I might as well seek those connections.

I grab my book, go to the front of the class, and find an empty seat. I listen to the instructor and even ask a few questions. My attitude begins to change.

As the semester goes on, I get more and more involved in the class. I learn how certain species live and depend on one another in an ecosystem. I began to grasp a greater understanding of the various nutrients that are in soil and water. We even boldly conduct labs on the drinking quality of the tap water from the drinking fountain in the education department. Surprisingly, the test results were very positive. Overall, once my attitude changed, the course became more an informative and enjoyable experience.

The lesson I learned can coincidentally be detailed by one of the scientific laws that were taught during the semester: *The first law of thermodynamics* is a law that says, "energy input always equals energy output". In other words, you can never get more energy out of the system than you put into the system.

In my case, the system was the science class itself. Had I maintained my poor attitude and refused to partake in the class (low energy input) I would have received very little out of the class (low energy output). Maybe your system is the exercise and diet program that you are facing. Perhaps it is your educational pursuits. Be assured that you will only get out of that system what you put into it!

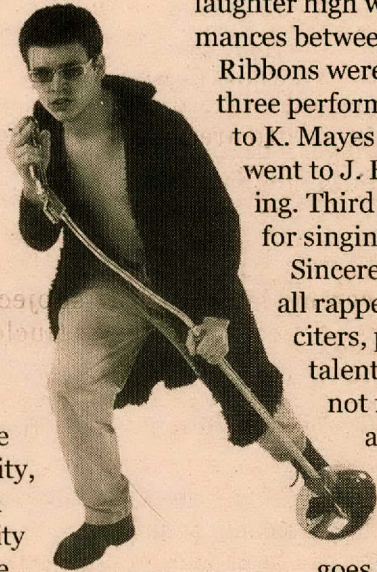
Never did I imagine science could be so connected to something as simple as this. I guess Van Doren was correct; "*when you begin to think of things as connected, you have begun the life of learning.*" ε

# Hightower Unit's got talent

By Restin Burk  
Hightower Unit

Excitement and anticipation filled the air as over a hundred people crowded into the gym for the Hightower Unit's first talent competition.

Competitors from all genres of entertainment squared off in an America's Got Talent-style setting, flavored with a dash of Night at the Apollo. The audience was the ultimate authority, deciding the fate of each contender by the intensity of their applause. In true Apollo fashion, the event had its own Sand Man (two of them) who were quick to sweep away any performers who received an overwhelming amount of boos. An emcee kept



laughter high with comedic performances between each set.

Ribbons were awarded to the top three performers. First place went to K. Mayes for rap. Second place went to J. Bryant for break dancing. Third place went to R. Burk for singing.

Sincere appreciation goes to all rappers, dancers, Bible reciters, poets, comedians and talented musicians—who, if not for their impromptu abilities, none of this would have been possible.

A big thanks also goes to W. Pina and Officer Watkins for orchestrating this amazing event. Most importantly, a special thank you goes to Warden Grimes and Warden Benoit for their help and support.

# Stiles Unit presents literary awards

Submitted by unit education department

Three Stiles Unit college students won monetary awards and five more received honorable mention in a contest sponsored by *Expressions*, the literary magazine published annually by Lamar State College in Port Arthur.

The offenders were:

- Jaime Cantu—second prize for poetry,
- Steven Hatfield—first prize essay, first prize short story,
- Robert Taylor—first prize general art, honorable mention cover art,
- Lorne Reggie—honorable mention for poetry,
- Brandon Skillman—honorable mention for poetry,
- Pedro E. Flores—honorable mention for cover art,
- William Thraillkille—honorable mention for general art and
- Alfredo Torres—honorable mention for cover art.



From left to right: S. Hatfield, J. Cantu Jr., B. Skillman, R. Taylor.

# Wynne Unit conducts Faith-based graduation

Jeremy Busby  
Staff Writer

This program allowed me to step up to my calling and be the man that God wants me to be," said Delvin Mouton during the second annual faith-based graduation on the Wynne Unit. Mouton, one of 71 graduating offenders, addressed the graduates after completing the one-year faith-based program.

Hosted by Chaplain C. Page and Volunteer Chaplain R. Richter, this graduation ceremony included special guests B. Pierce, TDCJ director of Chaplaincy Services; R. Lopez, TDCJ director of Support for Chaplaincy Services; S. Ulmer, TDCJ Region I Chaplaincy director; M. Ortiz, TDCJ director of Rehabilitation Programs Division; Warden V. Pittman, senior warden for the Wynne Unit; a number of chaplaincy volunteers and family members of the graduates.

Lopez, who began his career in TDCJ as a volunteer chaplain nearly 30 years ago, told the graduating class how fortunate they were to have had the opportunity to enroll in the faith-based dorm program. Currently there are 31 faith-based dorms in TDCJ, six of which are available to female offenders.

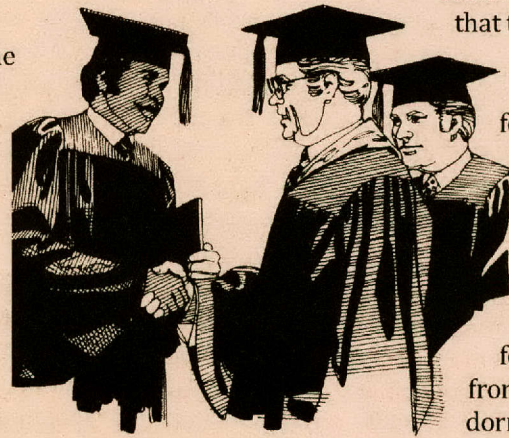
"Going into the faith-based dorms takes you to another level," Lopez told the graduates. "From now on, there is change in you, now go share what has been done for you in the faith-based dorms with others."

Pierce also told the audience that the faith-based program has given graduating offenders the foundation they need. In preparation for their return to the general population section of the unit, Pierce reminded the graduates to never forget where they came from—"the faith-based dorm."

The graduation ceremony was filled with words of encouragement and inspiration. Ortiz instructed the graduates to walk, not talk, about the things they had learned in the faith-based program.

"You've invested in treatment, you've invested in life, you've invested in your future, and now you're free," Ulmer said.

After honoring the offenders who changed their lives after completing the G-4 custody faith-based program, Warden Pittman announced his new vision to create a cell side faith-based initiative for ad seg offenders. Warden Pittman explained to the offenders that despite the fact that they are on a TDCJ unit that has a faith-based dorm, there are 2,600 offenders on the Wynne Unit. Of these 2,600, 71 were chosen to enter the program, "so they should consider themselves blessed."



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Difficult

## BEING TRUE TO WHAT YOU ARE

By J. Nathan Wilson  
Polunsky Unit

It was a nice morning that promised a beautiful day as I trucked off to work. Noticing a hitchhiker ahead, I decided to give him a ride.

"Hello there," I said as I leaned over and pushed open the passenger door. "Need a ride?"

"Don't mind if I do," the man said. "Well hop in," I said.

Dressed in tattered old overalls, scuffed black brogans and a soiled, wrinkled hat, my guest, with a strong but tolerable odor, slid into the passenger seat.

"Nice morning," he said in a gruff but cheerful voice.

"As good as they come. Heard it's supposed to get up around the high 80s," I responded as I pulled us back onto the road.

"I'm all for that!" I was born in July, and I'm not too fond of the cold," he said.

"Where you headed to?" I asked.

