

The ECHO

Texas Prison News

Letters to the Editor.....	Pg. 2
Dear Darby	Pg. 3
Dental Bites	Pg. 3
A Woman's Perspective	Pg. 6
Innocence Claims	Pg. 8
Creative Corner	Pg. 10
Bulletin Board.....	Pg. 12
Trust Fund Options.....	Pg. 14
Health News - BPD.....	Pg. 15
Recipes.....	Pgs. 15-16
Sudoku.....	Pg. 16

See
'Free
fan from
TX-CURE'
on
Page 8

Published Since 1928

Volume 87, No. 3, April 2015

Distributed Free to Texas Prisoners

Isaac White: 'Life was waiting for me!'

Businessman credits vocational classes as foundation for success after release

"I was 18 years old, convicted of aggravated robbery with a weapon and knew I would possibly be in prison until I was 26. I knew I had to make plans for the rest of my life. I knew after I was released, I had to get out and make a living. Life was waiting for me," remembers Isaac White, a former offender who served time in three facilities in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

Today White is a free citizen and president and owner of his own successful electrical contracting company in Texas. The company has been in business since September 2013, serving Waller, Washington, Grimes, Austin and Harris

counties. White employs three men and says last year's sales revenue was about \$300,000.

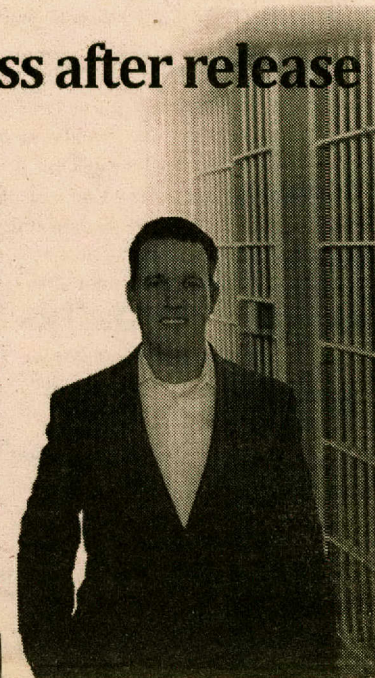
"We provide residential homeowners, general contractors and commercial business owners with emergency service, repair work, and new construction and remodeling work. We do honest, good work with integrity, and we get a lot of referrals from clients," he says. "We do all things electrical."

White credits the electrical and plumbing training he learned in prison from Windham School District (WSD) as the foundation of his success.

"Other offenders told me about educational opportunities available through Windham. I knew I needed a trade that

would provide me with a solid job to get on with life. I enrolled in a six-month WSD plumbing class at the Clemens Unit and graduated. Then I received a two-year set off and couldn't go home. I decided to enroll in another vocational class to add to my skills; I was planning for my release, whenever it would be. I graduated from the electrical program at the Luther Unit in 1998. I had found my Windham teachers were real people, and they taught their subject areas really well. They gave me hope for a future career with actual skills, and after 16 years in the trade, I have done well."

WHITE continued on page 13



Reentry and Integration Division provides identification document services overview

Editor's Note:

The Reentry and Integration Division provides a three-phased reentry program designed to prepare offenders for a successful return to the community after release from TDCJ. Information on each phase will be provided through a series of articles in The ECHO.

The Reentry and Integration Division's Phase I is known as the identification document services phase. Releasing from prison without proper identification makes it difficult to succeed in areas such as getting a job, finding a place to live, education or getting benefits and assistance from social services. To help in removing this obstacle, eligible offenders receive assistance from a reentry case manager in obtaining a replacement social security card, certified birth certificate and/or Texas identification certificate, commonly known as a DPS ID. Phase I ID services are available to those born in the United States who are not being released to a felony or Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainer, and who also plan to live in Texas upon release. State jail and Substance Abuse Felony Punishment (SAFP) offenders are eligible for birth certificates and social security cards upon arrival to TDCJ, and once received, can be processed for their ID cards. Prison-sentenced Correctional Institutions Division and Transfer Facility type offenders become eligible for social security card and birth certificate processing at the time they reach initial parole eligibility.

REENTRY continued on page 13

Day With Dads strengthens family bonds

By Jon Mark Beilue

Amarillo Globe News (Nov. 8, 2014)

Printed with permission

R. Sansom, in his all-whites, leaned near the corner of the gymnasium wall and tried to take in what he was seeing and hearing. "I've been here 17 years, and never thought I'd hear kids laughing in the gym," he said. "Laughing, running, playing."

There they were last weekend, a Saturday, as kids as young as seven and as old as 16 were shooting baskets with the old man, throwing a football, kicking a soccer ball with Dad as the goalie.

It should be said that the gymnasium was in the Neal Unit northeast of the city, the minimum-security prison in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice system. It was called "Day With Dads," about as groundbreaking a day as can be had behind razor wire and heavy doors.

"This will make your eyes swell," said L. Mills, pastor of ministry administration at Trinity Fellowship Church. "You don't say 'cry' in prison."

It was a collaborative effort with First Baptist Church, Trinity and most notably, Neal Unit Warden J. Baker, who worked to make the event happen since July.

"This is an exciting day for a lot of people," Baker said. "These men have been walking on pins and needles for a long time to make sure they didn't lose this privilege."

DADS continued on page 11

The ECHO

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To the editor,

I read *The ECHO* every chance I get. More often than not, an article will strike a chord in me. I wanted to comment on a particular article that described an offender's struggles with freedom upon release. Things are often tough when we get out of prison, but like this article advised, offenders just need to hang in there and tough it out. We need to use this time to slow down and take stock of all the positive things in our life. I'm sure that many offenders think that nothing good can come out of being in prison. But I must admit that coming to prison probably saved my life. But now that I'm here, instead of wasting my time hating the world or trying to get over on people, I use my time constructively by joining self-help groups and taking the education classes that I am eligible to take. Things may be tough when we get out, but we can prepare ourselves for the future while we are here in prison. Thanks, *ECHO* writers and staff. Keep sharing some positive news we can use!

Tony Green
Dominguez State Jail

To the reader,

Thanks for a great letter. It sounds like you are well on your way to bettering yourself as you wait for release. The ECHO tries to promote this plan and we encourage all offenders to find and participate in programs that will help you in this life! Thanks for sharing with The ECHO.

To the editor,

I have been incarcerated now for almost five months: four months in county and one month here at the Middleton Unit.

I am 48 years old, and I have been working everyday of my life since I was 13 years old, with the exception of vacation and holidays. To end up in jail and then prison has been a complete eye opener, to say the least. I have never been so bored in my entire life.

I know I have only been here a month, but please tell me that the programs offered and talked about in "*The ECHO*" are not a "myth" or some kind of front that is put up by the Texas prison system to make it look to outsiders that they are truly offering offenders the programs.

Harold Christensen
Middleton Unit

To the reader,

I can assure you that programs in TDCJ are not a "myth." Almost every unit in TDCJ has many programs, including those sponsored by the chaplaincy, Windham School District and other departments. Most programs have a certain eligibility requirement that must be met, but some programs don't. Apply for what programs you are eligible for and prepare for the day you leave TDCJ. Send an I-60 to a WSD counselor or a Chaplain today!



To the editor,

Life is always changing; we, as offenders, are always changing. While incarcerated, we live in a river of change. Everyday we are given a choice: we can relax and float in the direction the water is flowing or we can swim against the current. The differentiating factor here is either acceptance or resistance. If we resist, we will continue to tread the waters of ignorance and negativity. It's the wiser course of action to accept the consequences of our actions, work hard to improve ourselves and follow the river of change to a better future.

Bridgette Childress
San Saba Unit

To the reader,

Your analogy of a flowing river of change is a good one. I would definitely focus on your idea of working hard to improve ourselves. We at The ECHO

always encourage offenders to take advantage of any and all programs and education available. Have a plan, set some goals and work hard to achieve them. Thanks for writing to The ECHO.



To the editor,

Recently, I read an article in *The ECHO* about an herb garden at the Mountain View Unit for women in Gatesville, Texas.

This is awesome as it can lead to a job in the free world and a business in edible landscaping or office-scaping. Office-scaping is where a company rents or sells plants to such places as doctor's offices, dentist's offices, or maybe an office at a church, school, or public building. I am thankful to have taken horticulture from Lee College at Ellis One Unit where Mr. J. T. Langly was my instructor. I also learned how to grow a herb garden in a home kitchen.

There are so many uses for herbs – as spices in diverse dishes and as medicine! I wish the best to the people who work in the herb garden!

Richard A. Tulle
Michael Unit

To the reader,

Thanks for sharing with The ECHO and our readers! Landscaping and office-scaping seem to be growing businesses in the free world. Hopefully skills learned while in TDCJ will lead to future employment!

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).

DEAR DARBY
LETTERS TO THE DARBSTER

Dear Darby,

I started to ponder, should or could a person be thankful for incarceration? First off, my incarceration has given me a chance to forgive. Then I have to be grateful for the things that have been salvaged, like the love from my family. Incarceration has given me back my health and pride. So Darby, am I right to be thankful?

Larry from Sherman

Dear Larry,

You're on the path of wisdom. I've heard others express how being in prison saved them from the train-wreck their life became. They took the opportunity in here to reflect on their mistakes, correct their thinking, get educated and leave here ready to succeed. Do you have a right to be thankful for being incarcerated? You do, if you use your time wisely and turn your life around.



Dear Darby,

I'd like to comment on this seemingly never-ending battle between old-schools and new-schools. First off, all of old-schools were at one time the youngsters — how soon we forget. And I'm sure we did things back in the day which seemed disrespectful to our older generation. Did we listen to our old-school people? Obviously not, because here we are, the next generation of old-schoolers, which means most of us (including me) are on a return trip. Let's remember that the prison population is a mere sampling of society. For those who haven't been out recently, let me inform you that the free world is a place full of disrespect. You'll be hard pressed to see a young person give up their seat for a senior citizen. Neighbors don't even know each other's names. Social skills are at an all-time low thanks to social media, high-tech phones, and other gadgets which allow you to never have to face someone in order to communicate.

