

A man's action is only a picture book of his creed.

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The ECHO

Texas Prison News

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Published Since 1928

Volume 84, No. 3, April 2012

Distributed Free to Texas Prisoners

OFFENDERS, OFFENDERS' FAMILIES TARGETED BY SCAMS

Scam: *A fraudulent or deceptive act or operation;
To deceive, to defraud;
To obtain money by a scam.*

— *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,
Eleventh Edition, 2003*

In today's fast-paced, internet world, people are many times tempted to make fast, illegal money. Today, scams of all types are rampant. Scams include certain lotteries, auctions, postal scams, pet scams, Super Bowl ticket scams, psychic scams, etc.

It is now becoming more evident that certain people are now attempting to scam prison and jail inmates and their families, including those involved with the TDCJ. Naturally, scams involving prison inmates will normally involve promises of release or reduced sentencing. The scams, today, are easily contrived by use of multiple databases now available on the internet. Inmate and inmate family names and addresses are easily available for scam mail-outs. Family phone numbers are also available, and thus, aid in scams.

SCAMS continued on page 7



Lindsey State Jail GED graduates are B. Brown, G. Cortez, J. Medford, L. Blakely, R. Warren and Y. Flores. See pages 13-14 for more TDCJ and Windham School District event photos.

Commissary adds over-the-counter medications

The Commissary and Trust Fund Department will be adding additional items for sale in the category of over-the-counter medications. Items are being added weekly by the TDCJ Purchasing Department and will then be made available for sale at each unit commissary. Please check your unit price list for available items.

The process for indigent offenders receiving over-the-counter medications has not changed. Indigent offenders will continue to receive these items from the medical department.

Amachi Texas partners with Big Brothers Big Sisters

By partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), Amachi Texas brings more than 100 years of experience in successfully matching children into a safe, positive, one-to-one mentoring relationship with a caring adult.

While many programs reach out to those in prison, very few address the specific needs of children affected by this situation. Amachi Texas is designed to address these needs and change the direction of these children's lives. A United States Senate report in 2000 stated that 70 percent of the children of prisoners will go to prison themselves without intervention. The program ensures that these children will benefit from having an additional caring adult

in their lives. An evaluation conducted in 2006 by the U.S. Department of Justice concluded that children in Amachi Texas are:

- 46 percent less likely to use illegal drugs;
- 27 percent less likely to use alcohol;
- 52 percent less likely to skip school;
- 97 percent more likely to promote to their next school grade; and
- 84 percent more likely to graduate from high school.

It was also found in this study that less than one percent of the Amachi children become involved in the criminal justice system.

AMACHI continued on page 15

The ECHO

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• 16 PAGES •

PUBLISHED FOR 84 YEARS, SINCE 1928

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Don Keil – Managing Editor

Mary Partida – Administrative Assistant

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Clements Unit – Wylie Bone

Coffield Unit – Gregory Bryant

Crain Unit – Jane Callaway

Dalhart Unit – Jimmy Devance

Daniel Unit – Justin North

Darrington Unit – Michael Ingram

Duncan Unit – Jim Brannen

Eastham Unit – David Strong Jr.

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Subscriptions to **The ECHO** can be purchased for \$12. Money orders or personal checks must be made out to **The ECHO/WSD**. Correspondence via U.S. Mail must be addressed to **The ECHO**, P.O. Box 40, Huntsville, TX 77342-0040.

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

ISSN 1530-7298.



Letter from the editor

Have you ever wondered how **The ECHO** is created every month at the Wynne Unit and eventually makes its way into your hands? Many layers of people and processes must work in harmony in order for **The ECHO** to be published each month. I am extremely thankful for all the different groups of people that work toward the production of our monthly publication.

We have a great group of Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and Windham School District (WSD) administrators and staff that work diligently behind the scenes in the oversight, approval and proofing process. I am thankful for the time and energy these people devote to **The ECHO**, especially in regards to their other designated duties. They are the reason we have new articles, daily supplies, necessary equipment, edited copy and technical support!

Secondly, our unit reporters have been faithful in submitting reports and photos documenting unit events. They have done a great job and we have many stories and photos waiting to be published from all over Texas. We have had some really good unit reports sent in during the last year — and I look forward to many more in 2012. Unit reporters — keep up the good work!

Another group to be recognized is the offender writers who submit articles, commentaries, letters to the editor and to Darby, short stories, recipes, poems, etc. You all continue to do a great job by sending in material for your newspaper. Don't hesitate to send us your work — even if you are not a professional writer. We will edit your submissions for clarity and effectiveness. However, some of our contributing writers are amazingly gifted and willing to share their talents.

A fourth and smaller group would be the actual **ECHO** staff located here at the Wynne Unit. Our administrative assistant and four offenders responsible for writing, design and layout do a superb job each day as we work toward the monthly production date. They keep the newspaper alive and well.

Thanks also to the WSD warehouse

staff and offender workers who are responsible for distribution of **The ECHO** to prison units, statewide. They do an awesome job getting **The ECHO** out to all the prison units, along with handling their regular duties of serving district schools throughout the state.

Also, it is necessary to note the great amount of support **The ECHO** receives from the Wynne Unit administration, security staff and support staff. Without their assistance, the production of the prison news-

paper would be much more difficult. They are the best kind of neighbors and coworkers.

If I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me, as it was not intentional. In summary, I would again wish to thank and recognize all the above people who comprise **The ECHO** team. Thanks for putting this paper into the readers' hands!

Don Keil,
Managing Editor
The ECHO

ECHO requests submissions

The ECHO attempts to reflect positive values to fulfill the expectations you have placed on our prison newspaper. We request that **YOU** consider writing quality articles, commentaries, etc., to be published. All submitted articles will be appreciated and considered.

Please do not send anything more than 1,000 words (five pages handwritten, or three pages typed double-spaced). Publication is not guaranteed, and it may take a few issues for an article to appear.

Suggestions:

Submissions	Description
Article	An article is an objective discussion in an informative manner on any number of topics, such as health, history or legal issues. New and detailed facts need to have cited sources.
Commentary	A commentary is a discussion of any number of topics, but it is based upon the opinions or experiences of the writer.
Book Review	A book review details the subject, style and key plot elements of the book and generally concerns relevant topics of the day. Opinions about the book are welcomed.
Extras	Extras refer to letters to the editor, letters to Darby, puzzles, recipes and short stories, to name a few.
Poetry	Poetry is a piece of writing chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound and/or rhythm. (The ECHO already has more than 100 poems approved for publication and always has an abundance of poetry submitted, but if you have a really great poem, go ahead and send it.)
Unit Report	A unit report discusses activities performed on a particular unit and is submitted by unit reporters only . The report must be submitted on the "Article for The ECHO form" with the proper signatures.

When submitting any of the above, write a heading at the top of the first page with your name, number, unit of assignment and the type of submission you are sending. For example:

John Doe, #1234567

Huntsville Unit

Letter to the Editor (or article, poem, etc.)

Don't hesitate to send us your work — even if you are not a professional writer. We will edit your submissions for clarity and effectiveness.

Thank you for your continued support of **The ECHO**.

Dear Darby,

I'm writing you with the hope that you will answer me back and print my message in The ECHO. I have been reading The ECHO since 1987, and I still read it today. Now, I'd like to take a moment to say that I know it's very hard and tough inside these prison walls. Not much ever seems to change. You can trust me; I've been in prison since 1987, and it's now 2011. But some sort of change needs to take place in order to make the wheels turn.

I started out very young breaking the law (14 years old). I never went to juvenile hall or any boy's ranch, but when I turned 17, I hit a Texas prison unit—Beto I. I didn't understand what I'd gotten myself into. I was laced up by my convict uncle who had been to prison back in the 60s and 70s. I was aware of how older inmates back then tried to take advantage of new ones. When they tried to do it to me, I stood my ground with the best of them and showed that I was not going to be turned out by a bunch of inmates who want to pick and choose. I would, at times, say to other inmates "Do you guys ever expect to change and stay out of prison?" I'd tell them that getting involved in the silly prison games was not the key to getting out and changing your ways. Please don't think that I'm judging anyone, because I'm not. Why would I judge someone when I can't get it right myself. All I can do is make choices and change from being the type of person I was to being the type of person I'd like to be. But one thing is certain; when we are released, it's not going to be a cake walk for anyone.

I hope to read your feedback in an upcoming issue. I'll be looking for it.

Sincerely,

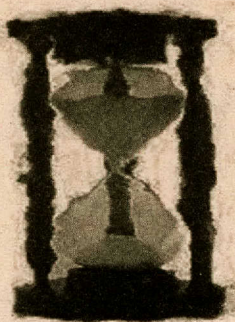
**The Bird
Allred Unit**

Dear Bird,

You make some excellent points. If you've ever watched the TV program "Beyond Scared Straight" you've probably seen how they try to make life in prison seem so horrible so that the kids will be scared. Well, for some ridiculous reason, some people in here actually seem to want all of that stuff to be true! But whenever they experience even a little of the stereotypic prison life, they cry like babies. Meanwhile, only a small handful are actually trying to make the sort of change that you alluded to.

You said that it's not up to you to judge. That may be true. But there's a lot to be said for that whole am-I-my-brother's-keeper thing, too. There's

certainly nothing wrong with you letting others know that you are trying to live in a way that will keep you from coming back when you're released. It helps, though, to actually live that way. To paraphrase Bill Clinton, people will always be more impressed by the power of your example than by an example of your power. Let everyone else live in their self-made prison jungle. Meanwhile, the smart people in here are spending all of their time trying to make a change in themselves.



Dear Darby,

I was eating breakfast a few days ago, and this fellow I was sitting with at the table was thoroughly convinced that he personally knew you and had done time with you on the Coffield Unit back in the 70s. He also said that your last name was Darby and that you used to answer Dear Darby letters from Coffield. If that's true, you must be one old cat! No wonder you know so much!

Anyway, is this true? Were you there and did you answer Dear Darby letters from the Coffield Unit? If not, then who are you?

**Burley Johnson
Wynne Unit**

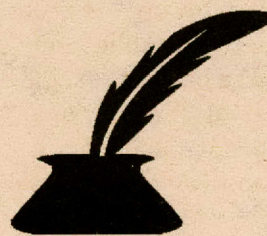
Dear Burley,

I can go on record as saying that everything your friend believes is untrue. Over the years, all sorts of rumors have been spread about me by foolish individuals who were trying to sound important. What's sad, though, is the misguided belief that inside knowledge about this ole thang would actually make someone feel important.

I can go on record, also, as saying that I am, indeed, old! How old? Well, let's just say I've got wrinkles that are older than a lot of the young guys I see walking around the unit I am currently on.