"As close to town as you can get me, young feller."

"I thought maybe you were on your way to work."

"Don't work. Quit a long time ago," he issued with pride.

"You don't work?"

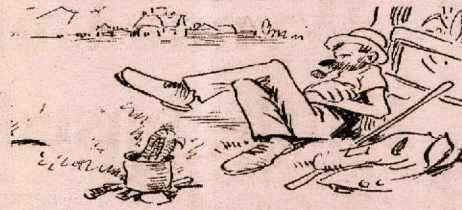
"Nope. I'm a bum," he said. Then, in a more challenging tone, he added, "And I wouldn't be much of a bum if I worked, right?"

"Well, I guess not. I suppose jobs are not very plentiful these days. Tell you what. I'll be doing some work on my property in a week or so, and I can give you a little work if you want it," I offered.

"Thanks, but no thanks," he said. "If I took a job, then I wouldn't have to bum anything. That would give bums a bad name. Bums play an important role in society too, you know. We don't clutter up the job market, and people need us to feel good about themselves, to feel needed and to have someone to look at and be thankful for what they've got. Also they will be able to say, 'There, but for the grace of God, go I.' And I'm okay with that."

"You seem to take being a bum pretty seriously," I injected.

"I do indeed. My bummanship is excellent, and I'm darn good at it! No



one has ever accused me of being an unfit bum, I might add."

"I thought a bum was a bum," I said, intrigued beyond expectation.

"Nope, there's all kinds of bums; good ones and bad ones. Most bums are honest. We don't steal, cheat or rob, and we'll eat out of a dumpster before we'd take anything. Frankly, not everyone is cut out to be a bum. It ain't easy. Me, I wanted to be a bum all my life, even when I was a kid. No one to answer to; no bosses; no taxes or strings attached. I can pack up and leave when I'm ready. Guess you can call my life, *Have bum, will travel.*"

Chuckling at the play on the old western series, I said, "I guess I never thought of it like that."

Reaching into what he used as a backpack, he extracted a pinch of chew, carefully placed it between his lower cheek and gum, and continued.

"Every bum's got a story to tell of how he became a bum. Some got laid off jobs, some got hit by alcohol and drugs, some entered the life as a result of illness or injuries. Me, I just quit work and became a bum."

"I suppose a person can't knock it until he's tried it," I shot back in earnest. "But I don't think I'm quite cut out to be one."

"It takes a special kind," he said. He then announced, "Anywhere around here will be fine." As I searched for a safe place to pull over, he added, "Someday I'll be in the Bum Hall of Fame. The Michael Jordan of bums!" Spurred on by my laughter, he continued with, "Can't think of a better place to end up. Except maybe in bum heaven. Imagine bumming a meal off of Saint Peter or hitching a ride with Jesus."

"A reward for living a good, clean life," I said, pulling to the curb.

"Appreciate the ride, young feller," he said as he hopped out of the vehicle with an agility that belied his aged appearance. Then he added, "Follow your heart, do good by yourself and others, and God bless."

Pulling back onto the road, I watched in the rearview mirror as the figure became smaller and smaller and then vanished. With an eerie feeling, I recalled Hebrews 13:2: "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by doing so, some have unwittingly entertained angels." *E*

## The art of prison language: A vocabulary update

By Lance Lindsey  
Lockhart unit reporter

The following is a list of phrases commonly used in today's prison communications. This is given as a means of education: use at your own risk!

- 1) *Beat your feet* - telling someone to get lost.
- 2) *Bet that* - to agree with someone; to concur.
- 3) *Everybody ain't able* - to have something going in your favor by which one could gloat over!
- 4) *Get somewhere* - telling someone to get out of your space.
- 5) *He's got something* - when someone exhibits extraordinary talents or skills.
- 6) *He smoked it* - to blow an opportunity.
- 7) *I'm just saying* - a warning or declaration stating the obvious.
- 8) *Kick rocks* - telling that person with the big nose to get out your business.
- 9) *Knock it down* - a prompting to get confirmation of facts.
- 10) *Know what I'm saying* - a sly tactic for getting a person to believe what you are saying.
- 11) *Let your hair down* - to stop the pretense of toughness or to go into a chill mode.
- 12) *Move around* - telling an annoying person to scram.
- 13) *Put some wind in your collar* - to tell a person to just be cool. *E*

## Wynne Unit presents 'Testimony of Month'

### Staff Report


The Chaplaincy Department on the Wynne Unit has introduced a new program to recognize offenders who have made positive changes in their lives. This program, entitled "The Testimony of the Month," seeks written testimonies (250 words or less) from offenders of all faiths detailing their transformations. This program is open to all offenders on the Wynne Unit, including those offenders who are at the trusty camp and in ad-seg. Once an offender submits their testimony to the Chaplaincy Department, the testimony is considered by a five-member panel that includes the unit's chaplain. Monthly, this panel will select one testimony from the entries to be recognized as "The Testimony of the Month."

The recipient of this monthly award will be presented a certificate of recognition from the Chaplaincy Department and Senior Warden V. Pittman. Additionally, they will have the prestigious honor of having their photo displayed for an entire month on the "Testimony of the Month" plaque that has been placed in the Wynne Unit's Rockwell Chapel.


"It is a real good program," said an offender who recently submitted his testimony for consideration. "It gives people a voice to tell others how they have changed their lives and now are living for God."

There are no limitations on the number of times that an offender can submit their testimony for consideration. Every offender on the Wynne Unit is encouraged to make a submission. *E*





# Give Romo a chance



By Jeremy Busby  
Staff Writer

Listening to all of the diehard Cowboys fans scream for Tony Romo's benching makes me sick to my stomach. As a life-long Cowboys fan, I'm overly thrilled that American's Team has a pro bowl-caliber quarterback taking snaps.

Looking at the modern-day NFL, this is a league that is all about the quarterback. If you have a good one, you win Super Bowls. If you don't, you win the number one pick in the NFL draft. Just naming all of the teams that are proven winners in today's NFL, you will find pro bowl talent at the quarterback position.

New England, which has won three of the last six Super Bowls, has perhaps one of the best quarterbacks to ever play the game: Tom Brady. The Colts have Peyton Manning, and the New York Giants has his equally talented brother, Eli. In both cases...Super Bowl! The list goes on with Ben Roethlisberger, Kurt Warner, Brett Favre, Aaron Rodgers and Drew Brees. All these guys have two things in common—quarterback skills and Super Bowls.

So am I comparing Romo to the Mannings and Favres of the NFL world? That is exactly what I'm doing. These guys have very similar skills. Ever since he was named the starting quarterback for America's team, Romo has won on a consistent basis. Both his quarterback ratings and his completion percentage have been in the league's top 10 yearly. With the exception of last year's season, where Romo had a season-ending shoulder injury, the Cowboys have not had a losing season with him as their starting quarterback. So why would you want to bench a guy who has brought so much to the team?

Okay, I get it: Romo can't win "the big one." He throws too many interceptions, and he is quick to fumble the football. Well, allow me to bring to your attention that these are the same things people said about Favre and Peyton Manning! In fact, Favre is the league's all-time leader in interceptions.

Much like Romo, Favre's style of play required those risky plays where you attempt to make an extra yard or two for your team or attempt to squeeze a ball into tight coverage to keep the offensive drive going. Sometimes those risky plays are successful, sometimes they fail. When the plays succeed, the team wins; when they fail, the team loses. That is the nature of the game. Live with it!