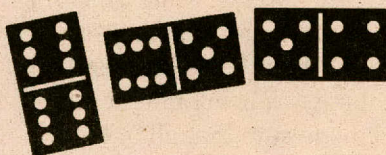
Now, youngsters: I get it — you don't want old-timers telling you what to do. Obviously if we had all the answers we would have saved ourselves long ago. But we do have some wisdom and experience you may find useful if you just stop and listen once in a while. Take what you can use, let the rest fly. Basically, you got to learn your own lessons just like we have, because experience is unique to the individual. Just remember, to get respect you have to show it. Don't think because of our advanced age we are weak, vulnerable or helpless.

Finally, I'd like to say that if we can't get along with others in prison, how are we to function once free? There are more disrespectful people out there just waiting to be rude to you. True enough, out there we can walk away more easily, but you can't run from every unpleasant encounter. Better to have good coping skills! I'm talking to myself as much as to anyone else, because I still have anger problems and could sharpen my interpersonal skills. But one of these old-school lessons I've learned: you are never too old to learn when you're wrong and do something about it.

Lisa Jackson
Lane Murray Unit

Dear School,

Take it from another School who hasn't made the trip home yet — your thinking is definitely on the path of wisdom and righteousness. Remember, though, good thinking without action is like good seed thrown on rocky ground: you're not going to get much to show for your effort. Walk the way you think, and before you know it you'll be a productive part of society. Keep your head up, girl!



Dear Darby,

Check this out, ol' thang — I'm tired of all the crying about respect. Folks complaining on who should or should not be respected. It all boils down to this: if you don't respect others, they won't respect you. You have to show respect, not demand it!

To those crying about the noise on Friday or Saturday nights: I bet you were loud when you were out on the town on the outside, so get over it!

To those mad about domino slammers: it's not your dominoes being slammed, so why are you trippin'?!?

I've been down 26 years, and I'm not getting out. If I can deal with doing the time, why can't the whiners?!?

Sick and Tired,
Estelle Unit

Dear Sick,

I'm with you on the respect thing. I, too, have "been down a minute" and have learned to tune out bad behavior. I show respect to those around me, and if they're disrespectful, that's on them, not me.

I disagree with you on the domino slammers, though. Slamming a domino won't change the spots on the rock and really doesn't impress those around the table. I see absolutely no redeeming value in being a domino slammer.



Dear Darby,

I'm having a difficult time understanding something. Maybe I'm from another planet, but I don't get why guys stand under the TV and scream and clap their hands obscenely loud. For the sane person in

touch with reality, this practice looks crazy. Don't these men (and women) realize that the big, glass and plastic thing they are screaming at is just an electronic device? Don't they know that those people zipping across the screen are not real people, but only electronic images? These images can't hear you, no matter how loudly you yell at them to run faster or shoot the ball. It's a good thing they can't hear you, with all the horrible names you guys call the pro athletes. If they could hear you, they would want to do terrible things to you! You would definitely end up being a story on ESPN's "Sports Center" the next day. Now, if you are physically at the game, sure, jump and yell and clap and stomp. The players can hear and see you and appreciate your support. But when you yell and scream at that box hanging on the wall, well can you say, "crazy in the head?"

Ricky "Wiz" Moulder
Allred Unit

Dear Wiz,

You just like kickin' the ol' hornets' nest, don't you?!? Yeah, folks get a little wrapped up with the monster in the front of the dayroom. I think it acts like a transporter for some — in their heads they get beamed out of prison when they're watching the tube. Still, the only thing they're hurting when yelling at the TV is your ears. Let 'em have it as their pastime and go to your house and curl up to a good book — then you can tune out all that static in the dayroom.

DENTAL BITES



Dr. David Seals
UTMB dentist

Editor's note: "Dental Bites" is a new ECHO health feature which offers dental tips to the offender population.

Tips from the Dentist: There are approximately 400 different types of bacteria [germs] that can grow in the human mouth. Each person has about three dozen different kinds that are their own. The majority of the germs are "beneficial" — they do no harm and some strains prevent yeast and fungus infections in the mouth. Others produce Vitamin K, which helps our blood to clot. Only about two or three strains cause tooth decay or gum disease. This can be prevented by thoroughly brushing and flossing your teeth daily. **The takeaway from this story is this:** Don't share your toothbrush with anyone else. You may inoculate yourself with an unfamiliar strain of germ which could cause serious mouth problems. ➔

Possible signs of being institutionalized

Francisco Prieto
Stiles Unit

1. You knock on the dinner table before excusing yourself.
2. You attempt to tip the waitress with Forever Stamps.
3. You take your commissary bag to H.E.B.
4. You refer to your employer as "Boss Man."
5. You stock your pantry with Ramen noodles.
6. You ask the stock boy to direct you to the bagged, instant coffee aisle.
7. You prefer wearing all white clothing.
8. You ask your girlfriend for a channel check.
9. Your wife finds you in the backyard "four-stepping."
10. You drop your unsealed letters into the mailbox.
11. You tell your barber to give you a "number one."
12. You wear your sandals to the shower.
13. You ask your doctor to renew your KOPs.
14. You dial your TDCJ number into your cellphone.
15. You think it's "count time" whenever you hear a horn blow.
16. You wake up at 2 a.m. for breakfast.
17. You give yourself a 1 a.m. curfew on weekends.
18. You put peanut butter on your pancakes.
19. You refer to your mom as your "T-Jones." ❖

THE ROAD

John Flagg, Staff Writer

It is a timeless and powerful image. More than the space between two destinations, the road symbolizes the journey, in and of itself. The road implies much more than a mere geographic voyage; rather, the road represents the creating and forging of a new way of life.

Many roads have been traveled throughout history. It was on a road to Thermopylae where the Spartan king Leonidas led his brave 300 to rout Xerxes the Persian. It was on a road to Egypt where Alexander the Great united the East with the West in a first episode of globalization. It was on a road to Damascus where Paul saw a vision of a kingdom of peace on earth. It was on a road through Paris where Napoleon Bonaparte marched his way to the throne to crown himself Emperor. It was on the road to freedom where George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and other national heroes blazed a trail for future generations of Americans. The Beatles sang of a "long and winding road."

When we use the road as metaphor or anecdote, it is in a way that describes our sense of losing direction in our lives, or of finding our way, of being thrown off course, of turning a corner, coming to a dead-end or wondering where we are headed.

Various turns of phrase using the road are as follows:

- "I'm at the end of the road."
- "I can't see that far down the road."
- "If only I had taken a different turn on the road."
- "The road ahead is filled with uncertainty."
- "I feel like I'm at a crossroads."

Many different roads have led to an offender's incarceration. Perhaps it was a road paved with foolish choices or a road riddled with hardship and disadvantages. Or perhaps it was just plain ignorance and stubbornness.

Yet if a road led an offender into incarceration, then there must be a road that leads out of it, right?

Such a road would be filled with positive goals and would be a continuous source of inspiration to all who traveled it. Such a road would grant offenders boundless opportunities to reframe their attitudes, perspectives and behavior. Such a road would allow offenders the chance to aim better and try again.

Now is the time to reconsider the steps one takes, a time to set one's sights down a more positive and productive road.

We are all on a road.

But to where? ❖



Eastham celebrates seminary graduates

Lance Brown
Eastham Unit Reporter

Eastham Unit's Therapon Theological Seminary and Bible College graduated its latest class of advanced degree recipients. After many years of cumulative effort the men were recognized for their dedication and commitment to learning the oracles of God, to changing their belief system, and to realizing the potential they have always had, but never utilized. Friends and family were in attendance from all over Texas and from as far away as Virginia.

J. Dunbar earned his Doctor of Ministry degree, and F. Tate was awarded his Master of Arts in Biblical Studies. Nineteen men spent the last four years working on their Bachelor of Arts Degrees in Biblical Studies: A. Amason, E. Bellamy, G. Bowling, L. Brown, J. Camp, G. Cox, R. Garcia, C. Henderson, M. Henderson, R. Keeling, P. LaBad, P. Manley, P. Ortiz, J. Peavey, J. Rice, R. Standberry, F. Torres, M. Webb and V. Wilson.

Graduate J. Peavey was granted parole three months before graduation. Therapon founder Dr. Paul Carlin allowed Peavey to complete the course work via correspondence, and the unit administration allowed Peavey to return to Eastham to graduate with his class.

"This is such an honor," J. Peavey stated. "I am so honored to be able to walk across the stage and receive my degree with my classmates. All this means so much

to me!"

Family members wept openly as their sons, fathers or brothers walked in full regalia to receive their diplomas. One mother was asked if she could have ever imagined her son earning a bachelor of arts in Biblical studies 25 years ago.

"Never!" she replied. "The Lord changes hearts and minds in ways you would never expect."

The required classes were long and varied. Some of the men loved the two Greek classes, while others had to really dig in to grasp some of the more obscure concepts. Others really enjoyed homiletics or hermeneutics. No matter which course was being taught, the men all pulled together and made sure that all of their classmates "got it." The men tutored and quizzed each other knowing that the class was going to start with a test over the previous week's material or a dreaded cumulative exam.

Dr. G. Goben spent many hours in class and even more hours out of class preparing material and grading exams. Goben, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, taught men the basics of Koine Greek and the rudiments of biblical Hebrew. In addition to Carlin and Goben, the scholars also studied under P. Fraley, R. Roberts, R. Rocamontes, I. Trevino, and R. Johnson. ❖

The Association of X-Offenders, Inc. (TAX) offers assistance to parolees

Paroling to the Houston area? We want to help you stay straight and stay out.

"It's a cinch by the inch."