In answer to your question about who I am: I'll go on record as saying that I'm just another person who is doing time in prison—no more, no less. I just happen to be fortunate enough to be able to share some of my thoughts

with those who choose to write letters. Over the many years I've been here, I've learned many things. I've changed my outlook about a lot of things. And I've seen a whole lot of things change. To those who labor under the belief that I'm no longer the Darby that I was in days past, I'd like to say thank you. Because if it's noticeable to people in here that I've experienced growth and undergone change, then maybe it will be equally noticeable to the people who matter in my life. Because let's face it, Burley, they're the only ones that matter.



Dear Darby,

I am a long-time reader of *The ECHO*. I'm not sure which part of it this would fit into. It's sort of a long question to you but sort of an article as well. I'll let you decide.

Why do inmates use nicknames like "ATX" or "Old School" or "H-Town"? I am constantly amazed by the fact that more nicknames are used in here than real names. I am 59 years old, and I am proud of the name given to me by my parents. I wonder how many of these guys use those same nicknames on the street after they get out. I considered it offensive to be called "School" or "Pops" simply because of my age. It takes just as much effort to utilize a nickname as it does to use my real one. I realize that this is prison, but why degrade yourself by allowing someone to give you a nickname—especially one that you don't like?

I suppose that some people in here would rather be called "Outlaw" all of their lives. But if inmates really want respect (as so many claim to want), they need to understand that respect is not your right; it's something you earn. I would rather be called David than Pops. And I believe I've earned that. The sad fact, though, is that more officers know my real name than fellow inmates.

So for all of those who prefer to be called something other than what their parents named them, be proud of the name they gave you and try using it once in a while. Just a few words for thought.

**Sincerely,
David Lee
Marlin Unit**

Dear David,

You make several good points. Now,

DEAR DARBY LETTERS TO THE OL' THANG

this is just my opinion, but I think so many of the people in here prefer nicknames because they simply don't want those with whom they live to be able to easily identify them. You see, if you send an I-60 to have someone "kited out", it's not going to get much of a reaction if the name you use on it is "Stop Six" or "Funky Town". As you pointed out, most of the people who go by nicknames are completely unknown by any other name.

One of the things I've always found comical in here is how quickly someone will leave the TV or domino table to go and get his mail when the officer handing it out starts shouting names rather than just cell numbers. So fearful are they of someone being able to connect an official name to a face and cell number!

As far as their using the nickname when they get out, it's not likely for those who go by the name of their town. I mean, is everyone in the city of Dallas running around on the street calling themselves "D-Town"? Nor do I believe that any of those who have adopted the name of a favorite food in here going to be thrilled by its use among their friends and family on the outside. So all of the "Pancakes" and "Cornbreads" in here will probably either pick a new nickname or go back to utilizing the name on their ID card.

As someone who has seen many birthdays, I'm often referred to as "School" by some of the less creative guys around here. I don't let it upset me, because I always consider the source. If it did bother me, though, I suppose I would inform everyone who uttered the sobriquet what my real name is, and that I'd prefer to be called by it. If they chose, after being told, to continue to use something else, then I would likely have nothing more to do with them. Because using something other than my given name only becomes disrespectful if it's done after I've informed the user that I find it offensive. If someone chooses to continue to be offensive, then they're really not worth associating with.

So, David Lee, let those who find solace in the monikers go by them. Because at the end of the day, what really


 HEALTH NEWS — NUTRITION — MEDICAL UPDATES

Fitness is a matter of components

Staff Report

According to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), there are five components of physical fitness. These are cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility and body composition. The five are separate entities. In other words, it is possible—and actually quite typical—for one to *not* be fit in all five areas. A good example of this might be seen in a sumo wrestler. While he might be considered the epitome of muscular strength, there are few who envy his body composition.

While it may, indeed, be practical for certain athletes to rate high in one component while coming up short others, it seems to be the better part of logic for average people—those of us who will never aspire to weigh 400 pounds—to strive to be fit in all five components.

Cardiovascular endurance is the ability of the heart and lungs to deliver oxygen to the working muscles and for the muscles to use this oxygen to generate work. This component is also known as aerobic fitness. Some of the benefits of cardiovascular endurance are reduced blood pressure, reduced body fat, lower heart rate, and an increase in high-density-lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol—that's the good stuff!

Muscular strength is the maximum amount of force that a muscle group can generate. An example of this is how much weight an individual can bench press or squat in a single repetition. It's not how many repetitions or sets an individual can do, but the maximum amount of weight they can move at one time.

Muscular endurance, on the other hand, is the ability of a muscle or muscle group to perform repeated contractions against a resistance over a period of time. A good example of this can be seen in body-weight exercises such as the push-up—a staple of penitentiary workouts. Perhaps the most important benefit of muscular strength/endurance training is increased muscle mass, which increases the resting metabolic rate. The more muscle an individual has, the higher their metabolism will be. Muscle burns far more calories than fat.

Flexibility is the ability to move a joint through its complete range of motion. Anyone who has ever watched people do the sort of pushup where they just bob their head up and down with only a slight bend in their elbow has been exposed to a good way *not* to develop flexibility. In other words, the best way to improve one's flexibility is to perform all exercises with proper form. For example, a biceps curl is not done with the back!

Body composition refers to the ratio of fat to lean tissue in an individual. Put another way, it is how obesity is determined. Anyone who has heard the disturbing statistic about two out of three Americans being defined as overweight may consider body composition. It simply means that the body comprises more body fat than is considered to be healthy. In this particular instance, the threshold for health has been set at 25 percent. If one's body fat percentage exceeds 25 percent, they are considered overweight. If that percentage goes up to 30 or higher, they are considered to be obese—a condition that affects a third of the American population.

The above represents a brief overview of the American College of Sports Medicine's five components of physical fitness. Each of the components will be covered individually in future issues of *The ECHO*.

Source: *The Fitness Instructor's Handbook* by More Coulson. Copyright 2007.

It's sort of a stretch

Staff Report

Contrary to popular belief, flexibility is not about being able to bend over backwards and touch the back of your head to the back of your heels. While such an ability would no doubt come in handy for a 16-d gymnast, it's probably not anything the average human will need during a lifetime. For those of us who do not aspire to ever being the Olympic individual all-around champion, flexibility simply means the ability to move a joint through its complete range of motion.

Being flexible—by this definition—has the primary benefit of allowing individuals to carry out daily activities as long as possible throughout their lives. In other words, maintaining flexibility allows us to continue to do those things we enjoy for as long as we want to. This is not to say that a man who is 90 will be able to perform at the level of a 20-year-old. Maintaining flexibility will allow him to be able to continue to perform normal daily activities, thus adding life to his years even as he is adding years to his life.

While there is little evidence to support the notion that stretching prevents injury, it is not very likely that anyone will ever see Usain Bolt getting into the blocks for the 100-meter final without first having thoroughly stretched. What's good for the world's fastest human is probably good for everyone else. So, rather than taking a chance, it's probably best to stretch prior to engaging in any sort of strenuous activity. It's important, though, to do it right.

Static stretching is generally considered to be the gold standard with regard to flexibility. This simply means one should stretch the muscle to the point of mild tension and hold it for a short period of time (preferably 15 – 30 seconds). Those of us with a little gray at the temples might remember the old ballistic-style stretching of bygone days that involved bouncing movements. When I was in the army back in the early 80s, stretching—like everything else—was done “by the numbers.” The military has since adapted the static style of stretching advocated by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). This organization also points out that the most effective stretching occurs when the muscles are warm. Stretching cold muscles can, indeed, lead to injury.

As we get older, the aches and pains of old age can slow us down. An excellent way to thwart this process is to maintain our flexibility. Since engaging in a daily stretching routine does not involve a whole lot of blood, sweat and tears, it seems only logical to get started as soon as possible. Like the saying goes, “You're not getting any younger.”

AGENCY INFO — POLICY UPDATES — LEGAL NEWS

Texas Department of Criminal Justice

**Inmate Trust Fund Department:
Current Inmate Trust Fund Deposit Options**

Note: Sender's name and address is required when making a deposit to an offender's account. Direct your questions to Inmate Trust Fund telephone number (936)438-8990.

- **MONEY ORDERS OR CASHIER'S CHECKS** made payable to "Inmate Trust Fund for Offender Name and Number"
 - Obtain deposit slips from offender or by sending an addressed, stamped envelope to Inmate Trust Fund
 - Send deposits and/or requests for deposit slips to Inmate Trust Fund, P O Box 60, Huntsville, Texas 77342-0060, Phone Number: (936)438-8990.
- **MONTHLY CHECKING ACCOUNT DEBIT (ACH) *THIS IS A FREE SERVICE***
 - Complete an ACH authorization form (available online from TDCJ's website link to the Inmate Trust Fund) and have a set amount automatically debited from a personal checking account once each month for deposit to a specified offender
 - Attach a voided check on the account to be debited
 - Debit transaction will occur on the 5th of each month
 - Submit form with voided check to Inmate Trust Fund, P. O. Box 60, Huntsville, Texas; 77342-0060
 - Free service provided by TDCJ
- **WESTERN UNION QUICK COLLECT (FEES VARY)**

From anywhere in the United States. All three Quick Collect products are subject to different fees, send amounts, and other restrictions in certain states. Standard fee for over-the-counter Quick Collect transaction at a Western Union location. Deposit will post to offender's account within 24 hours.

Western Union Quick Collect
—Call Western Union at 1-800-325-6000, or visit www.westernunion.com to find the nearest Western Union location

Western Union Quick Collect by Phone
—For credit card transactions – call Western Union at 1-800-634-3422 (Press 2 to send Quick Collect payment)

Western Union Quick Collect Online
—For Web transactions, visit www.westernunion.com

For each Quick Collect transaction the following information must be provided:
 Pay to: TDCJ-Inmate Trust Fund
 Code City and State: TDCJ/TX
 Account number with Facility: Inmate's TDCJ number and inmate's last name
 Attention: Inmate's last name and inmate's first name
- **WESTERN UNION CONVENIENCE PAY**

Offered at select locations within the state of Texas. Send up to \$200 to an offender's trust fund account for a service fee. Call 1-800-354-0005 to find a Convenience Pay agent location. Retail locations include Kroger, HEB, Minyard's, Sack 'n Save, Carnival and selected Western Union agent locations.
- **ACE, AMERICA'S CASH EXPRESS**

Available anywhere in the United States. Deposit funds to an offender's trust fund account for a service fee. For the nearest ACE location, call 1-866-734-2306 or visit their web site at www.acecashexpress.com.
- **JPAY**

Allows you to send money to an offender for a service fee. Visit their web site at www.jpav.com or call 1-800-574-5729 to send funds using Visa or MasterCard credit/debit card. Senders can make cash deposits at any MoneyGram location nationwide using an Express Payment form and using **RECEIVE CODE 3570**.
- **MoneyGram® ExpressPayment®**

Available nationwide at over 26,000 retail agent locations, including Walmart. To deposit money to an offender account:

 1. Call 1-800 MoneyGram for the nearest MoneyGram agent location or visit www.moneygram.com
 2. Bring cash to the MoneyGram agent location and fill out the blue form with the following information:
 - Receive Code: **5203**
 - Company Name: **Texas Department of Criminal Justice**, City: **Huntsville**, State: **TX**
 - Account Number and Offender Name: **Offender ID #, Offender Last Name**, (01234567, Smith)
 3. Pay the low fee and keep the reference number that confirms your transaction.
- **Touch Payment Systems**

Provides convenient ways to get money to your loved ones with low service fees.