If you are going to cheer when Romo makes one of his signature plays, in which a three yard loss is turned into a 50 yard gain, then you must offer words of encouragement when that same signature play results in an interception. Based on Romo's performance thus far, there is more likely to be

more cheering occurring than the offering of words of encouragement. With a little patience and trust, Romo will ultimately lead the Cowboys to their sixth Super Bowl victory.

Just imagine if the Indianapolis Colts had given up on Peyton Manning? While he was perhaps the greatest quarterback to ever play for the University of Tennessee, Peyton simply could not win any of the big games that his team needed him to win. Peyton came out of the University of Tennessee having never won an SEC championship. His legacy was that he was incapable of winning "the big one." This legacy followed him into the NFL.

After proving that he could be a great quarterback during the regular season, when it came to the big games during the playoffs, Manning's performance was subpar. Each and every year, the Colts fans would get hyped-up that this would be "the year" that Peyton finally got them over the hump, but time and time again there was only disappointment.

Nevertheless, the Colts fans stuck with their quarterback. After making a few personnel changes to their defense and bringing in a new coach, Peyton led them to a championship. He finally won "the big one!" Now he is lauded as one of the best ever to play the game.

While we can never know exactly what place in NFL history Romo will have, it can be said that he is the best quarterback that the Cowboys have had since Troy Aikman. Oh, so quickly does the entire Cowboys fan-base forget about all those dreadful 5-11 and 4-12 seasons that the Cowboys had before Tony Romo. Does anyone remember the numerous quarterbacks that were tried in order to replace Aikman? Let me remind you of a few: Tony Banks, Quincy Carter, Clint Stoerner, Drew Henson, Chad Hutchison, Randall Cunningham, Drew Bledsoe, and can anyone forget, Anthony Wright?

If those names don't make you cringe, and you are still considering benching Romo, let's take a look around the league today at some of the possible replacements for him. Let's see, there's Matt Leinart, John Beck, J.T. O'Sullivan, Derek Anderson, Brady Quinn, Jim Sorgi and Kyle Boller, just to name a few. Which one would you pick to be your quarterback once Romo is benched?

Maybe Cowboys fans need to take a couple of deep breaths and understand the value that exists in having someone like Romo as their offensive leader. His talents are rare, and if you don't have talent at the quarterback position, you don't win! Give the guy a chance. E

## Has anyone seen him?

By Jamie Stewart  
Telford Unit Reporter

My closest friend has been missing for quite some time now. I haven't been able to find him. I miss him dearly, so I would really appreciate it if you could help me locate him. How does he look? I'm sorry...I figured you already knew who he was and what he looked like. But since he's apparently a stranger to you, I'd be more than glad to give you a complete description.

For starters, he's very bright. That is to say he owns a light. No matter where you see him, his light shines brightly for your eyes to see. And what better place to give off light than in a place such as this: a place where there are far more dark souls and even darker thoughts; a place where hope is a joke, and the number of lies increases faster than gas prices.

But back to my friend. The light is his *outer* appearance. My friend is willing to shine it on anyone who is tired of living in darkness. On the *inside*, he is considerate to others; he is conscious of the lives that surround him; and he listens more than he speaks. Pride, machismo, selfishness... these are traits you will never see come out of him. Instead, if he happens to accidentally bump into someone, he says "excuse me." When he walks, you won't see a limp or a swagger. Instead, you'll witness the confidence of a man who is in control of his thoughts and actions.

When others are in need, you won't see him turning up his nose and whispering bad things behind a less fortunate person's back. Instead, he has compassion for human life and looks forward to giving and uplifting others..

I haven't seen my best friend in a while. I miss him so much. If your body feels heavy in the morning when you wake up, it's probably due to the baggage you're carrying. You know, the selfishness, immaturity, self-centeredness and pride that you refuse to let go of. Right before you get ready for bed at night and are brushing your teeth, if you aren't able to look yourself in the mirror, you have become the bad guy. You're the one chasing away the best friend you could ever have.

I'm not talking about your father, brother, or even your son. At any given moment, one or all of those people could leave or betray you. The friend that I'm speaking of is one who will truly be with you until the very end. This friend has a name. His name is **Morality**. Have you seen him lately? Are you even *looking*? I know I am! E

## I got me a good one

Submitted David Lopez  
Beto Unit

As I sit in this cell, lonely,  
C.O calls out mail. And just when I think he is done...  
He calls out my name....  
From Eva it says...  
I got me a Good One...

You see all my life has been heartache and strife.  
Good days gone bad, in the blink of an eye.  
"Why?" my wife asks.  
"Baby, talk to me, tell me what you have done?"  
I love you, David", through tears she cries...  
I got me a Good One...

"911, state your emergency," the operator says.  
"My husband is missing, please help me find him."  
Now at the morgue, I was called down to I.D. him!!!  
"Oh, thank God, it's not him...Son, your dad may still come home."  
I got me a Good One...

Now off to the dopehouse full of drink, I need more drugs...  
Telephone rings...Brinnnnng...Brinnnnng...it's her... "Hello"  
She says, "David, I love you, please come home, it's ok.  
I'm here for you, you are not alone..."  
I got me a Good One...

"D-2-03 get dressed, you have a visit."  
Fresh shave, tight whites, looking good as I can...  
We hug, she smiles: "That's my man"...  
I got me a Good One...

Do you remember the mail, lonely, in a cell?  
It says the rent is paid, the kids are fed, the lights are still on,  
And, hey, our son graduated kindergarten...I smile...  
I work a lot, my feet are sore, David, I just can't take it anymore...  
I cry at night, I miss you so, I just can't wait to have my husband home...  
I got me a Good One...

A little later after being released, my shirts starched up, my Dickies  
creased...  
My wife's relaxed...I carry her weight...well-deserved the break she takes.  
No more drugs, no more lies...Responsibility is my goal...  
Doing what is right to leave my mark on this world.  
She knows where I am, as I lie next to her.  
No more identifying bodies, no more chasing me down.  
She's at ease, relaxed, peaceful...I love this woman...  
I got me a Good One...

For those of you who question this all took place...  
Just look at the man next to you and ask his story...  
Good women are out there...I put mine through hell...  
But she is still here...And yes she did I.D. a body...  
It wasn't me, but it could have been...

## Disrespect

Submitted by Thomas Adams  
Beto Unit

There once was a time, not so long ago  
When respect among "convicts" was the in thing, ya know.  
We spoke to each other and even played games.  
And without all the noise or the calling of names.

Many old convicts speak of "Back in the day."  
Old convicts remember when respect was the way.  
When convicts stood together to get things worked out.  
They watched TV without hearing folks shout.

In prison these days "inmates" are the new breed.  
They know nothing of respect; it's all about me.  
Curses fly from their mouths like rain from a cloud.  
Forget who else is present, just out-yell the crowd.

And old convicts, ya know, we, too, are at fault.  
We no longer teach things the way we were taught.  
No longer are new boots shown the convict way.  
That's why there's no respect like back in the day.

We turn our heads and our mouths stay silent.  
And the world around us becomes somewhat violent.  
These are a couple of prison shortcomings today.  
And that's why respect is not longer the way.

Bragging has become the norm  
Now that disrespect has become the way.  
Respect and old convicts are things of the past  
Because we are no longer "Back in the day."