- We are a new x-offender and parolee lifeline in Houston.
 - We have support group meetings, referral services, counseling, and good connections.
 - We meet at the First Baptist Church Heights, 201 E. 9th St., Houston, every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.
- Contact: Dennis Kelly,
President
P.O. Box 230384
Houston, TX 77023
(832) 882-5895**

Editor's Note:

The ECHO, Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Windham School District are not responsible for information and services offered by the entity described in this article. This information is offered as a public service to our readership. ❖

Stringfellow Unit hosts GED celebration

Joe Feijoo
Stringfellow Unit Reporter

Offenders from the Stringfellow, Terrell and Ramsey units attended the recent GED ceremony that was hosted by the Ramsey Unit Windham Education Department. The ceremony included 24 graduates: six from Terrell, seven from Ramsey, and 11 from Stringfellow.

The Stringfellow Unit valedictorian, J. Sandoval, and the salutatorian, F. Hernandez, each presented a speech and shared some encouraging words with their fellow graduates. They both expressed their desires to continue their educational opportunities.

Studies have shown that the educational programs, like those that WSD offers, have

helped reduce recidivism for the offenders who pursued higher education. These same programs help offenders learn productive skills and essential knowledge that is the key to a positive and productive return to society.

"The graduates are proud to be given the opportunity to give back to their communities instead of just taking," *ECHO* reporter Joe Feijoo said.

The offenders' families, who came from all over Texas, were also in attendance at the ceremony. They were glowing with pride as they showed support to the offenders.

"Congratulations are in order for these guys who have tackled the odds stacked against them," Feijoo said. ♣

Darrington Unit encourages offenders to 'Man Up!'

John Stephens
Darrington Unit Reporter

Students of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS), in conjunction with the Darrington Chapel of the Resurrection and Chaplain Knapp, are hosting a series aimed at providing other offenders with knowledge and life skills that will benefit them both before and after parole.

The first phase of this series is called the Man-Up Summit. The theme of this summit is "Reclaiming the Virtue of Manhood." This phase focuses on reintroducing men to the foundational aspects of what it means to be a man in a family as a husband, community member, and citizen.

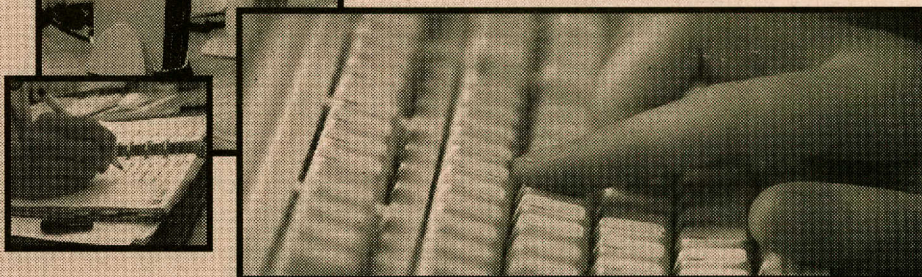
The second phase of the Man-Up theme is focused on job search skills. This phase aides men in their career outlook and resume writing, with mock interview sessions to prepare offenders for the workforce. Participants obtain a sample resume of their own as

well as a certificate of completion. This mock resume will be complete, only to have updated information added upon release from TDCJ.

The third phase of this series includes GED tutoring. This tutoring includes assistance in remedial reading, writing, and mathematics as well as helping men who are qualified prepare to obtain their GEDs. This special opportunity, supported by both the Darrington administration and Chaplain Knapp, allows SWBTS students to work with other offenders to develop necessary life skills as well as seek educational advancement opportunities. The series provides lasting benefits to be used inside and outside the walls of TDCJ. Reverend Banks, who also assists in several other areas with the Chapel of the Resurrection, will be providing assistance with this seminar. ♣

ATTENTION!

ECHO Workers Needed



The *ECHO* is seeking offenders to assist in publishing *The ECHO*.

We are seeking workers to work in an office environment creating a newspaper read by more than 150,000 offenders. Applicants should have a positive attitude and work well with others. *The ECHO* prefers workers to have 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 performing general clerk responsibilities.

Preferences:

- Experience with Adobe InDesign or Page Maker, Illustrator and Photoshop.
- The ability to type 40 words per minute is preferred.

STAFF WRITER

Job duties include writing articles and stories on various topics; typing; editing and performing 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.
- The ability to type 40 words per minute is preferred.

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 in Huntsville, Texas.
- 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:

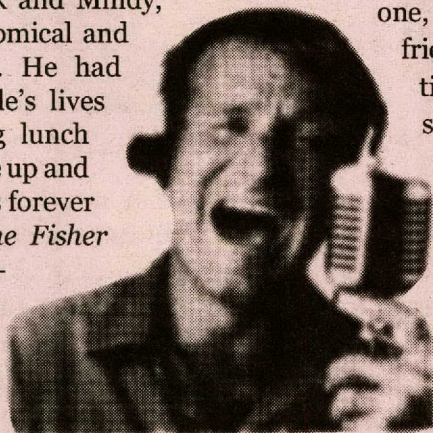
Managing Editor
The ECHO
Windham Administration Bldg.
Wynne Unit
Huntsville, Texas ♣

The day the laughter died

Von Michael Short
Contributing Writer

When Buddy Holly died in a plane crash, Don McLean came out with a song titled "American Pie," which was a tribute to the rock legend. There are some people who so profoundly influence life that when they're gone, you feel the world will never be the same.

The world recently lost the biggest class clown when Robin Williams took his own life. I grew up watching Mork and Mindy, along with many of his comical and sometimes serious films. He had such an impact on people's lives that while he was eating lunch with a reporter, a fan came up and told him that their life was forever changed after seeing "The Fisher King." The reporter responded by saying, "It must be incredible to have such an impact on people." The humbled Williams stated, "It's truly an amazing thing."



It's puzzling for someone who seemingly has nothing to sit back and watch someone who seemingly has everything take their own life. After his death, so many aspects of this man's life have been brought to light. A man who seemed larger than life had to deal with the insecurities, depression and addiction that so many of us in prison have faced. On the outside he was laughing, and in turn making us laugh, while on the inside he was dealing with his own demons. During a candid moment, he even joked about his relapse taking the voice of a bottle of whiskey and stating, "Welcome back."

In the past I, too, have chosen to laugh to mask the pain. I think at some point everyone deals with some form of depression. I can't imagine anything more depressing than sitting handcuffed in the back of a police car looking at an uncertain future. I can attest to the difficulty in overcoming addiction and the profound sadness that occurs when you hit rock bottom, feeling that the only escape is death. Many years ago I thought suicide was my only solution.

All these years later, I'm glad I didn't take that path. Looking around, someone who seemingly had nothing turned out to actually have a lot. Life in itself is a precious gift. My incarceration is coming to an end, and although I've lost many family and friends along the way, I've also had new additions to my family I have yet to meet. I've made many new friends, and I have a new faith and hope for a better future. I'm glad I didn't end the race five feet before the finish line.

If you're having feelings of depression or

thoughts of suicide, I would recommend seriously thinking about what lies ahead — what the possibilities are. Give it another day. If things aren't better tomorrow, give it yet another day, sleep on it, put it off. I promise you'll see things in a different light tomorrow.

Suicide cannot be undone. However, there is help available. Catharsis is an emotional release that you gain by talking to someone, whether it's a family member, a friend, or a professional. The last time that I actually considered something so drastic I wrote a letter out to my mother and told her I just couldn't do it anymore. I reread it and thought about what I was doing to the only person who unconditionally supported me from the very beginning. I decided I had caused her enough pain by my selfishness, and I tore the letter up. Best decision I ever made.

If a man on top of the world who has a beautiful house on the ocean, a beautiful wife and wonderful kids, a thriving career, and money to burn can become so depressed that nothing matters, then it can surely happen in the life of someone who has lost everything. What we must face is the fact that it's our own decisions that caused us to lose everything. We can take the easy way out, or we can fight for a better future. I've been fighting for 23 years, and it hasn't been easy. Even after all this time it hasn't gotten any easier; however, where you have life, you have hope.

I guess the death of Robin Williams has made **all** of us seem more human. There are so many programs available in here that will give you self-worth, improve your future and help cope with addiction. If you want a better life, you have to make it happen. Reach out to your chaplain, enroll in school, go to a meeting, contact the unit psychologist and take anger management, stress management, or depression management — or all the above.

Sign up for the Cognitive Intervention Program. Write your family. Don't be afraid to ask for help, because you are not alone. For many years there was a sign in the gym that said, "Don't ever, ever, ever give up." That phrase doesn't only apply to your next set. I've often thought of that phrase when I thought I just couldn't take another breath. And I hope you will, too. ♣

A Woman's Perspective: Considering consideration — an attitude for life

Jennifer Toon, Contributing Writer

Consideration: I think that word appears in almost every issue of our newspaper. Nothing else is mentioned as consistently or as frequently, except maybe the word parole.

Consideration can be demonstrated in simple ways like allowing someone who has classes and passes all day to go ahead of you to the store. (It's your day off so why wouldn't you?)

Consideration manifests when you clean up after yourself, especially when sick, even though you don't feel like it. I was impressed when the girls in my dorm were mindful of this during the most recent flu season. In doing so, what became more contagious than coughing and sneezing was the returned thoughtfulness. The healthy took over the cleaning, and made sure the sick ate, bathed, and slept. This was consideration at work.

Now the opposite we call inconsideration. Similar words could be callous, hard-hearted, indifferent, unsympathetic and thoughtless. Being inconsiderate means you do not take into account another person's feelings, needs or desires. The hallmark of inconsideration is the lack of thought in regards to others. Examples of this are in abundance: shattering mint stick all over the cubicle wall you share with your neighbor, leaving food in the sink, making excessively loud noise while others sleep or watching TV and talking. My favorite example, though, is a personal oldie-but-goodie. Many years ago when I worked commissary, I was involved in a minor accident while unloading a truck. I had to have four stitches in my head. As I limped back to the dorm with my bandaged head and matted hair, and my very obviously stained shirt, I noticed someone open a window. I anticipated her asking if I were okay. She instead asked me if we had gotten cheese on the truck. Oh, inconsideration at it's finest, most shining moment!