 1. Online: www.tdcjpayment.com
 2. Telephone (toll-free): 1-877-868-5358

MasterCard and Visa credit/debit cards are accepted, as well as MoneyPak, which is a remote cash option available at retailers nationwide. Visit: <https://www.moneypak.com/Partner/Payment.aspx/TouchPay> for details and locations.



AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATIC DEPOSITS (ACH CREDITS) TO AN INMATE ACCOUNT

I AUTHORIZE THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, INMATE TRUST FUND TO DEBIT MY CHECKING ACCOUNT EACH MONTH THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____ FOR CREDIT TO THE INMATE TRUST FUND

FOR THE BENEFIT OF:
 INMATE NAME _____
 INMATE TDCJ NUMBER _____

ACCOUNT INFORMATION IS LISTED BELOW
**** MUST ATTACH A VOIDED CHECK ****

NAME ON ACCOUNT _____
 BANK NAME _____
 BANK ADDRESS _____
 CHECKING ACCOUNT NUMBER _____
 SIGNATURE _____
 DATE _____
 DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

*** DEBIT TRANSACTIONS WILL OCCUR ON THE 5th OF EACH MONTH. ***
 THIS AUTHORITY IS TO REMAIN IN FULL FORCE UNTIL TDCJ HAS RECEIVED NOTICE IN WRITING FROM THE ACCOUNT HOLDER TO CANCEL THIS MONTHLY TRANSACTION FROM OCCURRING.

ITF USE ONLY:	_____
ENTERED	_____
VERIFIED	_____
DATE DEBIT TO BEGIN	_____

Investigators seek information for Fort Worth cold case

Heidimarie Cummings was a 51-year-old white female who lived at 3504 Cutter in Fort Worth. It was well known (in her circle) that Heidimarie sold marijuana to supplement her income. On Dec. 18, 2007, Heidimarie's son, Victor Ramirez, found his deceased mother in her bedroom where she lay in a large pool of blood. She had been shot. It appeared that Heidimarie may have known her attacker. From evidence at the scene, we believe that there was a struggle before she was killed and that money may have been stolen from her purse. Several leads were explored, but to date, no arrests have been made. Anyone who knows something about this murder should contact Fort Worth Homicide Detective Sarah Waters or Kerry Adcock at 817-392-4307 or 817-392-4316 or write to Fort Worth Police Homicide: 350 W. Belknap, Fort Worth, Texas; 76102. The email for the cold case unit is coldcase@fortworthpd.com for respondents outside the TDCJ.

ATTENTION!

ECHO Workers Needed

The ECHO is seeking offenders to assist in publishing *The ECHO*. Work in a good office environment creating a newspaper read by over 150,000 offenders. Applicants should have a positive attitude and work well with others. Prefer experience in similar/related work in the free world or in TDCJ.

Graphic Designer

Job duties include page layout, photo scanning and editing, art creation and general clerk responsibilities.

Preferences:

- Experience with Adobe InDesign, Page Maker, Illustrator and Photoshop.

Staff Writer

Job duties include writing articles and stories on various topics, typing, editing and general clerk responsibilities.

Preferences:

- Experience in journalism/publishing or a degree in journalism or related field.
- A strong knowledge of grammar, punctuation and news writing styles is required.

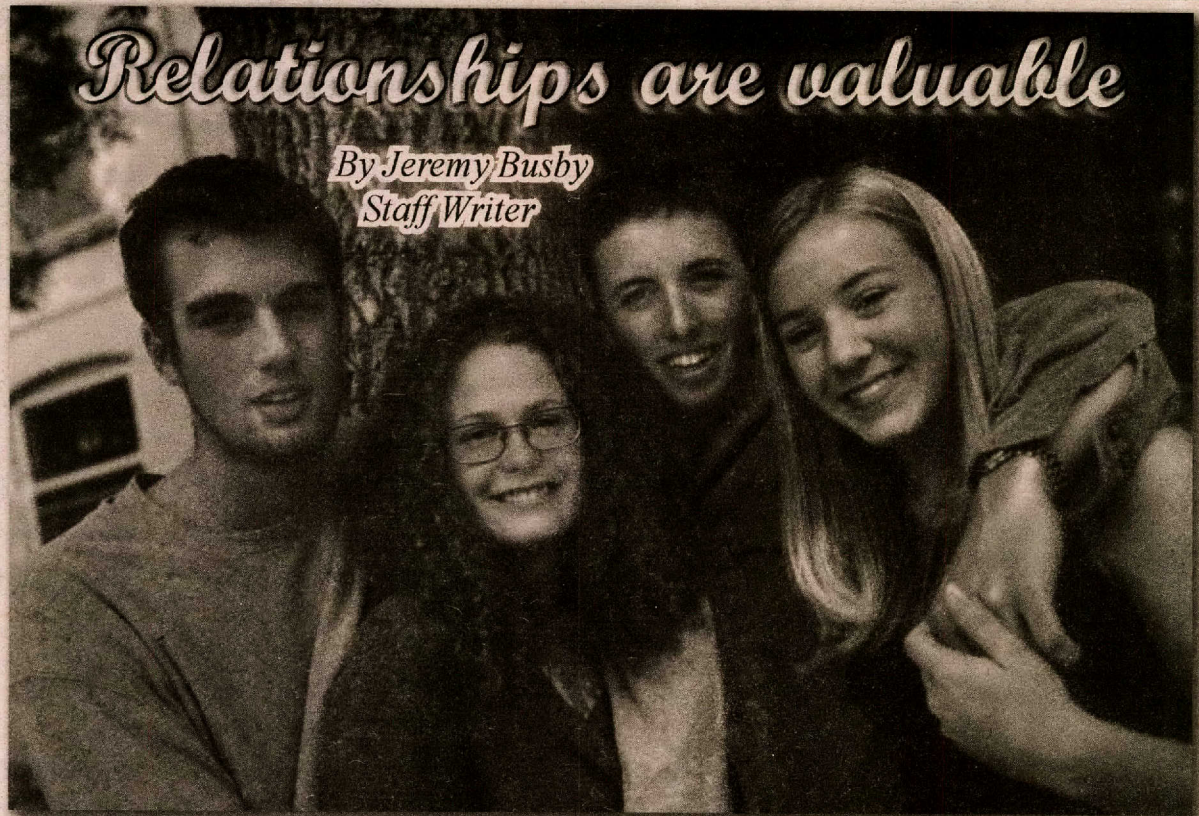
Requirements:

Applicants **must** meet the following requirements — those who do not will automatically be screened out.

Offender must:

- Be classified as a G2 custody status.
- Be willing to relocate to the Wynne Unit, Huntsville, Tx.
- Have no history of convictions involving aggressive sexual acts.
- Have no history of convictions involving kidnapping.
- Have no history of institutional disciplinary cases involving aggressive sexual acts.
- Have no major disciplinary infractions within the past 12 months.
- Have no history of security precaution designators.

Interested applicants may send an I-60 with qualifications to:
Managing Editor
The ECHO
Windham Administration Bldg.
Wynne Unit
Huntsville, TX



By *Jeremy Busby*
 Staff Writer

“Champions are champions not because they do anything extraordinary, but because they do the ordinary things better than anyone else.” This was one of the great sayings of legendary football coach Chuck Noll. People often think the success of others has a lot to do with that person possessing some sort of super powers. Never does one consider the fact that success comes from simply putting the best foot forward in any situation and developing healthy, safe and enriching relationships.

In prison, there is always the individual who complains about the lack of support that they have in the free world. As a result of extensive drug use or criminal behavior, most offenders have burned many of their bridges. Most offenders would confess to taking advantage of family members. Everyone that ever had any thoughts of helping them always ends up abused and hurt. As a result, once the offender comes to prison, there is no one left to offer any support. People don't desire to be around people who take from them.

Sadly for some, this trend continues after one has entered prison. Instead of learning the lessons that come from one's failure to sustain relationships properly, one continues to destroy new associations that are readily available

on a daily basis. It is common to hear ridiculous statements like, “I don't care about any of these fools in prison!” or “When I leave here I won't ever see any of these people again.” This rationale allows one to steal from cellmates and take advantage of the kindness other people in the same living area offer. Adopting an “us against them” mentality allows one to treat the prison staff like sub-humans. Not once does one stop to acknowledge that these same destructive behaviors were the compelling factors in failed relationships prior to prison.

While it is quite possible that one would never see the people from prison again, there are instances where wholesome relationships are important before one ever leaves prison. Take for

example when a desirable job opening comes up on the unit. Out of all the offenders on the unit, to whom will administration assign that job? There is a good chance the offender who has a blatant disregard for authority figures or a proven history of untrustworthiness will not be chosen. Most importantly, one could attempt to re-establish some of the bridges that were previously burned. Family members are more likely to forgive a person if that person is remorseful enough and abandons the behavior that destroyed their relationship in the first place. There is nothing like the support of a family member to help one move forward in life. A good team typically surrounds successful people.

In short, people who have healthy relationships—like champions—are the ones who simply do ordinary things to sustain those relationships. There is hardly any luck involved. Take pride in the unlimited types of relationships that life has to offer on a daily basis. They are just too valuable to squander. E

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Difficult

Prison humor: 'Ode to the Shower Realities'

By Jack Trykall
Jester I

“**S**oap and water, soap and water” wakes me out of a peaceful sleep.

Then it comes again from some deep place that I can't tell where it's coming from. “Soap and water.” I jump to my feet, trying to look out the window, but it's dark out. Soap and water; what's the meaning? It's not laundry day and it's way too early to wash the car. Everybody funnels to the door, so I follow. I'm soon informed it's shower time. While following along blindly, I'm thinking of my shower at home. No rubber ducky or anything, but the gentle flowing water, the big bar of soap and my favorite shampoo. I soon realize that I have none of those in my hands.



Cold air hits me, and I snap back to reality. We arrive at a small, dimly lit building. Everybody starts undressing, and so do I. I'm directed to go into another dimly lit room, so I go. I'm told to get soap and take a shower. I look across the room only to find water coming out of what looks like the ceiling. I stand there and wait my turn.