## Dream

Submitted by Codi Easter  
Plane State Jail

I've closed my eyes each night  
hoping to escape this place...  
Slide away into a dream where I  
can feel the warmth and comfort of  
your embrace.  
The chance to see beyond the time  
and dry the tears my eyes have  
cried,  
Taking me to a moment where you  
are by my side.

Trying to escape the loneliness  
throughout each night.  
Drifting off into a world where  
the two of us are together and  
everything is right.

The years seem to fade away; today  
turns into yesterday.

I wake at the sound of unfamiliar  
voices,

Back in a situation where I have  
very few choices.

The clock on the wall ticking at its  
own pace,

Leaving me with only memories of  
your beautiful face.

A rude awakening to what we have  
to endure.

This is definitely no dream, that's  
for sure.

## Why is that?

Submitted by C.W. Elliot  
Wynne Unit

Once upon a Christmas Eve, I sat on Grandpa's knee,  
And with a sparkle in his eye, these words he said to me:  
"Johnny," he asked as I listened on, "you're what now? Seven? Eight?"  
"I'm nine!" I yelled. And he softly answered, "Maybe I'm too late."  
"Too late for what?" I asked him then, not certain what he meant.  
Without a word, he set me down and to a bookshelf went.  
With a thoughtful look, he retrieved a book and opened it and read.  
And after finding what he wanted, Grandpa stopped and said,  
"Johnny, do you know what Christmas means?" To which I did reply,  
"Sure! Santa, presents, Christmas trees, turkey and pumpkin pie!"  
Then Grandpa laughed (the way he does) and said, "Yes, yes, of course.  
And you're the type, I guess, that puts the cart before the horse."  
Of course I had no clue of what the man was trying to say.  
And so said I, "Then you tell me the meaning of the day!"  
"That's easy," Grandpa answered then, a chuckle in his voice.  
"It's on this day that Christian folk, their savior's birth rejoice.  
You see, young man, there is a place for Christmas trees and stuff.  
If this is all you know, however, you don't know enough.  
There's that whole 12-day thing of which you likely have no clue.  
Epiphany is actually what that's referring to.  
And what of plastic Christmas trees with balls of red and gold?  
A fir tree decked with candles bright as it was in days of old.  
And how about the Santa Claus you youngsters all adore?  
Saint Nick and Father Christmas was that gentleman before.  
And there are far more quaint traditions people still employ  
With absolutely no connection to that baby boy  
To whom the Virgin Mary did give birth to on that night  
In a cold and lonely stable, beneath a star so bright."  
I saw my grandpa's face light up while telling me all this.  
And then he added, "Now my boy, I don't mean to dismiss  
The things that Christmas mean to you, like Santa Claus and toys.  
You see, that's what it should mean to little girls and boys.  
But just remember one thing as you skip from year to year.  
The holiday is rich with myth, far more than mentioned here.  
And which of these you will cling to is not for me to say.  
I only hope that I've instilled upon you on this day  
A wish to learn a little more about this special season  
So not only will you know the myth, but also know the reason."  
And this is why I say to you, my daughter and my son,  
That Christmas can be spiritual, mythical and fun.  
No matter what traditions you adhere to when you're grown,  
When your kids ask you, "Why is that?" the answer should be known.



## Another

### auld lang syne

Submitted by William Chaplar  
Former Staff Writer

Another January first rings in a brand new year. The ball goes down; the sky lights up with fireworks galore.  
The meaning of the day, though, has been lost on people here. At midnight, everybody cheers while champagne bottles pour.  
While many wonder if they'll keep their promises this time, And several hours later, when the sun begins to shine,  
The rest of us will simply sing another auld lang syne. Drinkers will sleep while others sing another auld lang syne.  
College games and hangovers seem all that represent. But what's it really mean, this thing that we're so quick to say?  
The first day on the calendar, which is by many spent. And why is it that no one says it any other day?  
Just sleeping off the night before when they drank too much wine. Instead of trying to figure out the meaning of this line,  
Meanwhile the sober folk just sing another auld lang syne. A bunch of us will simply sing another auld lang syne.

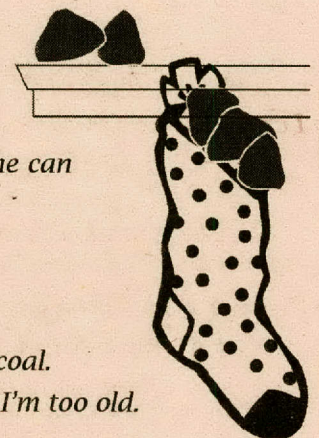
## A Christmas without

Submitted by Jimmy D. Saville  
Released

I may not have a Christmas this year.  
I may not have a family this year.  
I may not have a turkey  
I may not have a ham  
I guess old Santa Clause will have to do the best he can this year.

I may not get any presents this year.  
I may not get cards this year.  
I may not have a stocking which to fill with coal.  
I may not have much of nothing and it's because I'm too old.  
It may not matter if I am bad.  
It may not matter if I am good.  
I may not have Christmas lights to hang in my neighborhood.

I may not have all this because I am here  
But I do have something to give  
And that's a Christmas cheer!  
Merry Christmas to all  
And have a Happy New Year!



## Graphic Arts classes making mark on future Business Image Management & Multimedia courses training TDCJ students in new computer skills

**"T**echnology is opening the eyes of many students who have entered the multimedia world," said Windham School District (WSD) teacher K. Smith. "A multitude of students have completed the Business Image Management and Multimedia (BIMM) course at either the Huntsville or Hilltop units or the Travis State Jail.

"Various levels of computer skills have been brought into our classrooms," Smith said, "from beginners with absolutely no experience to those who have actually been employed in the graphic arts field in the world. Eventually, each student has produced amazing work, reinforcing the fact that everyone is capable of utilizing the computer in positive, creative ways.

"BIMM is an introduction to graphic arts," she said. "Therefore, it does not provide certification in that field. It does, however, provide you with computer skills in Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop CS3 versions. You also learn advertising techniques to help market your own business. All of these skills are geared toward making our students better able to find, and keep, jobs after release from TDCJ."

TDCJ offenders interested in participation in BIMM classes should contact their unit's WSD education counselor to verify eligibility requirements.



Participants must not have any history of conviction for sexual offenses, should have at least a 7.5 educational achievement score and should be within five years of release date.

### **BIMM students say:**

- *"BIMM is a course that offers the knowledge of basic graphic design. Students learn how to design a simple CD cover, or build an entire magazine."*
- *"Are you artistic, tired of watching TV programs, ready to think outside The Wall, and ready to expand your mind? BIMM is for you. Learn business applications including graphics layouts, drawing illustrations and transforming photos. WE HAVE!"*
- *"This class has opened my eyes to a different view into the computer world. Anyone can do it!"*
- *"What is BIMM? Image, perception, imagination...skills to change your life. My life has been transformed by the skills I have learned in the BIMM class. I know that I will be able to be a productive person because I am now a graphic designer--tomorrow's best!"*

## **THE STATION**

*By William Sneed  
Sanchez Unit*

**I**n my mind is a final destination. On a certain day, at a certain hour, I will be pulling into the station. Bands will be playing and flags will be waving. Once I get there, so many of my dreams will come true, and the pieces of my life will fit together, like a completed jigsaw puzzle. How restlessly I pace these floors, cursing the minutes for passing so slowly, waiting, waiting, waiting for the station.