We have to admit though, there's such irony in our almost fanatical desire for consideration amongst one another, for it was our own disregard and thoughtlessness that led us here. What we demand from each other, do we give? We will never achieve perfect consideration in our environment as long as there exists so many differences in perspective. It is impossible to accommodate everyone's feelings and needs, but any effort to be mindful of others is a victory in light of our failed citizenship.

When we realize we have been inconsiderate, I've discovered an apology of complete ownership, one that says simply "I'm sorry, I wasn't thinking, my bad," usually takes the sting out of the offense. When the inconsideration is directed towards us it helps to remember it for what it is — a habit of not thinking. Even though it is offensive, when we can see it as unintentional, it becomes less personal. That does not excuse the behavior, but it is a way of better managing our own feelings.

We cannot control other people's behavior, only our own. Let the focus remain on your progress. When you live out the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," you'll begin to experience the returned consideration you so desperately desire. If we can learn to be thoughtful and considerate in this environment with all its difficulties, such sensitivity towards others will become much easier in free society. ♣

Guest column:**Notorious landmarks — an endangered species***Richard A. Luna
Contributing Writer*

The Natural History Magazine featured a poignant story by Richard W. Sellars in its November 2013 issue. It was the equivalent of Hollywood's "Where are they now?" Sellars' exhibit, titled "Commemorating JFK's Assassination and Other National Traumas", located at the Sixth Floor Museum, left a sense of urgency burning inside me. As the title implies, Sellars discusses several historical sites in our country that were host to traumatic assassinations that changed the nation.

Upon hearing "the sixth floor" in any forum relating to Dallas, we automatically think Texas Schoolbook Depository (officially renamed the Dallas County Administration Building). This building, in fact all of Dealy Plaza in downtown Dallas, was almost permanently scarred by those seeking to rid the community of its shameful past. It's disheartening that many significant landmarks have been destroyed or have come close to it for that reason.

Historical sites like this are important. It's amazing how few people know of places like the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station, the Lorraine Motel, the Ambassador Hotel, and the Temple Music Performance

Hall — or their significance.

President James A. Garfield was shot at the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station. It was demolished in the early 1900s. The "West Building" of the National Gallery of Fine Arts replaced it. Nobody agrees to the exact spot of the assassination, but the Gallery makes no effort to tell people of the historical significance. Rather than the actual site being chosen for commemoration, a busy traffic circle was chosen as the site to erect a small monument for the slain president. It sits several blocks from the building and the public shows very little interest in this event even though it took President Garfield an agonizing two months to die from his injuries.

The Lorraine Motel in Memphis is where Martin Luther King Jr. was shot and killed. In June 1987, Memphis officials were determined to have the building destroyed. Richard Sellars met with them and persuaded them to save the site. The National Civil Rights Museum was born of that decision, and it was formally dedicated in September, 1991.

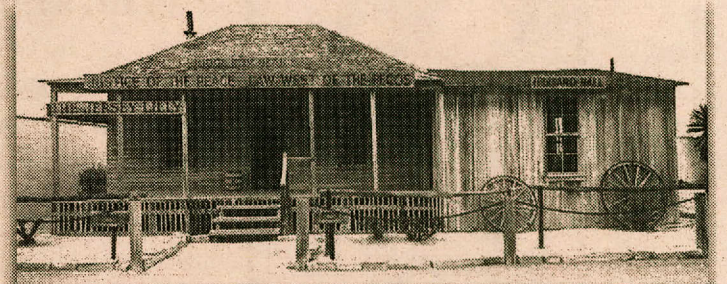
The Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles is where Robert Francis Kennedy was shot. The building itself had an interesting past. It was a popular Hollywood gathering place for

the stars of the 30s and 40s. The Academy Awards were held there. It was the site where the first African American received an Oscar. Hattie McDaniel earned it for the 1939 film "Gone With the Wind." There was an unsuccessful rally to save the building, but was demolished in 2006. Markers were placed near the site to honor it.

President William McKinley was shot and killed at the Temple Music Performance Hall in Buffalo, NY. The building was demolished and a housing area sits in its place. The appropriate location of the assassination is marked with a bronze plaque attached to a granite stone. A monument for the fallen president was also set in downtown Buffalo.

The National Park Service is the keeper of these and other significant historical sites. Their motivation is not to celebrate the events. It's about preservation—a quiet recognition that respectfully observes these sites and the tragic loss of public leaders that occurred there.

Most people are even unaware of



the history of a building as infamous as the Dallas Schoolbook Depository. In the years immediately after JFK's assassination, Dallas residents tried to ignore the building. That changed when prominent citizens there started calling for its demolition. City officials refused to issue the permits needed for that. Finally, Dallas County purchased it in the late 1970s, but not before arsonists tried to destroy it. Today, it is a museum that boasts more than 300,000 visitors a year.

As a country, we don't have to be proud of events that transpired at these locations, but is it the right answer to erase the tragedies? In a culture that spends billions a year on superficial entertainment, I say it's not. These are sacred places where one can pay homage, albeit painfully, to the reality of our past.

Sources:
Natural History Magazine Nov. 2013; Volume 121, Number 9 ↘

First impressions*Deidre McDonald
Riverside Unit*

I will never forget my first day in prison. The smell, sound, and shame of it all are imprinted in my mind for all time. The incident involves me overhearing several of the other women prisoners talking about me in the most unflattering terms. I think there were three of them. They were mocking me in every possible way, making fun of my hair, my weight and my voice. It was totally devastating.

One of the hardest things I had to do was walk back into the dorm area. A part of me wanted to listen closely to the voices around me so I could discover the identities of my detractors. Every woman in that dorm was a suspect to me. I didn't figure that those women may feel remorse. A few minutes in the bathroom had taught me that this was their dorm, and I was an interloper. However, as time went on, I began to adapt.

Being a prison newbie is an often harrowing experience, and we each



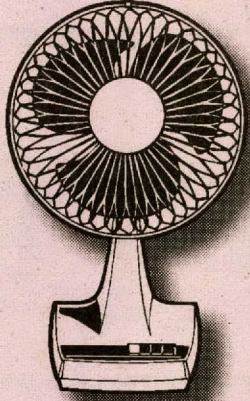
have undergone the insensitivities of the "first day." The dislocation and loneliness that one feels is nothing out of the ordinary. This episode can wound a person very deeply, but we must learn to take it all in stride. Incarceration can help us develop emotional armor that we don in order to hold our head up and walk with courage in our stride, regardless of what people say.

Years later, I told two newcomers what had happened to me. I warned them against the insularity that can result from having socialized with the same people for so many years, and stressed to them

the importance of never treating a newcomer as badly as I was treated.

I believe that recounting this story can help others, not to mention the fact that it has a therapeutic effect on me each time I retell it. I believe I can finally forgive those girls who gave me such a hard time when I first came to prison. ↘

Free fan from TX-CURE — How to get one —



If you have been indigent for six months or more you may qualify for a FREE fan from TX-CURE. Follow these simple instructions to apply for a fan:

1. Write an I-60 request to:
**TDCJ-CID TRUST FUND, P.O.
Box 60, Huntsville, TX, 77342**

Inmate Trust Cure Fan

I would like to get a fan from TX-CURE.

Name _____

TDCJ# _____

Unit _____

2. The Trust Fund will then forward the request to:

TX-CURE Fan Project
P.O.Box 38381
Dallas, TX 75238-0383

Your request must be dated **Jan. 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015.**
Send only the request.

3. Wait patiently. The Fan Project works from donations only. If you do not get a fan this year, you can request one next year if you are still indigent.

4. You may request a fan between **Jan. 1, 2015, and June 30, 2015. No earlier, no later.** The rule is one fan per prisoner, even if yours gets broken, stolen, confiscated or if you received a fan under a previous TDCJ number. TDCJ keeps accurate records, so please don't apply for a fan if you've received one in the past. Protect your property papers. Report a malfunctioning **new** fan to Unit Property. If you do not receive a fan this year, try again next year.

Mike Jewell, Director
Cheri Ledbetter, Fan Project
Joan Covici, Secretary
Dallas Office (214)348-0293

Innocence claims

The following information has been provided by the State Counsel for Offenders (SCFO) and can be found as Chapter 13 in the SCFO Legal Handbook available in unit law libraries.

Who should file an innocence claim

Only offenders who did not commit the crime for which they were convicted should file a claim based on innocence. Claims that are based on insufficient evidence to prove guilt should use other avenues of relief discussed in this handbook. Unwarranted innocence claims detract attention from valid claims and waste precious resources.

If you were involved in criminal activity with others, but were not involved in the specific act for which you were convicted, the conviction may still be valid under the "law of parties." For example, if you and a friend decide to rob a convenience store, and during the robbery your friend shoots someone, you may both be convicted of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Although you are technically "innocent" of the shooting (your friend did it, not you), you will not have a valid innocence claim.

Choosing an Innocence Clinic

At the time of publication of this handbook, four clinics associated with Texas law schools pursue innocence claims. They are the Innocence Project of Texas (IPOT) associated with the Texas Tech Law School in

Lubbock; the Texas Center for Actual Innocence (TCAI) associated with the University of Texas School of Law in Austin; the Texas Innocence Network (TIN) at the University of Houston Law School in Houston and the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Innocence Project (TMSLIP) associated with Texas Southern University also in Houston.

In order to avoid duplicative investigations and to conserve scarce resources, only one clinic will investigate a person's actual innocence claim. All four clinics share a common database. This means that if you write one clinic, it is noted in a database and the other three clinics can see the database entry. Consequently, it is not necessary to write all four clinics to have your claim reviewed. You should be aware, however, that clinics vary in the type of cases they review. The clinic that first receives and logs your case into the common database will be the clinic that works on your case. All other clinics that receive your case will allow the first clinic to complete their investigation. If the first clinic closes your file, another clinic may decide to begin an investigation. For that reason, you should review the filing guidelines for each of the four clinics noted.