Then someone yells, “You want soap?” I say yes. I'm handed a bar of soap the size of a postage stamp. I started wondering if I was going to lose it in some places I was going to wash. An empty spot came up and I was ushered into the showers. My thoughts of gentle running water coming from my rain-like shower head at home were soon shattered by piercing needles of hot water. While washing, I drop my postage-stamp-sized soap on the floor. I look down to try to retrieve it. To my surprise, it seems as if I'm not the only one who dropped their soap. I look for my soap, hoping it isn't stuck to the floor like the others. Whew! I find it, and attempt to grab it. My question of why all the other

ones were still on the floor is soon answered. In an attempt to bend over and grab my soap, I am bounced around between legs coming and going in the shower. I felt like a ball in a pinball machine. I decide it's best to let it go and grab any loose bar I can find.

I finish my 30-second shower with no chance to stretch out until the hot water runs out. Someone yells, “No towel without soap!” I wonder how they figured I would have any soap left. Only a midget would have soap left. But I find a piece and turn it in for my towel. I should know everything will be proportionate. I am given a towel the size of a washcloth, which actually makes sense, since I didn't get a washcloth in the shower.

I am ushered to the back of another line, where I wait for clothes. None of these lines has a little red machine with a sign reading, “Please Take a Number” or “Now Serving.” I hear, “What's your box number?” and a handful of clothes are shoved at me. I move on to find a place to get dressed, the whole time wondering why some old, nasty clothes had to be behind bars. I find my spot and start to get dressed. The parachute boxers I am given are way too big, and I know one size doesn't fit all where boxer shorts are concerned. I put on my socks, shirt and pants, and look at myself. My shirt is big enough to fit two people at the same time, and the pants look like I am waiting for a flood. It



seems everyone else has the wrong size on and needs to trade with each other—which some of them are actually doing.

It occurs to me that it isn't the clothes that need to be protected behind bars, but instead the people giving them out. The days of a nice long shower by myself, a pair of blue jeans and a T-shirt are long gone. I'm dressed for the day. E

SCAMS continued from page 1



Unfortunately, scams continue to target offenders in TDCJ. For example, Texas prisoners or their families may receive letters from out-of-state companies promising to achieve release results, regardless of what post-conviction remedies have been previously sought. These letters make promises that are impossible to fulfill. A one-time fee of approximately \$400 is required for the company to review an offender's case.

Other examples of scams targeting offenders and offenders' families include the following:

1. In Georgia, a caller told an inmate's family to put \$900 on a pre-paid debit card and the prisoner would be released from jail. Similar scams have been reported in several Georgia counties.
2. In Florida, callers to families made promises to get jail prisoners into special rehabilitation classes or anger management classes that would lead to release. The scam fees ranged from \$300 to \$1,500. Also, false solicitation was made for registration fees and court programs. A prison advocacy group also claimed they could get cases overturned. A \$500 retainer fee was required with future charges to be made.
3. In New Jersey, a phony non-profit organization offering legal services charged a \$350 consulting fee and claimed to be a watchdog group over inadequate public defenders.
4. In Hawaii, alleged “Ponzi” (also known as pyramid) schemes have victimized inmates serving federal prison sentences and their families. Inmates and families were asked to give money to invest in companies that offered guaranteed returns from commodities trading.
5. In California, a person impersonating a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) official attempted to scam a prisoner of \$36,000 by promising to get his sentence reduced.

TDCJ offenders should be particularly wary of correspondence regarding these scam issues. Offers that sound “too good to be true,” probably are. E

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

Discover your niche!

By Jeremy Busby
Staff Writer

Big, lofty dreams are always a great component of life. They give one a sense of comfort, drive and direction in life. Beginning in early childhood, people would ask, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Typically the response would be, "I want to be a fireman" or "I want to be a teacher." From that point in one's life, dreaming big becomes an integral part of our livelihood.

Theoretically, a significant percentage of people don't always live up to their dreams. Every once in a while there is that extraordinary individual who achieves every goal they set for themselves. It is extremely difficult to think that anyone can achieve every goal that they set in life.

The good news is that it is okay not to succeed in all of your goals. The most important goals in life are to achieve complete peace and happiness. The key to doing so is finding your niche!

Every single person has a *fundamental* niche and a *realized* niche. Your fundamental niche is the full potential range of conditions and resources that one could use within a system without any direct competition from others. Your realized niche is the part of those conditions and resources that each individual actually obtains within the system. For example, anyone is capable of becoming a president of a company (*fundamental* niche) but competition from others may mean that you only become vice president (*realized* niche).

One may have set their goal to become the president of a company.

When one places things into their proper perspective, becoming the vice president of a company is quite an accomplishment. You can look at your failed bid to become the president and be disgruntled for the rest of your life, or you can embrace your success in becoming the vice president and enjoy yourself.

Being a president of any kind is not always feasible for everyone, despite our fundamental niche. Every single industry in the world has multiple positions that are essential to their success. That's why they have presidents, vice presidents, CEOs, COOs, etc. In the music business there are the artists, the producers, the executives, etc. In the church there is the pastor, deacon, usher, musical director, etc. The moral of the story is—everyone cannot be at the top.

One must have a realistic expectation of what one can be. There is nothing wrong with reaching for the stars, but if one only reaches the moon, embrace that reality and enjoy life. Don't spend time worrying and stressing about things that are beyond one's control.

The legendary football coach Bill Parcells would always say, "You are who you are." The greatest basketball player ever, Michael Jordan, tried baseball and failed miserably. Eddie Murphy flopped as a singer. Ross Perot is an excellent business man but never had success in politics. When you look at these individuals you see people who have succeeded and enjoyed doing so.

Dream big. Pursue the best. Find your niche and be the very best at what you do. E



A BOOK REVIEW: 'NIGHT,' BY ELIE WIESEL

By Gabriell Urton
Woodman Unit

N"ight" is a riveting memoir by Elie Wiesel. The courage Wiesel demonstrated as a teenager during World War II is shown in the writing of this book. He's allowed himself to become vulnerable to the world. He opened himself up by sharing his personal experiences in the most devastating tragedy of the twentieth century – *the Holocaust*.

In Wiesel's adolescent years his family was uprooted from Transylvania, imprisoned in concentration camps and separated from one another. There was the constant fear of death looming over their heads, like a dark cloud waiting to engulf them. This was experienced by millions during that time.

Most people did not believe Hitler and the Nazis would succeed in destroying the Jewish people. As an excerpt from "Night" expresses, "Yes, we even doubted his resolve to exterminate us. Annihilate an entire people? Wipe out a population dispersed throughout so many nations? So many millions of people! By what means? In the middle of the twentieth century!" (pg.8)

However, the Wiesel family clung to hope like a life raft. Every time they were transported they hoped the next camp would have better conditions. Day after day they hoped the Russian Army would rescue them. Hope was all they had. People were being torn from their families, literally starved to death, stripped naked and left lying in icy cold weather. Babies were used as target practice. The scent of burning flesh lingered day and night. A constant pull of black smoke overhead reminded them of their loved ones lost. At any moment they could be next. It was terrifying, cruel and inhumane; it was real, and death was ever present.

There were times Wiesel lost faith in God. He shared his anger and doubt in God while others alongside him prayed. Who wouldn't question God when faithful, innocent people were being tortured and killed as a senseless act?

Wiesel's journey was one of pain. The reader will respect this author for his honesty and bravery as he shares his heartwrenching story of loss.

His account has helped to teach generations the truth of the Holocaust. We can only hope these horrendous acts will not be forgotten or repeated. Elie Wiesel explained his reason for writing this book: "The witness has forced himself to testify. For the youth of today, for the children who will be born tomorrow. He does not want his past to become their future." E



ECHO interviews Mike Barber

The Mike Barber Ministry recently conducted a crusade at the Wynne Unit and ECHO staff writer Jeremy Busby had the opportunity to interview Mr. Barber regarding 25 years of ministry service to TDCJ.

ECHO: *First, I would like to congratulate you on the 25th anniversary of your ministry serving TDCJ. Let us begin with Mike Barber, the retired ALL-PRO tight-end for the Houston Oilers. Out of all the different occupations that you could have selected, why did you decide to go into prison ministry?*

Mike Barber: It is an honor to be interviewed by you. I didn't really choose the ministry. It chose me. I always wanted to be a head coach in the NFL. I always felt that I was a better coach than a player. Prior to going into the 11th year of my football career, I went to Seoul, South Korea, and I had an experience with the Holy Spirit. I was already doing prison ministry with another ministry as a volunteer. I never gave it a second thought that prison ministry is what I wanted to do. I was 33 years old, and I was having a problem learning the playbook. This had never happened before, and I realized that it was the Holy Spirit getting my attention. He had another playbook for me. Therefore, I began prison ministry full-time.

ECHO: *Is it true that when you first started the ministry you only had a small sound system that could fit into the back of your Suburban?*

MB: Everything that the Mike Barber's Crusade owned could go into the back of that Suburban and there would still be plenty of room left. I could put my whole family in that Suburban, too. We had a small sound system that belonged to my wife. Put it like this, we could go inside the chapel and be set up and ready to go in less than 10 minutes. It didn't take but one trip to haul everything in.

ECHO: *How things have grown since then!*

MB: Today we have a warehouse of 12,000 square feet and a sound system that could blast out probably 15-20,000 people. God has really blessed us.

ECHO: *Despite the fact that*



you have celebrated your 25th anniversary, you actually volunteered for six years before starting your ministry. If you could think back to one moment that really stands out over the entire 31 years, what would that moment be?

MB: That would be the very first time I visited a prison. It was at one of the Jester Units. A friend of mine had been involved in prison ministries for many years. He was a dear, dear friend of mine, and for over a year he kept trying to get me to go inside a prison with him. I kept turning him down. I was a baby Christian back then. I had diapers on, and I had the typical mentality of America: Throw away the key and leave them there.

He called me "Barbs," and he would tell me "Barbs, there is a prison not far from your house that we could go to. It will be one hour in a gym, and you don't have to talk. Just come and be with me."

So I said, "Okay." It was a small unit but when they announced that "Number 86" from the Houston Oilers was in the gym, I think everyone came out. I guess they thought I was speaking. I'm standing in the corner of the gym with my back to the offenders as they were walking by. I was talking football with some prison officials.

Suddenly I start hearing, "Mike, Mike, Big 86," so I turned around and gave a little nod, and to make a long story short, I turned around one too many times. I looked into their eyes and immediately realized that the difference between them and me, was that they got caught. I saw that they were sitting on the floor, and I went and sat with them. When it was over, I went to the door that they would all walk out. The very first offender that came towards me threw

me a curve ball. I went to shake his hand and before I knew it, he had his arms around my neck. Now, I don't hug another man's neck, but he had me! I knew immediately that it was a Godly hug. The chills went up and down my body. I think the other 200 men behind him hugged my neck, too. Those hugs changed my life. Out of all the awesome nights we have had in prison, that was the greatest because it changed my life and it made me realize the will of God for my life.