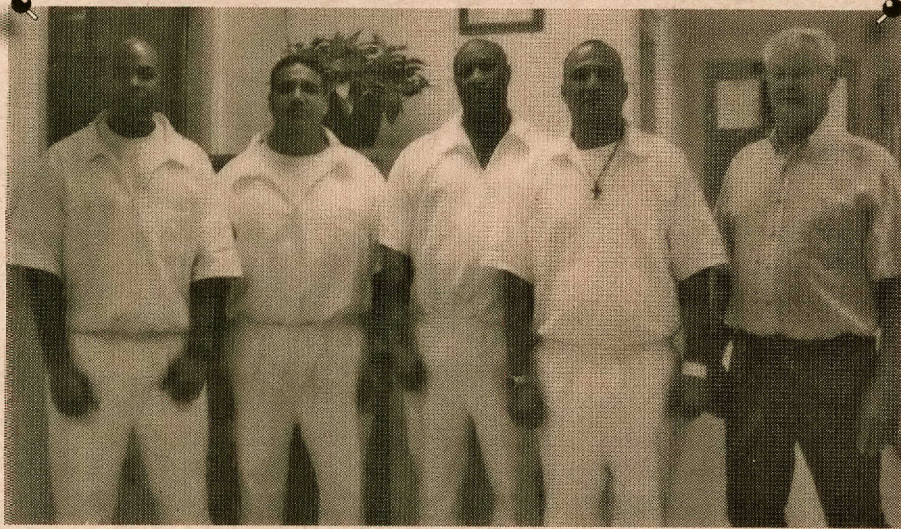
Once I've reached the station I will cry, "That is it! I am done; never again." I shall

live happily ever after! Sooner or later I must realize that there is no one place to arrive at once and for all. The station is only a dream. It constantly out distances me.

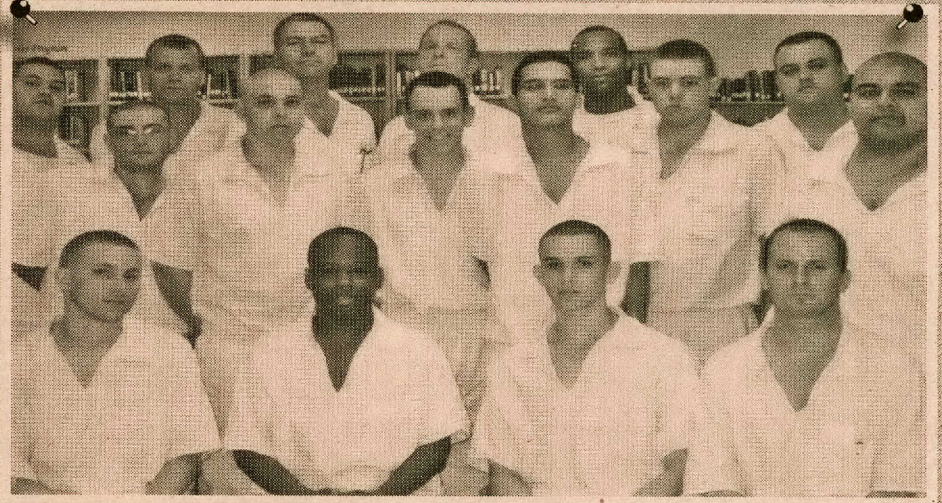
It isn't the burden of today that drives men mad. It is the regrets over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are twin thieves who rob us of today. I must stop pacing and live more. Life must be lived as we go along. The station will come soon enough. ε



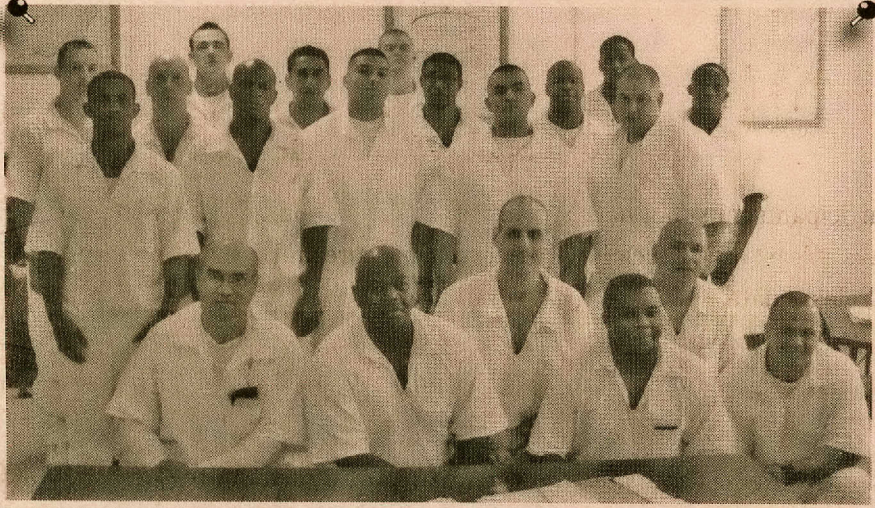
# TDCJ/Windham bulletin board



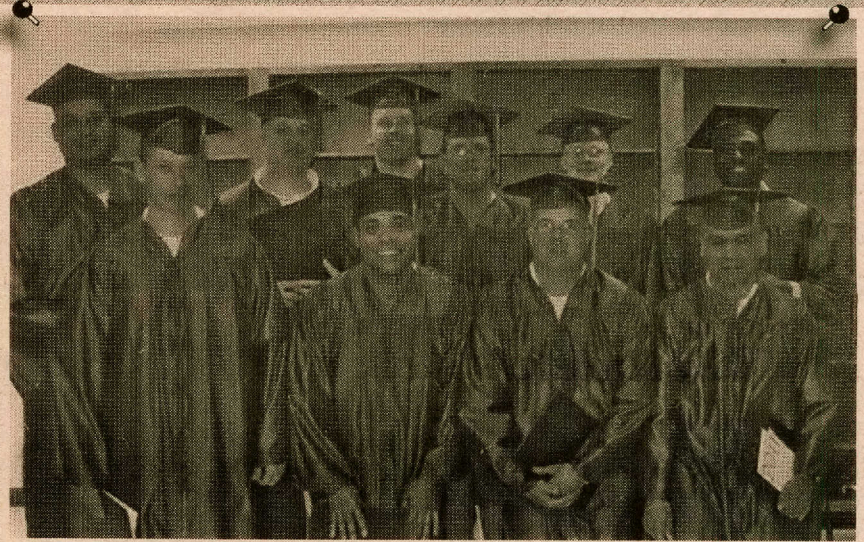
Allred Unit Automotive AC graduates are D. Bartley, C. Jones, J. Zarazua and J. Reyes, with instructor L. Josefy.