INNOCENCE continued on page 9

Prevent, recognize heat illness

Editor's note: The following information was provided by the TDCJ Risk Management Department. Summertime and summer heat is arriving, and offenders (and staff) are encouraged to be aware of these three types of heat illnesses.

Offenders who are at a higher risk for heat illness include those who are:

- newly assigned to a job;
- on psychiatric medications;
- over the age of 60 or
- exposed to high temperature and humidity conditions.

Prevention of heat illness includes:

- drinking at least 1/2 cup of water every 15 minutes when working in hot environments;
- taking a five minute break every 30-60 minutes and
- decreasing intensity of physical exertion under extreme conditions.

Types of heat illness

Heat Cramps: usually develop following strenuous exercise in muscles that have been subjected to extensive work. The pain may be quite severe. Heat cramps usually occur after several hours of work and may occur even at low ambient temperatures. The cause is inadequate replacement of electrolytes (sodium and potassium).

Prevention is accomplished by ample fluid intake before, during and after work, and salting of food during meals (if not medically contraindicated). Use of electrolyte replacement drinks (sports drinks) may also be beneficial.

Heat Exhaustion (Heat Prostration): the most common form of heat stress, caused by depletion of water and salt. Symptoms include weakness, anxiety, fatigue, thirst, dizziness, headache, nausea and urge to defecate. Signs include profuse perspiration, rapid pulse, lack of coordination and confusion. Heat prostration may lead to heat syncope, a sudden onset of collapse that is usually of brief duration. During heat syncope the patient appears

ashen gray and skin is cool and clammy. Failure to treat heat exhaustion may result in progression to heat stroke. Risk factors include failure to maintain adequate fluid intake during exertion, and taking diuretics.

Prevention is accomplished by ample fluid intake before, during and after work, proper work-rest cycles, and salting of food during meals if not medically contraindicated.

Heat Stroke is a medical emergency! While it may be preceded by signs of heat exhaustion, the onset is often sudden. In heat stroke the body has lost its ability to dissipate heat and maintain a normal body temperature. Body temperature is often elevated over 106°F. Exertional heat stroke occurs in young, healthy people who maintain inadequate fluid intake during exertion. Signs include headache, chills, gooseflesh, (weakness in coordination,) nausea and vomiting, progressing to unconsciousness. Classical heat stroke is seen in the elderly, those with predisposing medical conditions such as congestive heart failure, diabetes and alcoholism, and those on medications that cause fluid depletion, interfere with sweating or interfere with the body's thermoregulatory system. Classical heat stroke has few warning signs. Collapse may be among the first symptoms. Skin is hot and dry, and pulse is rapid and weak. Shock and death may occur in either exertional or classical heat stroke.

Prevention includes ample fluid intake before, during and after work, proper work-rest cycles, keeping people at high risk from working under conditions of extreme heat and humidity and maintaining adequate indoor conditions, such as access to cool fluids and use of cooling fans for persons at increased risk for heat stroke.

Report all incidents of a heat-related illness to a staff member immediately.

INNOCENCE continued from page 8

All four innocence clinics share at least one thing in common: they only take cases involving **actual innocence**. This means you cannot have been involved in the crime in any way. For instance, if you and a co-defendant planned to rob a store and during that robbery your codefendant unexpectedly shoots someone, the clinics will not assist you, even though you were not the shooter. The clinics will look at cases where the crime never happened (for example, a false claim of sexual abuse) or the victim of the crime has mistakenly identified you as the person responsible.

A. Innocence Project of Texas (IPOT) – Texas Tech Law School, Lubbock

For IPOT to accept your actual innocence claim the following must apply to you and your case:

- direct state appeals have been exhausted
- innocence claim involves a felony offense
- crime took place in Texas and was prosecuted in Texas
- not currently represented by an attorney

B. Texas Center for Actual Innocence (TCAI) – University of Texas Law School, Austin

TCAI focuses on felony cases where all direct appeals have been exhausted. TCAI will **NOT** handle innocence claims involving:

- death penalty cases
- federal cases
- drug offenses
- people who are not currently incarcerated

C. Texas Innocence Network (TIN) – University of Houston Law School, Houston

TIN will not pursue claims involving constitutional violations by others such as misconduct by prosecutors, police or jurors; claims involving self-defense, defense of others, justification or accident; or claims where you were an accessory or party to the criminal scheme, even if you did not commit the physical act resulting in the conviction. In addition to the above, TIN will **NOT** pursue cases where the innocence claim involves:

- a misdemeanor offense
- a sentence that has already been completed, even if the crime behind the actual innocence claim was later used to enhance a sentence in an unrelated crime
- the reason parole or probation has been revoked
- a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, *unless* there is physical evidence or a victim recantation that would show you did not commit the crime
- a conviction for an offense arising out of TDCJ confinement
- current or prior review from another innocence project

D. Thurgood Marshall School of Law Innocence Project (TMSLIP) – Texas Southern University, Houston

For TMSLIP to accept your actual innocence claim the following must apply to you and your case:

- direct state appeals have been exhausted
- crime took place in Texas and was prosecuted in Texas
- not currently represented by an attorney
- not a death penalty case

The Texas Prisoner Innocence Questionnaire (TPIQ)

All four clinics noted above worked together to cre-

ate the TPIQ. It is a very comprehensive form that will take several hours or days to complete. You should read through the entire TPIQ without writing anything so that you have an idea of the information you need to collect in order to answer all the questions. A copy of the TPIQ (without any space for writing) is reproduced in SCFO REF 13.01 so that you can study the form before you request one.

When you are ready to fill out the TPIQ, request a copy from your unit law library. If your library is out of the TPIQ forms, send an I-60 to Access to Courts. **Do not send a request to the clinics for a TPIQ.** They will only respond that you should visit your unit law library to request a TPIQ, and if one is not available, to send an I-60 to Access to Courts. If your I-60 request to Access to Courts is not addressed in a reasonable amount of time, send an I-60 to SCFO and include the date you sent the I-60 to Access to Courts.

Complete the TPIQ and send it to one of the four clinics listed above, paying careful attention to the criteria they list for the type of cases they accept. If your case does not meet the criteria for a particular clinic, do not send it there. If it meets the criteria for more than one clinic, you can either select just one clinic to send it to or you can make multiple copies of the TPIQ and send it to each clinic likely to take your case. Remember, the clinics share a database and will know that you have sent your TPIQ to another clinic, so your efforts at duplication may not be particularly helpful.

Write legibly so that your TPIQ can be read by the clinic staff. Write clearly and concisely. You may need to fill out more than one TPIQ if you are claiming innocence on more than one conviction. For example, if you were convicted in two or more sexual assaults, involving different victims who were attacked at different times, fill out a TPIQ for each conviction. However, if your convictions involve a sexual assault against the same victim on multiple days, fill out only one TPIQ. Likewise, if your convictions involve different crimes against the same person arising from the same incident (for example, kidnapping and sexual assault), fill out only one TPIQ. If you are filling out multiple TPIQs, mail all of them together to the same clinic. If there is not enough room in the space provided on the TPIQ form for your answers, write as much as you can in the available space, then write "see attached." On a clean sheet of paper, write the corresponding number of the question you are finishing and complete your answer. Before you send your TPIQ to a clinic, take time to carefully review it to make sure you have answered all the questions. An incomplete TPIQ wastes your time, the clinic's time, and may also result in the denial of your request for assistance. When you mail the TPIQ remember to include any additional sheets of paper you used to complete your answers. **DO NOT SEND ANY OTHER DOCUMENTS WHEN YOU SEND IN THE TPIQ.**

If the clinic needs additional information it will request it from you.

The clinics you send your TPIQ to do not represent you. However, the information you provide in the TPIQ and send to the clinic is an effort by you to establish an attorney-client relationship with them. As such, that information is confidential and is protected in law by the attorney-client privilege. That is true whether or not an attorney-client relationship is ever formed between you and the clinic.

What to Expect After Sending the TPIQ

Any clinic you send the TPIQ to will respond to you. If you do not meet the criteria, you may receive a postcard or letter to that effect. If the clinic needs additional time

to review your claim they will let you know. The clinic may also need supplemental information. Although the TPIQ form covers a lot of information, once the clinic understands your issue, they may send you an additional form to fill out. Do so as quickly as possible and return it to the clinic. If you do not understand their instructions, write them back and ask for clarification. It is important that the clinic knows you are serious about pursuing your case and that you are doing all you can to provide the clinic with needed information.

It takes a very long time to work up a case based on innocence, sometimes years and even decades rather than months. Do not be impatient, and do not lose hope. If none of the Texas clinics accept your case, pursue clinics outside the state for assistance.

Questions offenders often ask:

1. What do I do if my unit law library doesn't have a copy of the Texas prisoner innocence claim (TPIQ) form?

Answer: Send an I-60 to Access to Courts and tell them your library needs more TPIQs. Wait a reasonable time and check back with your library to see whether they have more. If they still do not have TPIQ forms, send an I-60 to SCFO. Tell SCFO the date you sent your I-60 to Access to Courts.

2. I have a lot of documents I can send the clinics to prove my innocence. Should I send those documents with my TPIQ?

Answer: No. The clinics will write you back and let you know which documents, if any, to send them.

3. Can I send a TPIQ to more than one clinic?

Answer: Yes, but remember that a clinic will look at the database and know you have a request pending with another clinic. Duplication may not be helpful. You may want to wait until you hear from the first clinic before you send a TPIQ to a second clinic.

4. If one clinic turns me down should I send another clinic my TPIQ?

Answer: Yes, so long as you fall within the criteria for that clinic.

5. I am innocent of more than one crime that police say happened at the same time. I did not kidnap or sexually assault the victim. Do I still fill out two TPIQs?

Answer: For that situation, fill out only one TPIQ since the crimes were part of one incident against one victim.