ECHO: *For so many years, we have heard about Mike Barber Ministries entering into prisons all over the world. What is it about TDCJ that has made Texas a mainstay in your ministry?*

MB: Thanks for asking that question. The reason I have Texas as a "host state," is because of the leadership here in Texas--from the executive director down. Any new executive director that steps into that position could say, "No, you can't do this any more." But every executive director and all management under them, and the chaplains as a whole, see the importance of fulfilling the Word of God--"even to the least of them." They let us. They let all of the other tremendous ministries come and do what God has called them to do. The administration, the leadership of this state, understand that change can only take place in a man's heart. This administration is awesome about developing programs that will help a young lady or a young man. The bottom line--they know if there is no true heart change, there is no change.

I very clearly say there is not anyone more responsible for putting Mike Barber Ministries on the map than the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Not anyone! The crimi-

nal justice system here in Texas put us where we are. I owe them everything. That is why I'm so committed to the great state of Texas.

ECHO: *If there is an offender somewhere sitting in his cell reading this interview and they are saying to themselves, "Mike Barber has not been to my unit," what would you say to them?*

MB: When I first started 25 years ago, the state of Texas had roughly 22-23 prisons. It was easy to visit all the prisons in one year. I knew all the wardens' names, all the chaplains' names. We were a close family. Then all of a sudden, boom! Today there are over 100 prisons in the state, equaling about 156,000 offenders. So now, we can't visit each unit near as much. That is very disappointing. Thankfully TDCJ allows all of the other great ministries to come in and serve all the offenders. Today we have so many volunteers come in, and it is a great thing.

ECHO: *Lets talk about your website, Pro-claim.tv. What was your vision for expanding your ministry to the internet and making your prison visits accessible to the family members of offenders?*

MB: Well, as far as internet and television, that is more or less due to my staff: my director, Brian Sanders, and my son, Brandon Barber. I don't know much about it, but they came to me with the idea, and we discussed it. Today we are seen through the internet all over the world. We have 20-30 foreign countries watching our events live when we are in a prison.

ECHO: *Have you received any feedback from the loved ones of offenders who have watched the events on Pro-claim.tv?*

MB: Through television and Pro-claim.tv we receive one testimony after another. We have been able to put families together. My son says, "Save a soul, save a family." That is what modern day technology has done for us.

ECHO: *I heard you mention last night in the program that after celebrating 25 years of service to TDCJ offenders, you are committed to serve for*

The storms of life

Submitted by Timothy J. McKee
Jordan Unit

The tears of sorrow, the tears of pain.
Life's great storm and never-ending rain.
Will it rain forever until we drown and die?
Is there hope for tomorrow or will we
continue to cry?
There seems no rope to grab onto; no towel
to dry our eyes.
Just when we start to be happy, the waves
come crashing by.
Do we give up or do we struggle? Do we sink
or do we swim?
The darkness seems to overtake us and tries
to come within.
We try to hold on and hope a boat comes
passing by.
We have to keep fighting and keep our
heads raised toward the sky.
Looking for His outstretched arm to reach
down and save our life.
If you hold on and look forward, you'll see
the lighthouse through the night.
A place ahead in the distance where the
land is warm and dry.
And once you reach the shoreline, you look
back and wonder why.
You realize you wouldn't have made it
without the hand that held you tight.
And now you can tell others how to make it
through the storms of life.

My prison

Submitted by Adrian Dinn
Garza East

Locked behind bars and bound up with chain.
I have so many scars that I can't explain.
There are no walls nor are there floors.
There are no halls nor any doors.
Where am I and why am I here?
I hear no one reply and I begin to fear.
Can anyone hear me; is there anyone there?
Darkness I see clearly; silence is everywhere.
I see no one's face although I try hard.
What is this place; where is the guard?
The silence is screaming, and I can't stand it.
I must be dreaming; I don't understand it.
Could it be...shhh, listen.
This is my...my prison.

My Sanity

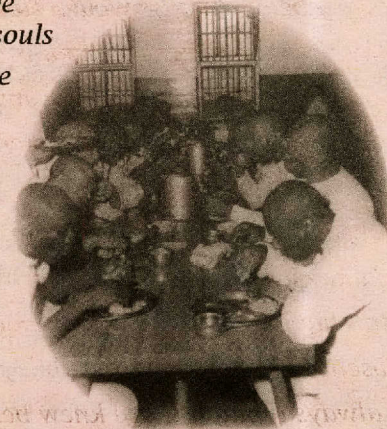
Submitted by Howard Jackson
Holiday Unit

These days and nights go by so slow,
Here comes a guard to watch the show
Things change quickly when I see in her hand
She's got the mail, so we all stand.
I know time passes for you out there,
And the fact I'm locked up, you are aware
But keep in mind while I do this time
Not hearing from you makes me lose my mind.
There are only two things to look forward to,
Going home is No. 1 and mail is No. 2.
These are the most important things,
Two rays of hope everyday brings.
Locked away behind these prison walls.
Sometimes you feel you've lost it all.
It especially gets lonely in here.
But you can't shed a tear or show any fear.
Baby, you are my ray of sunshine
As long as you let me know you're fine
Just send a letter once a week
Then my sanity I may hope to keep.

Prison

Submitted by Glenda Robertson
Hobby Unit

Prison should be
where we correct
And reprogram our mind.
We should see prison
as another chance,
Not a place to just do time.
Prison should be
where we search our souls
And try not to make
the same mistakes.
We should set goals
to achieve in life
And do whatever it
takes.
To be a daughter
to our parents
And a parent
to our child.
Not doing those things
that we used to do,
Acting like a beast of the wild.
Prison should make us
a better person;
The one God created us to be.
Not to come in
and pick up the games
That are played here
in TDC.
Prison is prison,
But the best can
come out of it worse.
So reach out to
God, receive
His blessings,
And come from
among the cursed.
Yes, prison is
prison,
No matter what
you say or do.
But just because
you're inside prison
Doesn't mean prison
must be inside you.



As time passes

Submitted by Edward N. Miller
Clements Unit

Stranded on an island oasis
With only the Word of
God
to keep me alive
I try to remember
faces among
places
Praying my spirit
will help me
survive
As time
passes...
Night
becomes light
among the
constellations of
stars
Footprints in the
sand left by those
before me
Happiness without
cars
Peace without wars
Truly God has set me free
As time passes...



A shrill cry of a seagull awakes
my mind
I run to the ocean hoping to see
a boat
Something is floating
I see it's a rope
I grab a hold, holding
on to hope
As time
passes...
Life is a source
of strength
Something
to adore
A hidden
treasure
of
unlimited
pleasure
It is you that I've
pulled ashore
A treasure beyond
measure
As time passes...

Letters from home

Submitted by Michael Lawrence
Holliday Unit

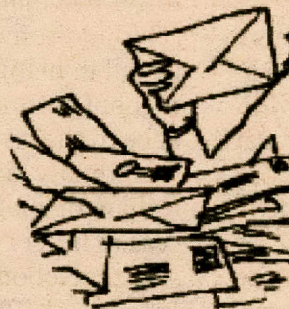
Missing & Waiting

By Leslie Subirias
Plane State Jail

Twenty-two years old, sentenced to 10 yrs.
in prison
All for not making the right decision
Missing my mom and dad so much
Would give anything to feel their touch
Missing all the holidays and family get-togethers
Having to read about them through pictures and letters.
Counting the days 'til I go home
And won't have to worry about feeling alone
Waiting every weekend to see my family
Never thought a short visit would make me so happy
So hard to let them go and say goodbye
It gets harder and harder everytime
When I go home and learn from all this
I won't return and that's a promise!
I hope my family believes me
when I say,
I'll never put them through pain
like I did that day
they took me away!

Making it through another long day,
Waiting on six at night,
Hoping to hear my
name being called
Praying this time I might.
Watching the man go down
the list,
My heart starts
beating with fright.
He calls them out
one by one,
But mine
is nowhere
in sight.
He turns and
leaves right out
the door,
And I find
myself alone,
Staring out into the night
And waiting on letters
from home.

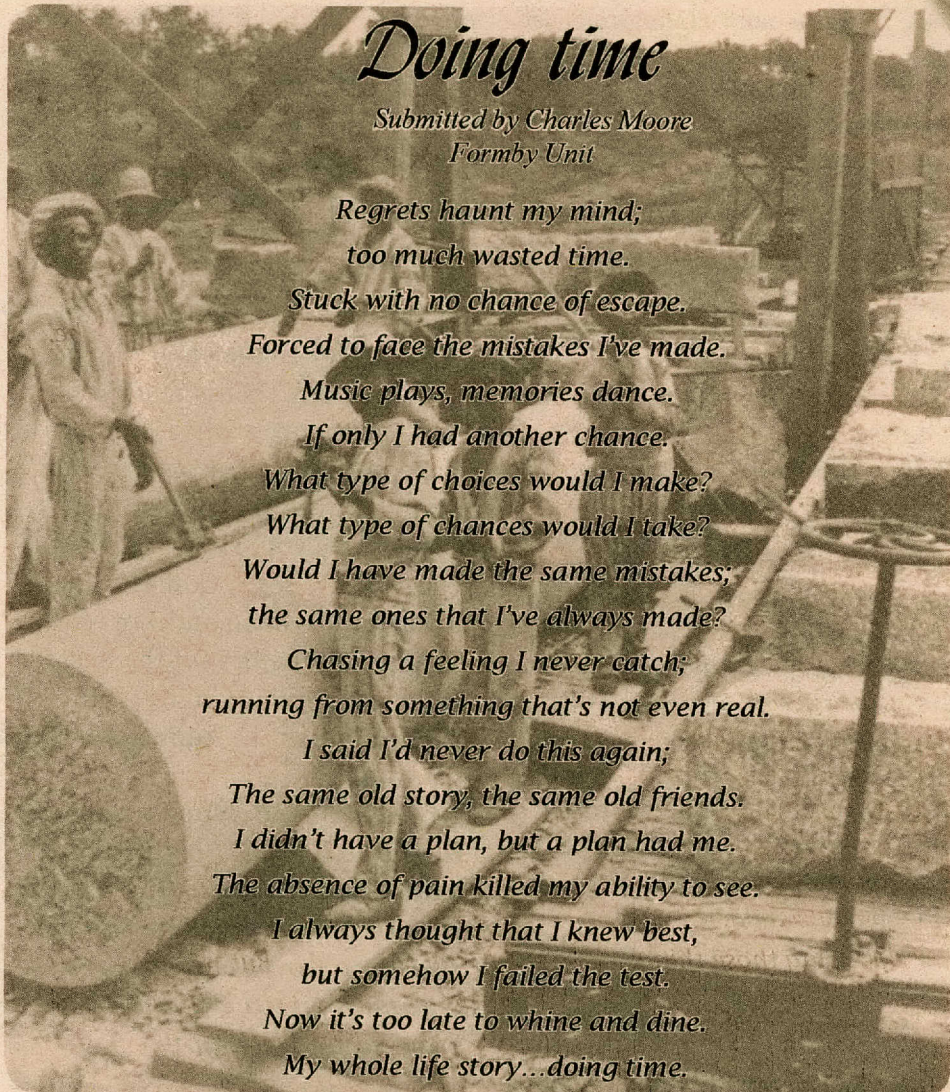
Letters here and pictures there,
Wishing next time that it's me.
Seeing the wives and kids of others
Sometimes makes me want to scream.
I have to stop and pray to God
Upon His shoulder I lean.
They're just so busy with kids and jobs,
And of course there's the house to clean.
I know they'll get the time to write
And then the letters will show
The love we have is always there
As I wait on letters from home.
Another week has come and gone,
And Sunday's here again.
Tomorrow starts the waiting game;
Gotta play if I'm gonna win.
Finding ways to pass the time
And keeping my mind from sin.
Tired of chess and sick of TV,
So now it's just paper and pen.
To write my thoughts to the ones I love
And tell them so they know
They're always in my heart and prayers
As I wait on letters from home.