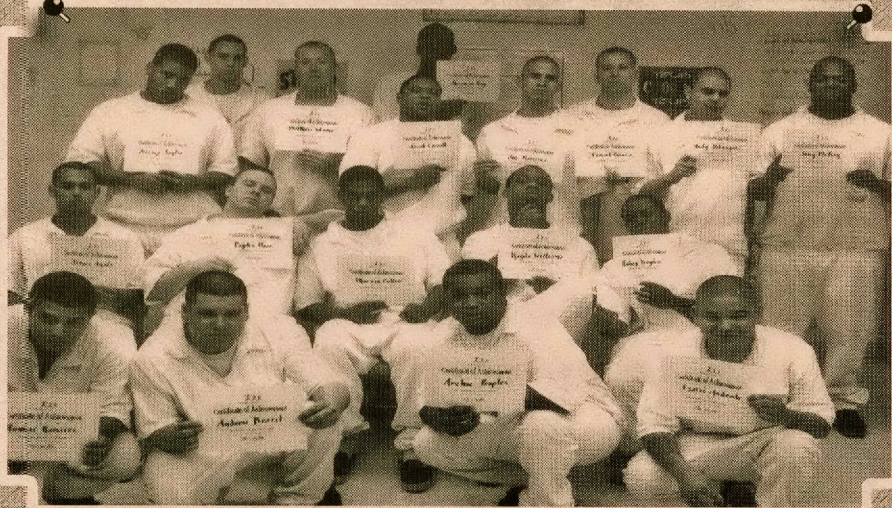
Gurney Unit GED graduates are W. Barnard, J. Bridges, M. Clendening, A. Diaz, V. Hicks, R. Jackson, C. Jones, S. Martin, J. Myskiew, J. Quezada, D. Ramirez, B. Revilla, J. Rodrigue, B. Rogers, C. Williams and L. Guevera.



Allred Unit Cognitive Intervention graduates are S. Stegall, D. Henley, J. Roman, J. Hyde, B. Love, R. Adams, E. Williams, D. Douglas, J. Rapp, C. Scott, G. Alvarado Jr., C. Churcher, L. Gill, J. McGowan, J. Perez, J. Rodriguez, R. Wood, G. Bahr, M. Holder and A. Hernandez.



Daniel Unit West Texas College graduates are D. Hays, J. Shepherd, R. Battise, P. Wyborny, J. Martinez, D. Develrow, W. Poole, D. Ensign, I. Thomas and J. Eaves.



Clemens Unit Middle Way Family Education graduates are R. Ramirez, A. Brazil, A. Peoples, I. Andrade, J. Ayala, P. Rose, M. Collins, K. Williams, R. Vaughn, J. Taylor, S. Truitt, M. Adams, J. Carroll, T. Ray, J. Ramirez, I. Garza, A. Velasquez and T. McRay.

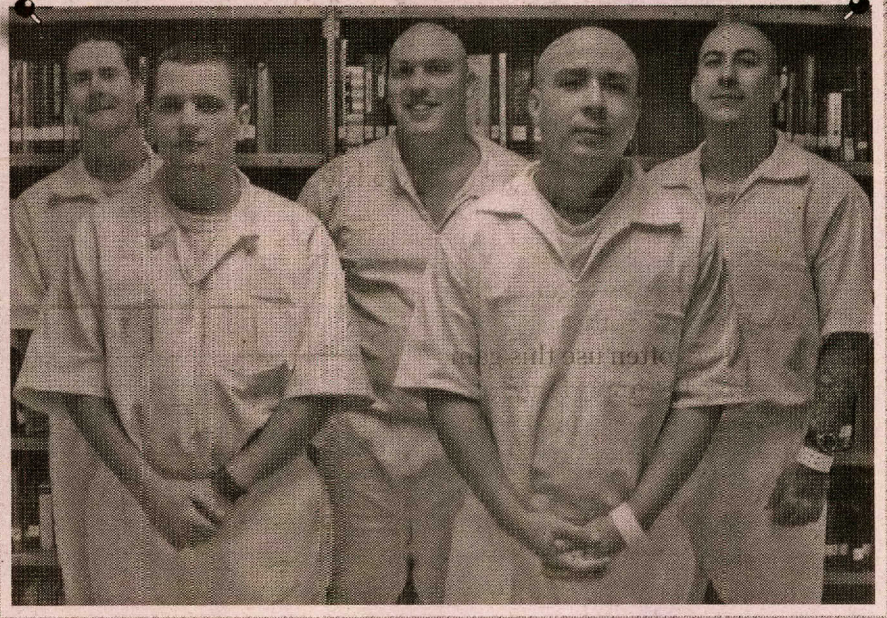


Daniel Unit CTE-Construction Carpentry graduates are B. Smith, B. Phifer, J. Warren and M. Brown.

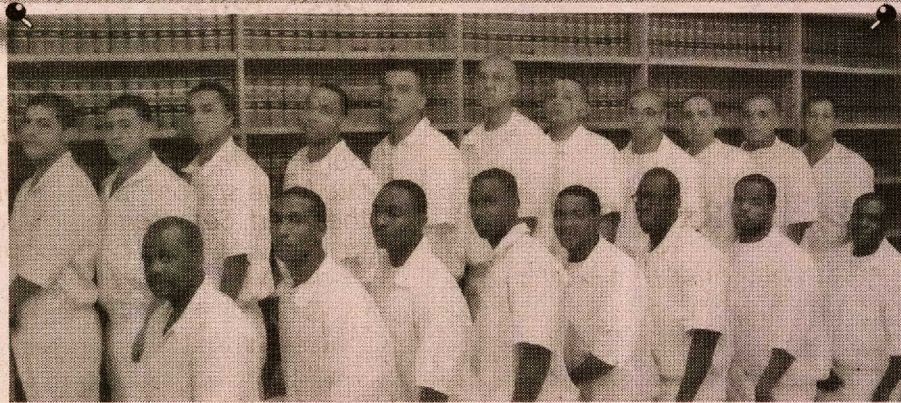
## TDCJ/Windham bulletin board



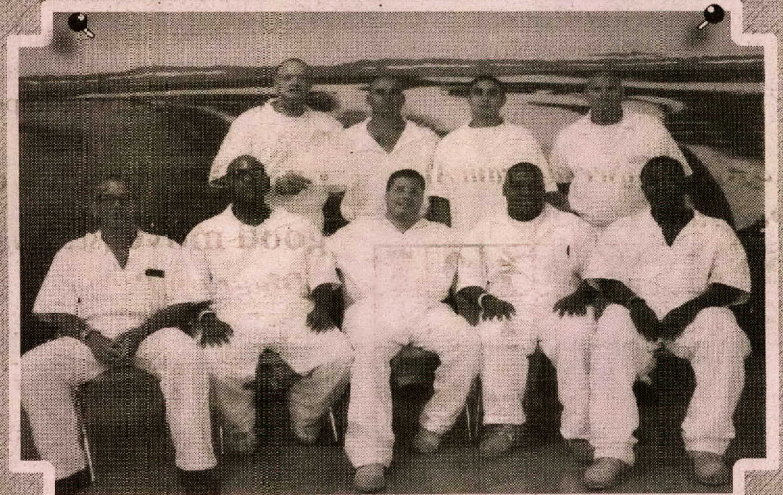
Neal Unit GED graduates are F. Bright, J. Borreson, D. Yates, Salutatorian, K. Smith, M. Morales, youngest graduate, D. Farris, Valedictorian and oldest graduate, W. Culpepper, L. Thomas, C. Oglesby and C. Rurak.



Wallace Unit Brakes Engine Performance graduates are N. Diedrick, J. Tadlock, V. Shook, S. De La Cruz Jr., R. Rando and J. Maldonado.