6. I was convicted for a string of sexual assaults against different victims but I did not commit any of those crimes. Police claim the same person committed all of the crimes. Do I still fill out two TPIQs?

Answer: For that situation, fill out a TPIQ for each conviction. If there were two different sexual assault victims (who were not assaulted together), fill out two TPIQs; if there were three sexual assault victims (who were not assaulted together), fill out three TPIQs, etc.

Editor's Note:

Addresses for the four clinics mentioned in the above article are as follows:

1. The Innocence Project of Texas, 1511 Texas Avenue, Lubbock, TX 79401

2. Texas Center For Actual Innocence, 727 E. Dean Keaton St., Austin, TX 78705

3. Texas Innocence Network, 100 Law Center, Houston, TX 77204-6060

4. Thurgood Marshall School of Law Innocence Project, 3100 Cleburne St., Houston, TX 77004

Toxic Clouds

Submitted by Kretta Johnson
Carol Young Unit

Toxic clouds around your head,
blocking your vision.
People crowding you,
demanding from you;
wanting to kill you
is the devil's intention.

Fame and fortune
is only for a minute...
a few little tastes, snorts, or drags
and you are caught up in it.
Loss of privacy, family,
hopes and dreams.
Chasing the demons that
financially and physically
have you on a declining slope.

A snap of a finger, and it's all gone.
No one around to help you hold on
or be emotionally strong.
Everyone you thought was
your homey, lover, or friend
has shown their true colors.

Toxic clouds are now a must,
you've fallen so far off
and have no more trust.

The free ride is over!
Parties have ceased!
No more fancy clothes.
Your pants are no longer creased.

Cars, jewelry, fancy food,
name brand coats and shoes,
now you only have
a few to choose from
and you don't have to think twice.

Lawyers giving you
the, "I need more money," blues.
People treating you
like yesterday's news.
Trying hard to get back on your feet,
toxic clouds still riding you deep.

Body craving the toxic waste...
prison sentence offered in haste.

You are at the bitter end,
what are you going to do, my friend?

Bow down or fold;
yours is the next story to be told.

A new beginning or tragic end,
the choice is yours to comprehend.

Prison walls

Frank Bernard
Darrington Unit

Behind prison walls, the con-
vict prays for better days
Recalls his season in the sun
when this life began

Spring first spread his
wings, so much to be seen

Summer morn the rebel
born, between right and
wrong he was torn

On an autumn day, he
went away

Winter breeze upon his
knees; God hears his pleas

Spring, summer, fall, winter
— life's final call

Beyond prison walls, free-
dom calls

The Perfect High

Submitted by Ninety-Nine
Darrington Unit

Life passed you by in search of the
perfect high

All you found was a lie

To ease the pain, with a needle
pierce your vein

Shame drives you insane
and I'm to blame

Heroin is my name

Sister morphine, cousin cocaine
we're all the same

Crystal paranoia is our game

Acid is a trip

Sweet herb gives its word
to lay you down to sleep,
pray the Lord your soul to keep

Before you die,
Find the perfect high
It lies before your eyes

In order to be whole
you must look within your soul

How can I walk?

Submitted by Angela Streater
Released

Lying underneath
society's rush of sin,
looking up beyond
the devil's tempting grin,
I crawl beneath
the surface of addiction.

The glass of a numbing high
holds the need for acceptance inside.
How can I walk?

I wrap myself in a blanket of guilt.
I want to stop hurting
but where is my will?

The light has called home the ones
that would die for thrill.

A life for a hit.
A life for a pill.
How can I walk?

Shattered tears
in the eyes of my creation.
This is where the glass is broken
and I break from temptation.
I walk away.

This Photograph

Submitted by Glendon Girard
Pack Unit

I caught you by surprise today,
My camera within reach.

I took a picture suddenly,
And left you without speech.

You jumped and screamed, yelled at me,
You said that it wasn't fair.

To do that with no clue or warning,
I told you that I didn't care.

The picture that I took of you that day,

No words could quiet define,
I will hold it in my heart forever,
This photograph of mine.

Creative Corner



Big change by a small touch

Submitted by Michael Garza
McCConnell Unit

I was on a bit of a bad run a little while ago, mostly because I'd grown to hate people. That was until I was in prison at the McConnell Unit, standing in the security line outside of visitation in my grey socks, and boxers with my jump-suit lost somewhere in the machine.

There was a guy behind me. He had made some joke I can't remember when we were undressing, but it was more conversation than I'd been looking for, and I'd just given him a smile and gone back to being mad at the world. It was only after we were through to the other side and gathering our things that I glanced back at him and realized he was crying, not just a little bit but a grown man in tears in the middle of this awful cruel place, better known as "the concrete jungle".

I'm pretty sure it wasn't because I didn't laugh at his joke. Instead he had just kissed goodbye someone he loved, maybe for the last time. Nor-

mally I would have just picked my things up from the tray, but that afternoon I reached out behind me, and put a hand on his shoulder before I walked away.

It was the shortest of connections, but it was enough. I sat there and remembered those years when I had been an optimist, honest and true, and when I'd been hopeful, and when I'd loved people I didn't even know existed.

There was a time when I loved people the way other people love churches, coming together under glass and high ceilings so that they might be released. I remember especially waiting for my wife at the Bexar County jail late one night back when she was my girlfriend and our son was just growing up in our lives together. I remembered how excited I was when she appeared through the glare behind the car window with her big smile, teeth showing and all.

That's when I knew everything I needed to know, and I'd forgotten all about it in my rage and my rush. Now when I get up early, I sometimes confuse the guards when I refuse my rec. I open my window, pick up a book, put on my

headphones — and I watch people begin again.

By begin again, I mean the unit that I'm living in started to release offenders, and my window faces the gate they walk out of to their family. I watch them come out after years, and I see their tired faces light up, their hearts explode, their knees buckle, their eyes close. Sometimes I wish I could ask them what they mean to each other, but I can't. Yet it's not hard to tell.

I'm not afraid to admit I wobbled when I saw a man and a woman hug each other, and when two daughters ran to their father and each grabbed a leg, and when a son with a giant bag of what looked like mail from years being away fell into the arms of his tearful mother.

Every time I see emotions so familiar in the faces of strangers, I'm rescued from today, from all of our modern sins and plagues. Again and again and again, I'm brought back to those moments in my own life when I knew that everything would be OK; like the moment just before I hugged my wife in front of county jail, and the moment just after I let go of that man's shoulder in that security line. ♣

DADS continued from page 1

There were 13 of them sitting in the gymnasium when their children and church volunteers arrived about 10 a.m. Saturday. The 13 men, out of a prison population of about 1,800, could not have a sex crime or domestic violence conviction, or any disciplinary case while incarcerated on their record. They had to earn this date.

They wore dark blue Day With Dads T-shirts, a stark contrast to the all-white standard uniform.

For some, it had only been a few months since they had seen their children. But for others, it had been as long as five and eight years with distance, finances and priorities causing the long separation.

One by one, they were called to the middle of the gym. On the other side, their son or daughter would meet them. Some came tentatively, self-consciously, the ice not yet broken. Others, like B. Furr, eight years old, sprinted to her dad. They had not seen each other in a year.

"We're going to have some fun today," said D. Henderson, 28, who held his daughter, A. Henderson, eight years old, of Grand Prairie. His daughter was born the day after he was sent to prison.

"This means everything," he said. "It gives me the opportunity to be a father and instill certain things I've learned. I'm not the same man I was when I came here."

In the initial hubbub after reuniting, some took their young kids to arts and crafts tables, while many took to athletic activities. E. Mathis, who turned eight two days before, came from Little Elm near Dallas. He wore an FC Dallas soccer shirt, and was firing shots over and over at his dad, the goalie.

"You can't put a price on this. It's invaluable," said Mathis, incarcerated a week after his son was born. "This is something a lot of dads and sons take for granted. It's the first time we've ever done this, first time I've seen him kick a soccer ball."

R. Larra was there. Released from the Clements Unit in June 2013 after 20 years, he knows what separation is like. He had a daughter he saw just twice in 20 years.

"Every day you think of your kids and wish you could have been a better father," he said. "This opens the door because you wonder how your kids feel about you. This is something a letter can't do."

"There are all kinds of butterflies from these guys, there has to be. I can guarantee you they will not stop talking to other guys about this and probably go to bed tonight and cry."

E. Underwood, 14, and brother B. Underwood, 12, came from Cypress, near Houston, to see their dad, L. Underwood.

The last time they saw each other? 2006. The boys were happy, a little nervous. So was L. Underwood.

"Scared to death, actually," he said. "I just want them to know I'm not as bad as they might believe. I'm trying to hold back the tears."

There was a hamburger and hot dog cookout, a "Happy Birthday" song with 60 cupcakes to

catch any and all birthdays and a DVD screening of "Frozen."

But there was also this — four dads and their daughters slow dancing to Louie Armstrong's "What A Wonderful World." Among them was R. Robles and daughter M. Garcia, 11, of San Antonio. They had not been together since 2009.

"I had watched the movie 'Courageous,'" Robles said, "and in it, a dad loses his girl in an accident. She always wanted to dance with him and he never did."

"That part always stayed with me. I told her, 'I'm going to dance with you because we don't know what tomorrow might hold.'"