Doing time

Submitted by Charles Moore
Formby Unit

Regrets haunt my mind;
too much wasted time.
Stuck with no chance of escape.
Forced to face the mistakes I've made.
Music plays, memories dance.
If only I had another chance.
What type of choices would I make?
What type of chances would I take?
Would I have made the same mistakes;
the same ones that I've always made?
Chasing a feeling I never catch;
running from something that's not even real.
I said I'd never do this again;
The same old story, the same old friends.
I didn't have a plan, but a plan had me.
The absence of pain killed my ability to see.
I always thought that I knew best,
but somehow I failed the test.
Now it's too late to whine and dine.
My whole life story...doing time.



DON'T EAT THE MARSHMALLOW

By William Chaplar
Released

During the entire time I've been in prison, I have wondered how it is possible for so many of the people I've observed to behave in such a similar manner. One of the things I discovered almost immediately upon entering prison was the disturbing fact that the overwhelming majority of those around me had virtually no patience. Specifically, I found that prison inmates had absolutely no tolerance for closed doors. Whenever confronted with a closed door, they were simply unable to wait patiently for it to open. As if they were Pavlov's dogs, they immediately began pushing the buttons meant to alert the control picket officer that someone was waiting for the door to open. What I always found particularly odd was the fact that, once they made it *through* the door, they would quickly lose that sense of urgency and begin to casually stroll down the sidewalk or hallway.

The complete lack of patience only manifested itself when it was time for someone else to do something. Once it was time for them—the offenders—to move, suddenly it was okay to move at a snail's pace.

As I said, I've spent years trying to figure out how it is that virtually every inmate I come across shares this annoying trait. Well apparently, others have addressed this question over the years. In his book *We Have Met the Enemy: Self-Control in an Age of Excess*, Daniel Akst cites a study from the 1970s conducted by Walter Mischel. The study later became known as the "Marshmallow Test," and it involved four-year-olds having marshmallows placed in front of them. They were given the option either to eat one marshmallow now, or wait until the facilitator returned and eat two.

The researcher actually followed the participants of this study into adolescence and adulthood, and he discovered some interesting things about those who were unable to put off the instant gratification of eating one marshmallow. For instance, they were more sensitive to rejection. It was also found that highly rejection-sensitive individuals with low delay-of-gratification scores as tykes were found later in life to have lower educational attainment and use more cocaine or crack. Sound familiar? Wait, there's more!

The same book cites a study performed by Scott Johnson, who looked at 32 personality variables in a group of students and found that self-control (or self-discipline) was the one factor best used to predict grades in college. Self-control was a better predictor than SAT scores! Only high school grades did a better job foretelling how students would fare at college. The researchers recommended, "the global trait of self-control or conscientiousness be systematically

assessed and used in college admissions decisions." In direct contrast to Johnson's academic aptitude findings, Walter Mischel, this time teaming up with a researcher named Yuichi Shoda, showed that pre-teen and teenaged boys with low self-control are at a greater risk for aggressive behavior and delinquency. Sound familiar? Well, there's even more!

The book also cited research conducted by a criminologist named Travis Hirschi, who found that, among high school students, self-control—or lack thereof—"consistently predicts behavior analogous to crime." In other words, young people who display a lack of self-control; who demand instant gratification; who simply *cannot* wait for anything; are more likely to engage in delinquent or criminal behavior. On the other hand, those who showed an ability to put off gratification at a young age were more apt to do well in school.

This book went a long way toward explaining much of the offender behavior I've observed over the years. For example, here on the Wynne Unit, we are not allowed to leave the chow hall as soon as we're finished eating. Sometimes we are required to wait for 20 minutes or more before being released to our housing units.

Rather than utilizing this time in some positive manner, most of the offenders I've seen expend copious amounts of energy trying to figure out ways to get out sooner. It's actually sad to watch men in their 40s and 50s trying to sneak out of the chow hall as if they were nine-year-old delinquents. Now, I can't help but wonder how many of the people I see acting like children in here would have been one of the four-year-olds who opted to eat the one marshmallow rather than wait a few minutes to get two marshmallows.

I found something in Akst's book that might prove useful in helping offenders get through their days without getting into a wreck. The author made reference to the renowned Knowledge Is Power Program (commonly known as KIPP). This program involves a chain of charter schools that have shown success in inner city neighborhoods. KIPP has made self-control one of its core "character strengths." Indeed, a KIPP school in Philadelphia even went as far as handing out T-shirts with the words "DON'T EAT THE MARSHMALLOW" emblazoned across the front. Now, while I am in no way advocating for offenders to write slogans on their T-shirts, you can utilize these words in a positive manner. Whenever you feel the need to do something that you would be ashamed to tell your children—lest you, end up looking like a child—just repeat the mantra "don't eat the marshmallow."

Source: *We Have Met the Enemy*, by Daniel Akst. ϵ

BARBER continued from page 9

25 more.

MB: First of all my wife said that, not me. Seriously, all I know is that we are going to do this for as long as God has us doing it. We never pressured our children into doing prison ministry. We never even talked about it. Never spoke a minute to them about it. To make a long story short, all of our children are in full-time prison ministry, and that is all we talk about today. We are one big family. You heard my message last night—"let us." We go to that, because when we focus on the "us" we get rid of the "I." Let us come together and fellowship and love one another.

ECHO: *If there is one thing that you could tell an offender who has not had the privilege of attending a Mike Barber Ministries program but will have an opportunity to read this interview, what message would you give them today?*

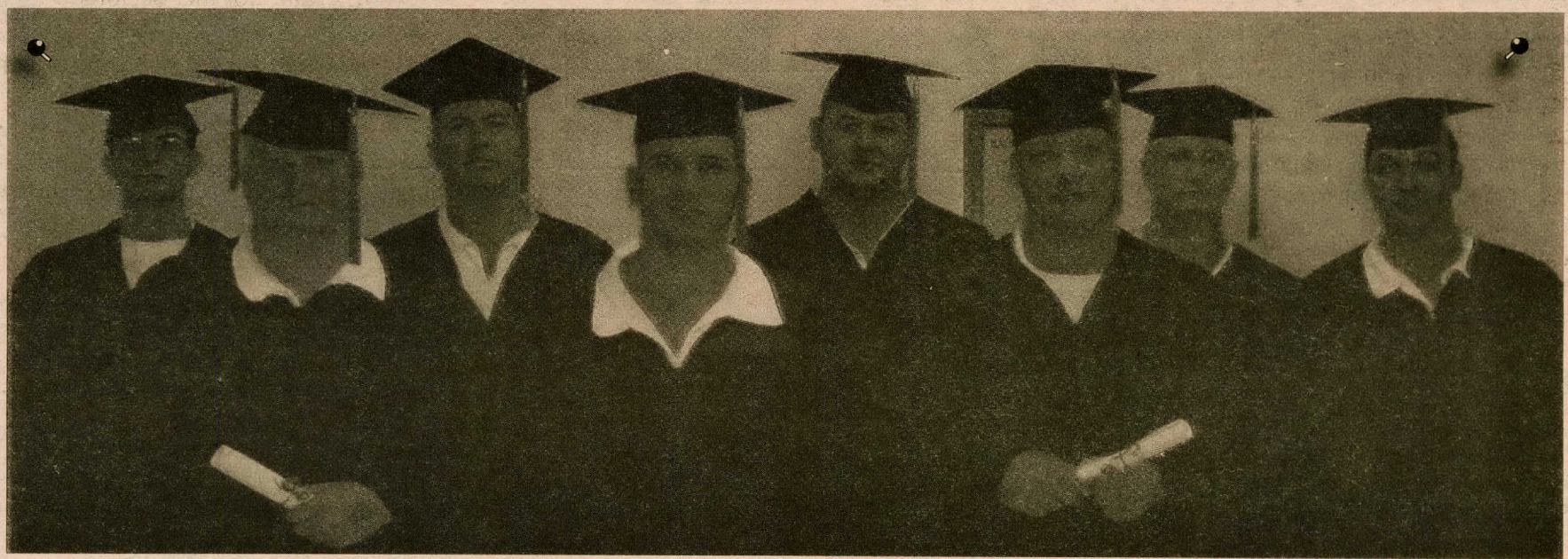
MB: Very simply: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." I pray we get out to America that very simple passage, "That God so loved the world." We have to realize that He loves us. He forgives us. He is full of mercy. He is full of grace. When we surrender our will, we really win that battle; we are the victors, we are the champions!

To anybody that is reading this, it doesn't matter what you have done, it doesn't matter how long that you were stuck on stupid—Jesus loves you, He is not mad at you, and He says "Come home, my arms are open and I'm ready to give you the best of the best." He doesn't know you by your TDCJ number, he knows you by your name.