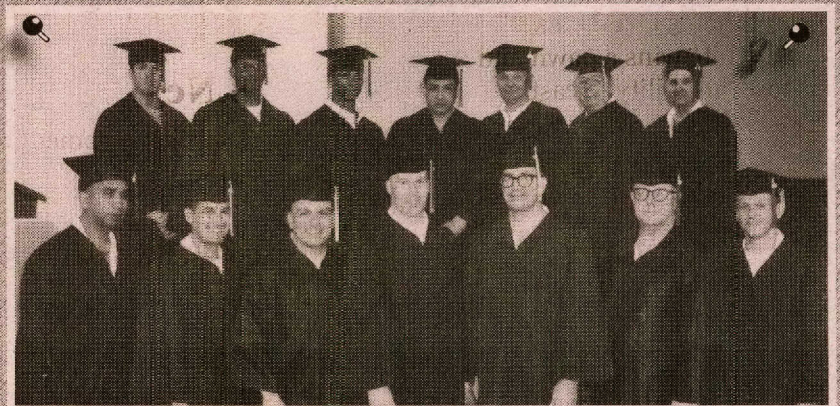
Torres Unit GED graduates are C. Brown, D. Chapa, A. Cisneros, E. Cox, R. Durkin, M. Estrada, A. Gonzales Jr., N. Gonzales, J. Hernandez, S. Johnson, D. Kelly, R. Partida, E. Rodriguez-Flores, Q. Simon, F. Soria, J. Taylor, N. Terry, B. Thompson and H. Young.



Stiles Unit Automotive Mechanics graduates are J. Warren, C. Wilson, J. Martinez, R. Leblanc, J. Elizondo, A. Stewart, T. Anderson, A. Batiste and S. Gobert.



Wallace Unit Cognitive Intervention graduates are B. Littleton, R. Cruz, A. Salas and D. Forbes.



Hughes Unit Texas State University College graduates are V. Klock, J. Gentry, R. Dadson, D. Ball, J. Garcia, C. Shockley, R. Villescaz, E. Martinez, A. Morrison, S. Miller, F. Sutherland, J. Rangel, S. Camp, G. Peoples and R. Crampton.

# Crespo's chess corner

## Famous games of the past — the opera house game

Richard Crespo  
Terrell Unit

The opera house game was a famous bout played in 1858 between the American chess master Paul Morphy and two strong amateurs, the German noble Duke Karl of Brunswick and the French aristocrat Count Isouard, playing together as partners against Morphy.

Chess teachers often use this game to demonstrate the importance of rapidly developing one's pieces, the power of tactic pinning, as well as other lessons.

### 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6

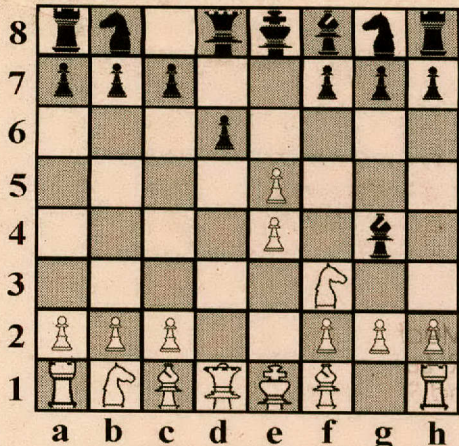
This is the Philidor Defense. It's a solid opening, but is slightly passive and it ignores the important d4 square.

### 3.d4 Bg4?

Though 3... Bg4 is considered an inferior move today, this was standard theory at the time. Now 3... exd4 or 3... Nf6 are usual. 3... f5 is a more aggressive alternative.

### 4.dxe5 (See diagram A)

Diagram A:



If 4... dxe5, then 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.Nxe5, and white wins a pawn and black has lost the ability to castle.

### 4... Bxf3 5.Qxf3 dxe5

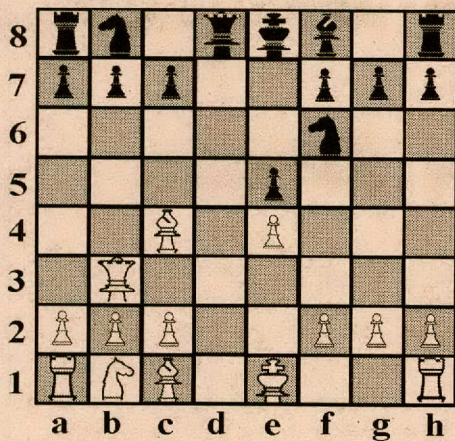
### 6.Bc4, threatens mate Nf6

This seemingly sound developing move runs into a surprising refutation. After white's next move, both f7 and b7 will be under attack. It would have been better to directly protect the f7 pawn with the queen instead of just blocking it from the white queen, which would have made white's next move less potent.

### 7.Qb3, double attack

(see diagram D)

Diagram D:

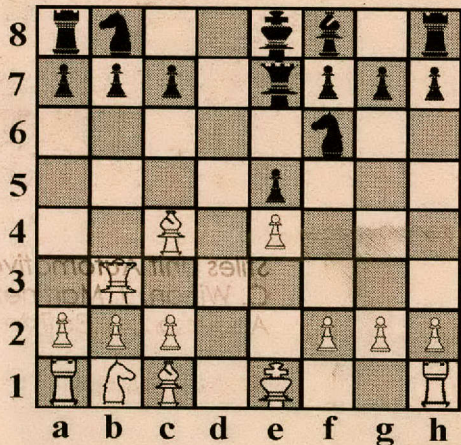


If 7... Nc6 or Nd7 mate in two 8.Bxf7+ Ke7 9.Qe6#. If 7... Qd7 loses the rook to 8.Qxb7 followed by 9.Qxa8. notice that 7... Qe7 saves the rook with the combination 8.Qxb7 Qb4+ forcing the queen exchange saving the rook. Black is forced to move the queen to e7, which blocks the f8 bishop and more importantly impedes kingside castling.

### 7... Qe7, black's only

good move (see diagram B)

Diagram B:



### 8.Nc3

White prefers fast development to material. He declines to win a pawn with 8. Qxb7.

### 8... c6 9.Bg5, pinning the knight b5?

This move drives the bishop away and steals the initiative, but it allows Morphy a sensational sacrifice to keep the initiative.

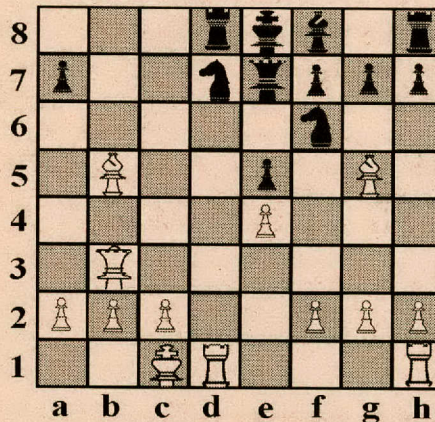
### 10.Nxb5!

Morphy chooses not to retreat the bishop, which would allow black to gain time for development.

### 10... Cxb5? 11.Bxb5+ Nbd7, pinning the second knight.

### 12.O-O-O Rd8 (See diagram C)

Diagram C:



The combination of the bishop's pin on the knight and the open file for the rook will lead to black's defeat.

### 13.Rxd7 Rxd7

Removing another defender and now pinning the rook.

### 14.Rd1

Compare the activity of the white pieces with the idleness of the black pieces. At this point, black's rook is not able to be saved, since it is pinned to the king and attacked by the rook, and though the knight is defending it, it is pinned to the queen, so Morphy can gain material advantage now.

### 14... Qe6

Qe6 is a futile attempt to unpin the knight (allowing it to defend the rook) and offer a queen trade to take some pressure out of white's attack. Even if Morphy did not play his next crushing move, he could always have traded his bishop for the knight and then taken the rook.