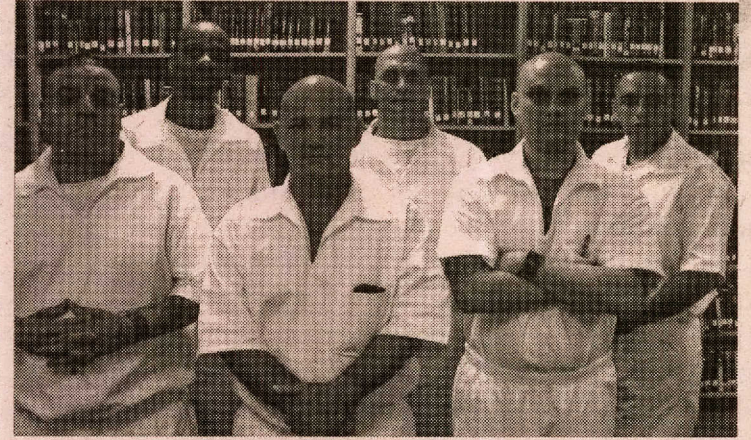
But for Robles, 12 other men and 15 of their children, they had Saturday. And that was a pretty special day. ♣

**'This means everything...
It gives me the opportunity to be a father and instill certain things I've learned. I'm not the same man I was when I came here.'**

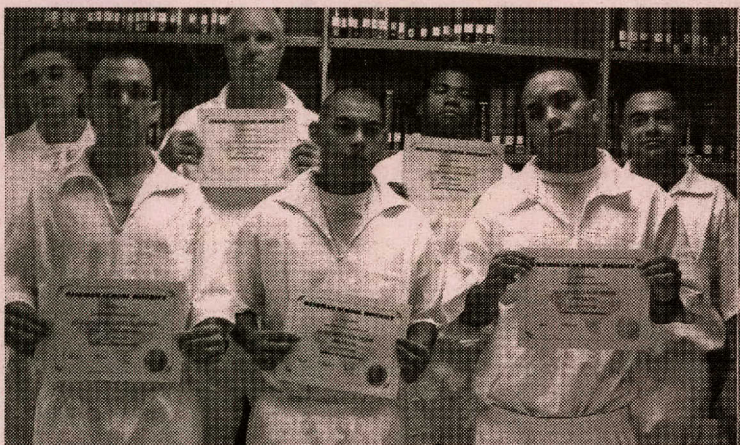
TDCJ/Windham bulletin board



Crain Unit Riverside Campus Cognitive Intervention Program graduates are M. Smith, M. Potocki, H. Roberts, S. Stephenson, L. Velazquez, S. Whitaker, K. Smith, S. Askey, B. Tillis, R. Tidwell, C. Black, D. Carroll, L. Brown, S. Fox, L. Stone, M. James, B. Jicha and WSD instructor J. Brookshire.



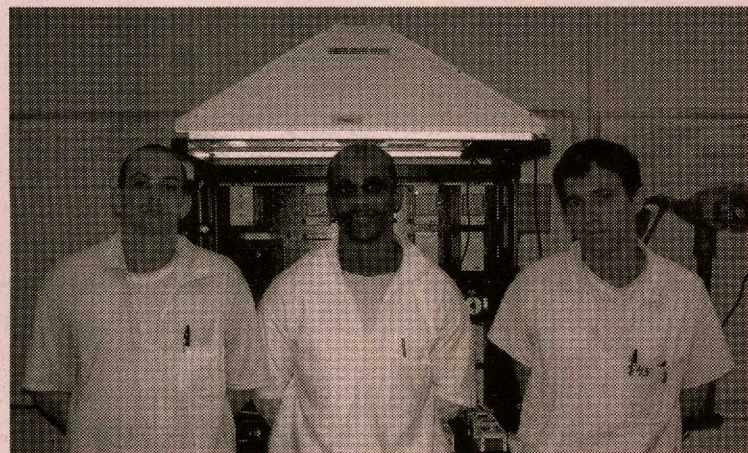
Allred Unit Electrical Trades are S. Goodson, D. Houck, R. Naranjo, B. Smith, S. Garcia and E. Martinez.



Wallace Unit Automotive Brakes and Automotive Engine Performance graduates are B. Linesay, I. Ibarra, C. Reyes, J. Gonzalez, E. Flores, D. Harrill and J. Banks.



Beto Unit Trinity Valley Community College computer aided drafting graduates are M. Santollo, C. Deason, C. Ruby, R. Herrera, B. Thornburg, B. Garcia, M. Gonzalez, D. Wilson, J. McManus, T. Frasier and E. Bachelder.



Beto Unit Trinity Valley Community College electronics technology graduates are Z. King, J. Taylor and J. Jeffers.



Torres Unit Vocational graduates are J. Bagley, T. Collins, T. Dominguez, D. Dorsey, C. Eaton, L. Henderson, B. Liendo, C. Livingston, H. Martinez, D. McQueen, G. Moorehead, R. Rodriguez, S. Surgeon, R. Silva, T. Smith, M. Tamez, C. Thornton and J. Ulmer.

Rethinking our responsibility to the world

Ruben D. Constante Jr
Torres Unit

Something is happening to us. Just take a look around you and notice the growing trend that is infecting citizens of the free world and those behind the razor wire. It's a belief permeating every facet of our great country that citizens can rightfully resist law enforcing officials on virtually any grounds. It's classic insubordination.

For whatever reason, people in today's world sincerely believe that they can oppose any form of supervision. In fact, they demand to be left alone because this is a free country. This attitude stems from many causes. Many people today feel justified in defying any form of official power. As a result, the schisms among us are growing wider each day.

I wish to offer an alternative viewpoint to the idea that citizens can resist authority whenever they want. If accepted, this option can help combat the type of entitlement that is quickly eroding at least three things in our nation: respect for authority, civil order and proper governance.

First, let's look at how respect for authority is affected. When an attitude of insubordination completely overtakes us, we begin to believe that no one has the right to hold us accountable for our actions. When this becomes the norm, we lose all respect for authority. It's tantamount to a teenager who has gained a little bit of freedom, and because of it, he believes that his parents can no longer hold him liable for his behavior. Their questioning would become intrusive and annoying, and he would feel like his freedom is being violated. This is what we are witnessing with today's movement of civil resistance: the demeanor that characterizes teenage life.

Second, civil order is lost. One of the great fea-

tures of our American republic is the right to petition the government for help when oppression is present. However, when citizens are infected with petty entitlement that has nothing to do with valid liberty issues (but are rather the groaning's of a restless body), civil order is lost in a sea of meaningless chatter. This is not the foundation on which our country was founded. Our government simply isn't equipped to make everyone happy. Instead of turning every nuisance into a litigating matter, we might want to think about developing a tolerance for daily hardships.

Consider the impact insubordination has on the proper role of government. When citizens surrender their self-control to trivial matters, a functional government will be reduced to social paralysis. There will be no domestic tranquility, because trifling skirmishes will flood every court across the land. Every conceivable sorrow will distract us from working toward self-improvement and communal growth. Granted, our judicial system can protect us from tyranny and oppression, but what's protecting us from the abuse within our individual souls?

We have become extremely arrogant and insubordinate people. We think that we have the right to buck authorities when they are simply doing their job. Anytime they attempt to hold us accountable, we resist them on the grounds of racism, harassment or profiling. We don't want to comply with the smallest hint of authority, because we are burdened with offenses from the past. This form of rebellion will always result in self-imposed afflictions that comprise the heart of victimization.

The only way to remedy this mentality is to admit

and accept the truth that we can not do whatever we want and expect those actions to carry no consequences. True freedom is always attached to the idea of responsibility. Individual actions always affect others.

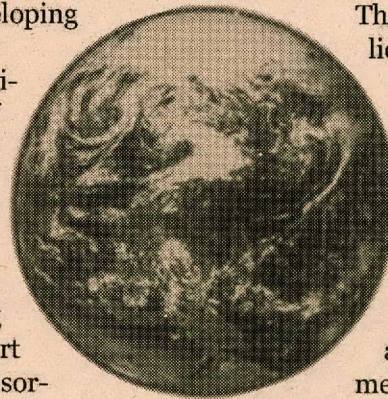
For example, I can drive down a highway all I want, but I must comply with state-regulated speed limits. If not, I will get pulled over. At that point, I place myself under the lawful domain of a police officer. He's the boss and I'm not.

The point is that freedom to act is no license to expect my actions to go unchecked. When I live lawfully, the state must respect my business. But when I live unlawfully, I invite them to regulate my business.

I believe this enchantment with insubordination can be dispelled when we realize that freedom is inevitably connected to responsibility and to self-respect. The only way for me to truly succeed in life is to respect myself, because when I do that I'll protect what I value. And freedom is a value that will not defend itself. It requires individual care.

In summary, we aren't the little sovereigns we fancy ourselves to be. We are accountable to others and our actions affect people around us. Authorities exist for a reason, and our duty is to obey them with all respect. Submission isn't a sign of weakness. It's an indication that you are completely secure with yourself and that you have no problem saying, "Yes, sir" or "Yes, ma'am." That's what respectful and mature people do.

So let's rethink our responsibility to the real world. Let's honor our freedoms and protect them with an attitude of nonresistance. Our lives will be greatly rewarded for it. ♣



WHITE continued from page 1

Following his release in 1999, White hired on for a year with a swimming pool contractor and soon made his move into the electrical field. He also went to the Independent Electrical Contractors Association to attend a four-year apprenticeship program.

"When I graduated, I took a test to acquire a Journeyman Electrical License and later pursued a Master Electrical License," he says. "I went to school for four years to learn all I could. Knowledge is power and money!"

Along with financial rewards, White enjoys doing his job well and balancing it with family life, which includes a wife and teenage son.

"I love to see the excitement and relief on my customers' faces when their job is fixed properly and in a timely

manner," he says, "but the most challenging part of what I do these days is balancing everything in my life. I make sure I keep appointments with clients, I have time with family, and I keep my reputation at its best for the future of my company."

White encourages current offenders to use their time to prepare for success after release.

"Life is waiting for you!" he says. "Get ready for that day when you walk out those doors. Learn a trade and get your GED and education. When you get settled and are doing well for yourself, tell someone and share your story. If you can go back and tell those who are still waiting for their chance, let them know that life is waiting." ♣

REENTRY continued from page 1

They are also eligible for Texas ID cards once TDCJ receives both the social security card and birth certificate and the offender has received parole approval or is within six months of a sentence expiration date.