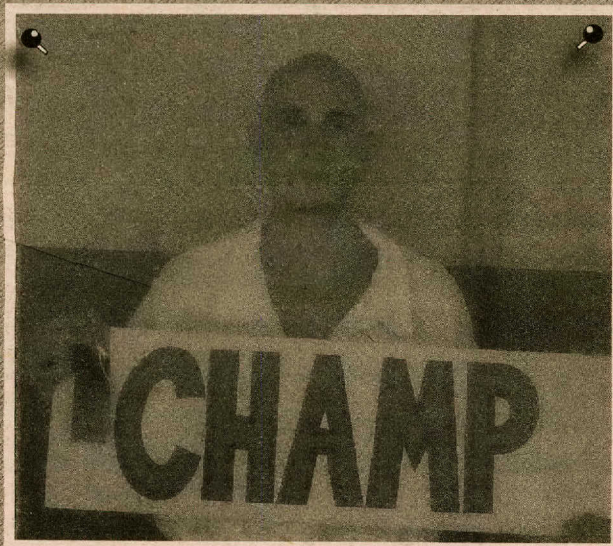
ECHO: *Mr. Barber on behalf of all TDCJ offenders and The ECHO staff, I would like to thank you for taking the time for this interview. It has been an extreme pleasure to be with you.*



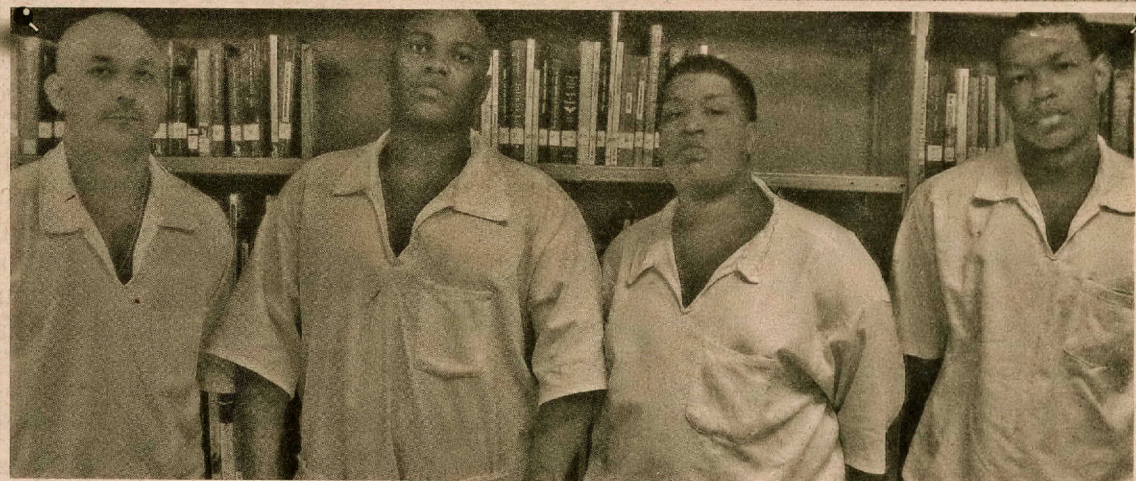
TDCJ/Windham bulletin board



McConnell Unit Coastal Bend College associate degree graduates are P. Brown, S. Garcia, T. Stone, L. Hernandez, M. Lamb, R. Perez, P. New and E. Gonzales. In 2010-2011, 447 associate degrees were awarded to TDCJ offenders.



McConnell Unit Scrabble tournament champion is B. Daquilla.



Wallace Unit Winhdam School District CHANGES graduates are D. Torrez, T. Williams, R. Wise and T. Lee. Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES) is a 60-day life skills program designed to prepare offenders for release.

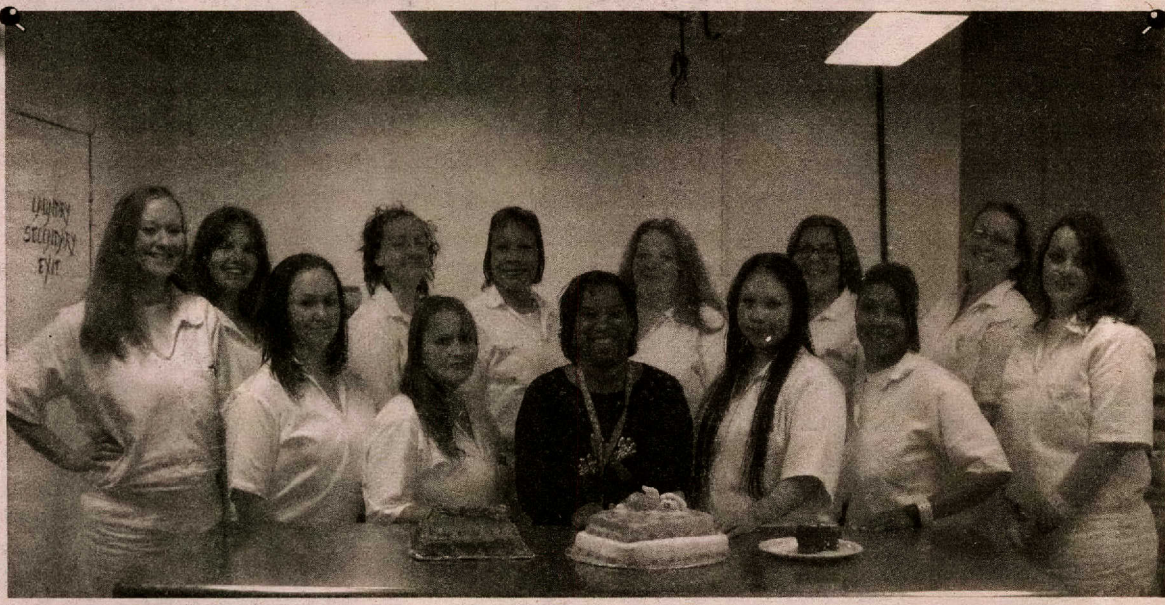


Wallace Unit Winhdam School District CHANGES graduates are K. Alexander, D. Voong, R. Cruz, J. Gutierrez and J. Norwood.

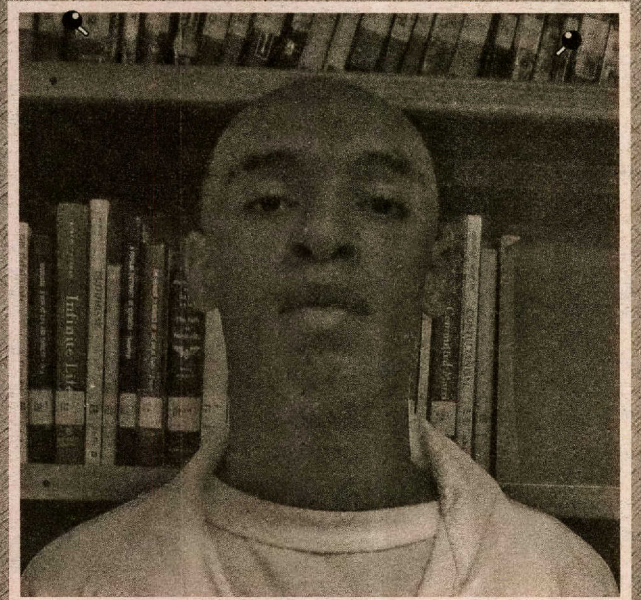


McConnell Unit chess tournament champion is G. Garza.

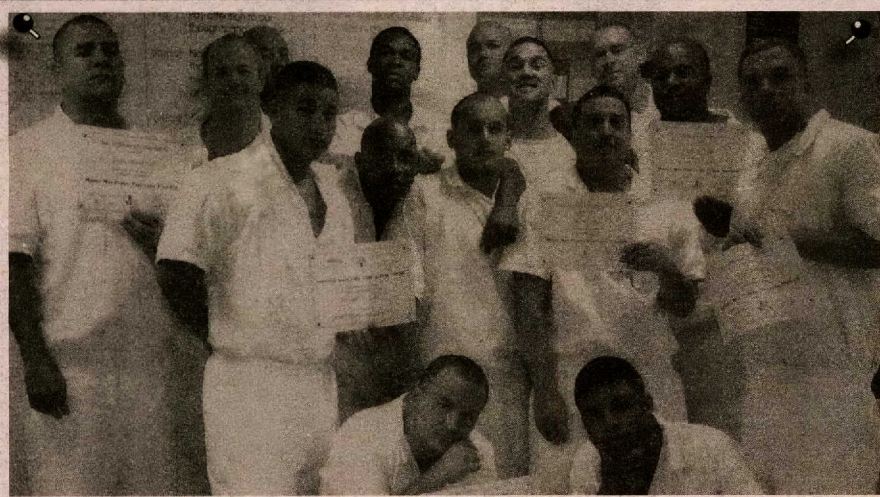
TDCJ/Windham bulletin board



Riverside Unit Central Texas College Restaurant Management graduates are S. Wade, K. Sulzer, T. Washington, K. Hock, A. Strazz, F. Richmond, C. Samano, P. Hower, M. Ward, G. Duncan, D. Reiser and D. Prado. Instructor pictured N. Freeman.



Wallace Unit Windham School District CHANGES graduate is D. Reynolds.



Hamilton Unit Windham School District Parenting graduates are J. Wynne, J. Williams, L. Calderon, S. Haywood, J. Lozada, J. Torres, G. Walker, S. Haselbauer, S. Brinlee, S. Sanford, G. Osborne, V. Hall, A. Monday, J. Reed and K. Fowler.



Boyd Unit offenders participating in Flag Day are T. Moon, H. Ferguson Jr., R. Woods, H. Beemer, H. Orr, R. Hargrove and E. Teran.



Wallace Unit Windham School District Construction Carpentry Vocational graduates are J. Arce, E. Cardwell, J. Sneed, T. Brown, R. Lopez and L. Escalera.



Wynne Unit Windham School District Cognitive Intervention class participates in a "Design a Poster for Youth" to symbolize self-esteem, values, core beliefs and principles. Class participants are T. Bothwell, L. Brooks, M. Dellatore, S. Tinch, W. Walsingham, F. Hazard, J. Fisher, B. Reimer, V. Ramirez, F. Mitchell, J. Oakley, F. White, M. Terry, E. Aldaco, J. Wells and F. Franco.

AMACHI cont. from pg. 1

The mission of Amachi Texas is to prevent the inter-generational cycle of crime and incarceration by helping children of prisoners reach their maximum potential through safe, positive mentoring relationships.

Because its top priority is child safety, BBBS conducts a thorough background check and personal interview with each Amachi mentor.

After interviewing the children as well, an approved Amachi mentor is matched to a child of similar interests to help ensure a successful and rewarding mentoring experience.

Offenders who would like their child to participate in Amachi Texas should tear the Child Application from their copy of The ECHO (along with this article) and mail it to the child's caregiver. The caregiver will need to complete and sign the application, and mail it to the address noted on the application.



Big Brothers Big Sisters Community Based Child/Youth Application



Child's Name: Gender: Race: Date of Birth: How did you hear about BBBS? Parent/Guardian Name: Relationship to Child: Home Address: City: State: Zip: Home Phone: Work phone: Cell Phone: E-mail: Alternate Contact Person - Name: Address with Zip: Contact Number: Type: Home/Cell/Work Their Relationship to Child: Child's Living Situation: One Parent: Female/Male - Two-Parent Home - Other (specify) Household Income \$ per year How many people live in your home? Do you or your children receive Free/Reduced School Lunch? Yes No Do you or your children receive Family Assistance? Yes No What is the primary reason for you wanting your child to have a Big Brother/Big Sister?