### 15.Bxd7+ Nxd7

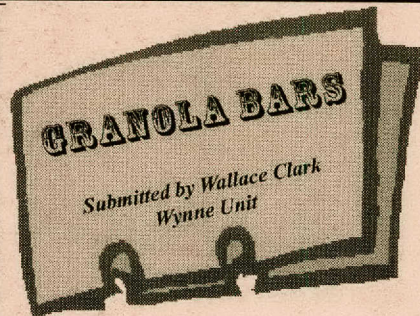
### 16.Qb8+!!

Morphy finishes with a stylish queen sacrifice.

### 16... Nxb8 17.Rd8# ♯



## RECIPES



### Ingredients:

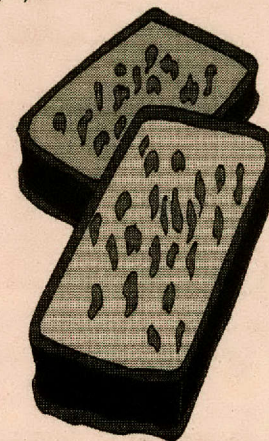
- 4 packages maple and brown sugar or apple cinnamon oatmeal
- 2 packages trail mix
- 2 vanilla Moon Pies
- 3 Nutty Bars
- 15 butterscotch disks
- 1 package multi-grain caramel chips
- 1 large empty chip bag

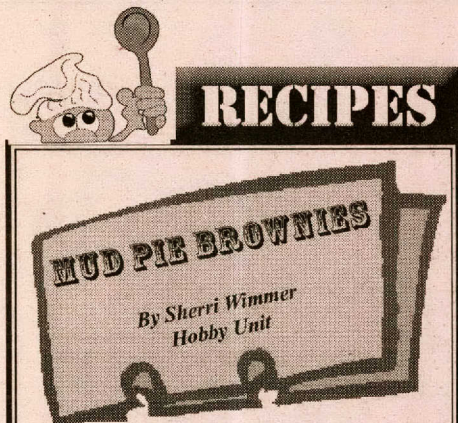
### Directions:

Open both Moon Pies and remove the marshmallow filling. Place filling in your hot-pot insert, along with the 15 butterscotch disks. Add about five large spoonfuls of water to the insert. Set insert in hot-pot and let cook until butterscotch and marshmallow are completely melted.

Crush both the Nutty Bars and multigrain caramel snacks. Place in large bowl along with the four packages of oatmeal. Crush up the trail mix to small pieces and place in bowl. Mix well.

Remove insert from hot-pot (careful, it's hot!!) and slowly pour over contents in bowl. With clean hands, mash contents together. Spread on a chip bag and flatten out into a square. Cut with spoon into two inch by three inch portions. Allow to cool and enjoy!





**RECIPES**

**MUD PIE BROWNIES**  
By Sherri Wimmer  
Hobby Unit

**Ingredients:**  
Peanut butter  
Hot chocolate  
Graham crackers (or vanilla wafers)

**Directions:**  
Fill an empty peanut butter jar (or hot pot insert) almost to the top with chocolate. Add a little bit of water and stir until chocolate is all dissolved and gooey. (Do not add so much water that it becomes runny.) Add two large scoops of peanut butter into the chocolate. Put the jar filled with chocolate and peanut butter into the hot pot for approximately 15 to 20 minutes to melt it all together.  
In a bowl, crush one whole package of graham crackers or half a bag of vanilla wafers. (It's best if crushed very fine.) Once the chocolate and peanut butter have melted, pour it over the crushed graham crackers in the bowl. Mix well, adding water if needed. Let this sit for a couple of hours to settle, then eat up!

# The wise one and the intelligent one discuss prison potential

By Ray Rios  
Huntsville Unit

**The Wise One:** Oh, intelligent one, here in prison we have the opportunity to cultivate our minds and better ourselves by taking advantage of all of the educational and vocational classes that are offered here at the Windham School District, don't you agree?

**The Intelligent One:** Yes, even if we are not able to attend any classes and go to school, you know with all of this time we have in here, we can read a lot of books and learn about all kinds of subjects such as politics, government, economics, business and religion. We can even learn world history and study philosophy and then write our own book if we want. There are a lot of good books at the unit's library!

**The Wise One:** Yes, in the library there are also recent newspapers so you can keep up with what's happening in America and in the world.

**The Intelligent One:** Oh, Wise One, prison is what you make of it. It is only hard for those who, by their own choices and actions, bring problems and troubles upon themselves. It is not hard to go without catching a case.

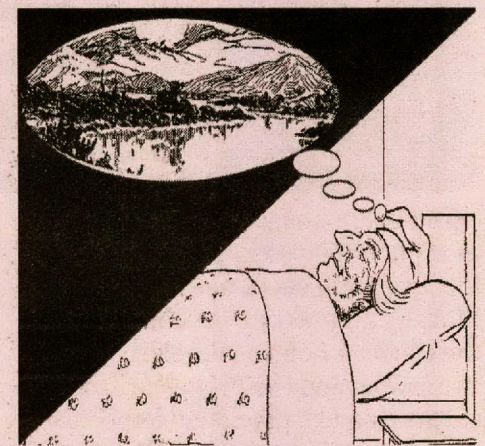
**The Wise One:** The human mind has great potential. Everyone is capable of learning and absorbing a vast amount of knowledge.

**The Intelligent One:** And, you, my dear Reader, what have you been doing with your time? Have you been thinking deeply about your life and your future?

**The Wise One:** Excuse me, Intelligent One. Many say that we should mind our business and let everyone continue in their ways.

**The Intelligent One,** stunned and saddened, replies mournfully: But no, it is good to encourage people to better themselves and attempt to give them a desire to change. In truth, the lifestyle that the majority of men in here desire to live is self-destructive, harmful to their health and will ultimately hurt them in the end.

**The Wise One:** I know, I know. I just pray that they will wake up and realize this before it is too late...



## Summer dreams

By Lance Lindsey  
Lockhart Unit Reporter

I'm so excited! All my friends are going to be there. I will be tubing this weekend; floating down the Guadalupe River with my best buds. (I'll stay in the shower a couple of minutes longer, close my eyes and dream...)

Finally everything is packed! I'm going camping with my family today. The crickets will be singing as we feel the cool breeze under the sparkling stars in heaven above. (I'll tune the radio to my favorite station, turn on my fan, close my eyes and dream...)

I can't wait until tomorrow! I got my rod and reel in the back of the truck along with my tackle box full of new lures. I'll pick Dad up early in the morning and cruise to the lake to meet my brothers. I bet I catch the biggest fish! (I'll pull out my photo albums, say a special prayer for my loved ones, close my eyes and dream...)

I can taste it already! I got charcoal, lighter fluid and fat juicy steaks. I've invited everyone I know. This will be a barbeque that will go in the record books. (I'll make the biggest, most delicious spread in TDCJ history and, while I'm enjoying every savory bite, close my eyes and dream...)

Sunday will be so refreshing! I'll wake up and head to church with the family. We will sing hymns, read the Bible, hear a great sermon and pray together. (I'll grab my chair and head to the gym for church. I'll sing hymns, read the Bible, hear a great sermon and pray as I close my eyes and dream...)

Someday my dreams will come true.

## Sudoku solutions

Difficult

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

Easy

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

The Echo  
Apologizes  
for the  
Sudoku  
error in  
last month's issue