I give my approval to Big Brothers Big Sisters for release of information regarding my child (named above) in regard to participating in the following (with name included)**: Photographs, TV & Movies and General Information. (If permission cannot be granted, an alternate form is available.) I understand that no fees are charged for requesting a volunteer, and that it is a privilege for a child to become part of the program. I recognize that the volunteer assumes no legal or financial liability for my child. I also understand that by signing this form I am giving permission for my son/daughter (minor child named above) to participate in the program and activities of Big Brothers Big Sisters, and in connection with such participation, that he/she be assigned a volunteer "Big Brother or Big Sister". In consideration of my child being permitted to participate in the program and activities of the agency, I do hereby release that organization and its employees, members and volunteers from any and all liability for any damage or injury which my child might sustain while participating in said programs and activities both as to any right of action that may accrue to my child, or to me as his/her parent/guardian.

I understand that Big Brothers Big Sisters does not exclude Clients, Parents/Guardians, Volunteers, Staff or Board Members on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, religion, or disability.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date **Big Brothers Big Sisters incorporates photographs, slides, films, television/radio tapings, and/or pictures for the sole purpose of promoting the agency in the media on local and/or national broadcasting affiliates.

Your child's interview is unable to be conducted without a signed and completed application.

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO BBBS 450 E. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75062 Phone: 214-441-2227 x711 Fax: 972-421-1770 intake@bbbs.org

SDM-STDZ-Sept 2011



Big Brothers Big Sisters Community Based Child/Youth Application



Child's Name: Date: BBBS has several program options, including some that we receive special funding for. In order to provide these additional support services, we need to ask you a few more questions. Your answers will not influence your child's eligibility for the program. 1. Does your child have a family member who is currently: a) incarcerated? yes no b) on parole? yes no c) on probation? yes no 2. Do you have a family member who previously was incarcerated, on probation or parole? 3. If you answered yes to any of the questions in #1 or #2, what relation is the family member to the child? 4. Do you have a family member currently on active military duty? Do you have a family member in the military that is currently deployed? If yes, what relation are they to the child? Is your family a "Gold Star" military family? 5. If you are enrolling a son, we continually have more female volunteers than male volunteers and will be able to match your son sooner if you are open to a Big Sister. Are you open to a Big Sister (if the child is 11 or younger)?

School: Child's School & ISD: Grade: Teacher: Child's School ID # Has your child ever been held back a grade due to failure? If so, what grade level? Did your child pass the Math portion of the TAKS test in the 3rd grade? Did your child pass Reading portion of the TAKS test in the 3rd grade? Has your child had problems with truancy in the past? If so, when? Has your child been adjudicated in the past? If so, when?

Child's Health History: List any allergies (animals, foods, medications): Any conditions now requiring regular medication or treatment? Yes/No If so, please explain: List any medications currently taking: Any activities that child should/could not participate in? Yes/No If so, please explain:

BBBS requires records from your child as part of the enrollment process. Other documents may be requested prior to matching your child in the BBBS program in addition to those listed below. You must bring to your interview:

- 1. COPY OF YOUR CHILD'S MOST RECENT SEMESTER REPORT CARD (Online printout is OK)
2. COPY OF YOUR CHILD'S FINAL REPORT CARD FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEAR

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO BBBS 450 E. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75062 Phone: 214-441-2227 x711 Fax: 972-421-1770 intake@bbbs.org

SDM-STDZ-Sept 2011

Big Brothers Big Sisters application form address:

450 E. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75062

2012 TEXAS MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL SCHEDULES

Houston Astros

April July baseball schedule grid for Houston Astros

May August baseball schedule grid for Houston Astros

June September/October baseball schedule grid for Houston Astros

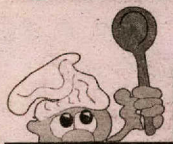
TEXAS RANGERS

April July baseball schedule grid for Texas Rangers

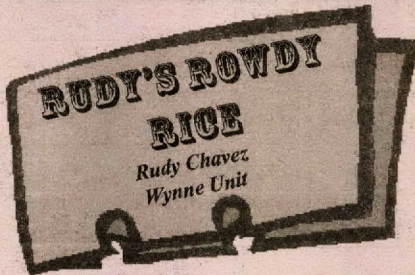
May August baseball schedule grid for Texas Rangers

June September/October baseball schedule grid for Texas Rangers

Note: gray dates indicate home game



RECIPES

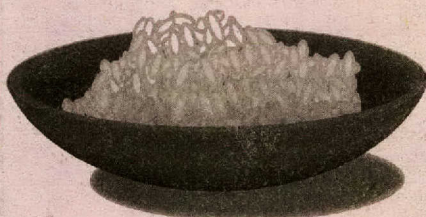


Ingredients:

- 1 bag rice
- 1 can V8
- 1 summer sausage or Spam, diced
- 1 bag pork skins, slightly crushed
- 2 jalapeno peppers, diced
- 1 chicken soup seasoning pack
- Hot sauce
- 2 empty corn chip or tortilla chip bags

Directions:

Separate rice, meat, pork skins and peppers equally into two bowls. Transfer ingredients from bowls into chip bags. Split V8 evenly between each bag. Add one or two ounces of water per bag. Add a liberal splash of hot sauce and place bags into hot pots. Seal each bag with twist ties. Add water to hot pots and cook for about an hour, opening bags occasionally and stirring contents. Enjoy! Serves two to four.



Crespo's chess corner

Richard Crespo
Terrell Unit

Chess quiz - chess openings

A chess player first starts to become serious about the game when he reads a book on chess. His first book should be a primer on general strategy. Soon after, the player needs to learn a few chess openings. A player needs to learn openings for playing both black and white.

As white, choose one first move, usually 1.e4, 1.d4 or 1.c4. If, for example, you choose 1.e4, you will need to learn replies to black's common responses, 1... e5, 1... c5, 1... e6, etc., but there is no need to learn them all at once. If the people you play with reply only 1... e5, then choose a single 1.e4 e5 opening, such as the Evans gambit, and decide which opening lines to play among white's choices. This way you learn what is useful to you with minimum effort.

As you become more involved with chess openings, you may want to choose more involved and complex variations to study. A must have

book for chess players wanting to improve their opening knowledge would be **Modern Chess Openings** (MCO) by Nick De Firmian, known as "the chess player's bible." This book is a one-volume reference book covering all chess openings.

This month's chess quiz will test your opening knowledge. You must match the opening with the diagram.

- A. Bishop's opening
- B. Philidor's defense
- C. Sicilian defense
- D. King's Indian defense
- E. English opening
- F. Ruy Lopez
- G. Queen's gambit accepted
- H. Caro-Kann defense.

Diagram 1: 1.d4 d5 2.cr dxc4

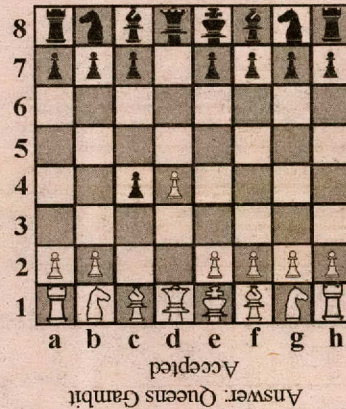


Diagram 2: 1.e4 c6

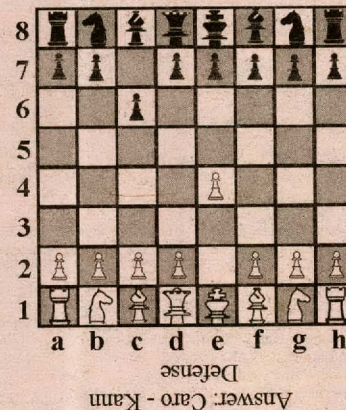


Diagram 3: 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4

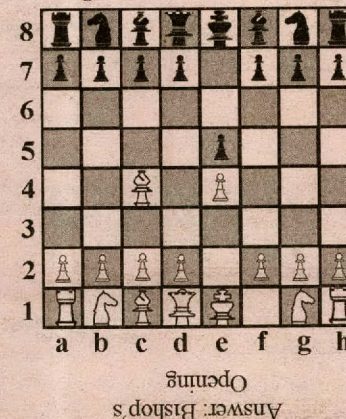


Diagram 4: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6

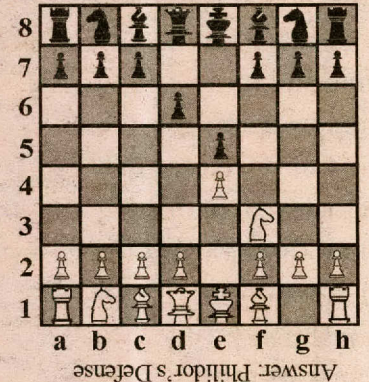


Diagram 5: 1.c4

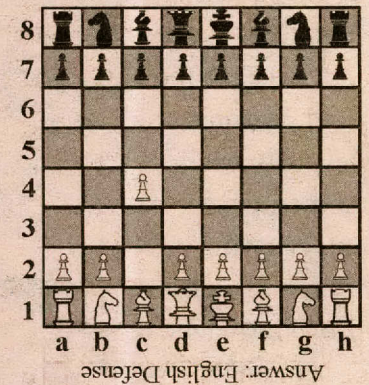


Diagram 6: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

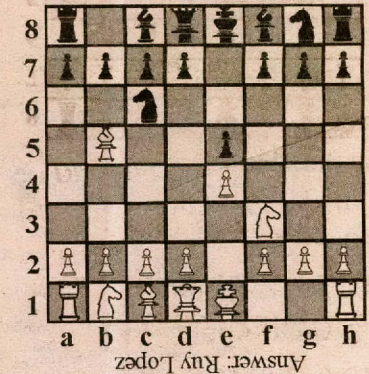


Diagram 7: 1.e4 c5

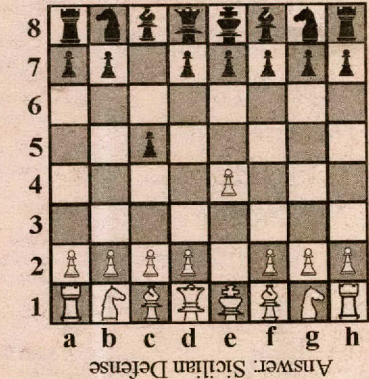
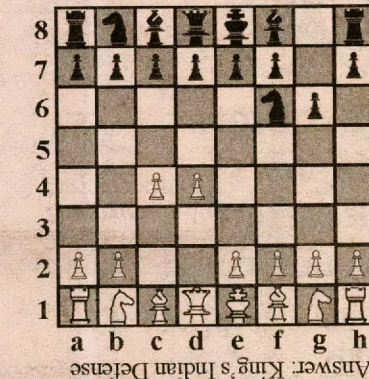


Diagram 8: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6



Sudoku solutions

Easy

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

Difficult

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