There is no cost to the offender for the social security card, Texas birth certificate or Texas ID card. Unit reentry case managers will assist with submitting a request for an out-of-state birth certificate if the offender or a family member/friend of the offender provides the fee required by the state issuing the certificate. All identification documents obtained by reentry case managers are securely stored until the day of release from TDCJ when they are given to the offender during release.

Questions regarding identification document processing services may be addressed to the unit reentry case manager by I-60 or to the TDCJ Reentry and Integration Division by mail to 4616 W. Howard Lane, Suite 200, Austin, Texas 78728. ♣

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 [ITF] or may be obtained by writing to ITF) 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**

From 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

• **ECOMMDIRECT** is the secure way to make a deposit in an offender's trust fund account.

—Visit www.texas.gov/eCommDirect

—Enter offender details

—Add deposit amount to your cart

—Check out using a Visa or Mastercard

• **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**.

• **TOUCH PAYMENT SYSTEMS**

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

—Online: www.tdcjpayment.com

—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.

NOTE: Sender's name and address are required when making a deposit to an offender's account. Direct and questions to Inmate Trust Fund, (936)438-8990.

- Do not send funds to offenders you do not know
- Do not send funds to an offender as a favor for offenders you do know
- Report EXTORTION to Unit Warden/Office of Inspector General
- Offenders do not earn interest on funds in their account
- Do not send cash, stamps or personal items for offenders to either the unit or Inmate Trust Fund
- Do not send deposits to the unit
- Personal mail sent to P.O. Box 60 is not forwarded
- Obtain deposit slips from OFFENDER for money orders or cashier's checks.



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 _____

Sudoku Solutions

Easy

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

Difficult

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

Borderline personality disorder — what is it?

Jennifer Toon
Contributing Writer

As a case manager at my former freeworld job, I frequently ran across a mental health term that appeared in the majority of my female clients' histories. It was a diagnosis I had heard about often during my time in prison, but only vaguely understood. I did some research to better help my clients, and I'm glad I did. I still meet women who were given this diagnosis at some point in their lives but have no idea what it means, how it relates to them, or what treatment they may need.

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is most commonly diagnosed in women, though recent studies indicate men may suffer just as much from this disorder. According to the Encyclopedia Americana, our personality is the "set of behavioral, emotional and interpersonal functions that each individual develops from experience with events and other people." In simpler terms, our personality is our feelings, thoughts and behaviors that make us who we are.

A personality disorder is a "psychological condition in which serious problems arise in regard to the function of personality." There is a consistent, recurring pattern of thought, feeling and behavior that continuously produces problems in daily life. While some researchers believe the root of these disorders is genetic, "psychiatrists believe personality disorders are long-term developmental disorders." This means that those disruptive patterns are developed during times of conflict, and such ways of thinking and behaving serve well in "warding off unpleasant feelings of guilt or distress." Another feature of the disorder is the recurrent manipulation and exploitation of others in the personal environment. Treatment is difficult because of these reasons, since the person with the disorder does not understand the actual source of distress is not other people, but other peoples' thinking processes.

There are several types of personality disorders, borderline personality disorder being the most well known. The term borderline is a bit confusing. It was once thought that patients with these symptoms were on the

borderline between neurosis (an internal anxiety about self) and psychosis (severe loss of contact with reality). That's no longer the belief but the name stuck. Borderline personality disorder "manifests as a pervasive pattern of instability in several areas." Symptoms include: extreme fears of abandonment and rejection, unstable, intense relationships with the tendency to idealize or dismiss people quickly, an uncertainty about who you are, self-destructive and impulsive behaviors (spending, sexual activity, substance abuse, reckless driving, bingeing), thoughts or attempts at self harm (cutting) or suicide, chronic feelings of emptiness, rage and difficulty controlling yourself, and paranoid feelings during times of stress. The hallmark symptoms are the intensity of emotions, the fear of abandonment, and the polar, black-or-white thinking. Borderline patients view the world and people as perfect or evil. There is rarely an in between, making interactions with others difficult and extreme. This often causes the abandonment and rejection they fear.

Medication may help with anxiety, but the most effective treatment is a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy and dialectical behavioral therapy. The goals are increased self-awareness, the change of irrational thought patterns, and having healthy relationships with other people. Symptoms lessen with therapy and in some cases diminish as a person matures in age. This indeed is dependent on the patient being responsible for their own thoughts and behavior, the very thing their disorder curtails. Loved ones who wish to be supportive must be patient and nonjudgmental, but firm. Relief is possible. Many BPD sufferers learn to successfully change harmful patterns and establish a healthier relationship with self and with others. If you feel you experience any of the mentioned symptoms, contact a mental health provider. There is hope.

Information sources:

- Encyclopedia Americana
- Women's Health for Life
- ESPN the Magazine

Change begins within

Keith L. Demps
Stiles Unit

As incarcerated individuals, we live in a world that is defined by violence, immoral lusts, negative affiliations and racism. If we allow ourselves to become subdued by the mind state of this culture then we have become institutionalized. Thus, our environment can impact who we are, how we think, and what we will become. Therefore, if we partake in negativity, we will breed negativity. We cannot embrace negative behavior and expect to live positive lives. In order for us to be successful and lead positive lives, we need to change how we think, who we associate with and what we believe.

There is an essential step that we can take which will bring about noticeable change in our lives. We need to work on our spiritual development. Spiritual development refers to the nurturing of the inner-self. We can change by changing what resides in our

hearts, minds and souls. We need to let go of all the anger, bitterness, pity, jealousy, lust, greed, deceptive thoughts, false witnessing and selfishness that impede our growth and hinder our ability to love. Therefore, spiritual development is meditating on the things that are true, just, pure, lovely, virtuous and praiseworthy. We need to exchange our negative attributes for positive ones. We need to let go of our old dysfunctional self and recreate ourselves to be functional and successful individuals.

Our life is a journey and its course is depicted by the choices we make. The journey begins now while we are incarcerated. Now is the time for us to choose the path that leads to freedom, prosperity and service. Now is the time for us to change. It should be the goal of each man or woman that their future should always be brighter than their past could ever be.



Recipes

KENDALL'S AMAZING BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

Kendall Hartl-Cantu
Bridgeport PPT

Ingredients:

- 1/2 loaf of bread
- 3 cream cheese
- 2 spoonfuls of jalapeno squeeze cheese
- 3 or more spoonfuls of BBQ sauce
- 1 pouch chunky chicken
- BBQ chips
- nacho cheese chips
- 1 ranch dressing
- 1 large white bowl
- 1 cup
- enough water to lightly soak the bread

Directions:

In a large bowl, tear up bread into small pieces while adding just enough water to roll bread into dough. Now mash and make into a shape of crust that lines the sides of the bowl. When you have the shape you want, let the crust sit to dry for 30 minutes or until there is no moisture left. Flip and do other side as well. Mash chicken chunks in pouch so it will appear shredded. Mix 3 or more spoonfuls of BBQ sauce in with chicken. In a cup, mix the cream cheese and squeeze together so it makes enough to cover the pizza, spread evenly over crust. Add chicken, then crush a handful of nacho cheese chips and BBQ chips and also spread them evenly over pizza. At last, top with ranch dressing and enjoy!

CHICKEN BOMBERS

Adrian Gutierrez
Lockhart Unit

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. chunk chicken, shredded
- 1 bag pork skins, crushed fine
- 10 jalapenos, cut in half lengthwise, seeds removed
- 10 pks. cream cheese
- 7 tortillas, cut into 1/3 triangles
- 1 pkg. ranch dressing, optional
- Squeeze cheese, optional

Directions:

In a bowl, mix shredded chicken and cream cheese. Add pork skins. In a tortilla triangle, place a jalapeno half and add a spoon of the chicken mixture. Roll up tortilla slice (tuck in any mixture that comes out) and place horizontally in an empty pork skin bag in layers of three, with no more than four layers (12 total) in a bag. Place bags in hot pots and cook for 45 minutes. Remove from bags and top with ranch dressing and squeeze cheese (optional). Makes 20 bombers.



Recipes

SWEETHEART STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE

Aja B. Mauldin
Carol Young Medical Facility

Ingredients:

- ½ bottle of strawberry preserves
- 2 powdered milk packages
- 2 lemon-lime sport drinks
- 4 packs of cream cheese
- 1 Sprite
- 1 pack of cream cookies of the week (any flavor)
- 1 Hershey candy bar

Directions:

Combine all the powdered milk, 4 cream cheese, 2 lemon-lime sports drink, ½ bottle of strawberry preserves and ¼ can of Sprite together and mix until smooth. Take package of cookies and separate cream from cookies, use on something else or throw away, but do not use cookie cream. Smash cookies to fine powder, then add the rest of the Sprite and form into crust. Pour cream cheese mix onto the crust you formed. Let stand to form crust. Melt Hershey bar in hot pot, then drizzle chocolate on top of cake. Let stand for 30 minutes. Makes about 8 to 10 servings.

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER PIE

John Ryan Lewis
Telford Unit

Ingredients:

- 1 package of vanilla cream cookies
- 1 package of Bud's Best chocolate peanut butter cookies
- ½ jar of peanut butter
- ½ bag of hot chocolate mix
- 3 cream cheese
- 1 package of salted peanuts, crushed
- 1 package of M&M's, crushed
- 2 Chick-O-Sticks, crushed
- 2 or three large bowls for preparation
- Water, as necessary

Directions:

Separate vanilla cream from cookies and place into a large bowl, set aside for later. Crush cookies to fine powder. Now add just enough water to make a thick, sticky dough. Line another bowl with dough crust. Crush Bud's Best cookies — don't bother separating cream, just place entire cookie in mixture. Add in peanut butter and hot chocolate mix. Mash together into a thick, sticky ball. You may need just a little water. Be careful, you want it thick, not creamy. Add cream cheese to vanilla icing and mix well. Put chocolate peanut butter mixture in bowl with crust and even it out. Spread icing mixture on top and sprinkle crushed M&M's, Chick-O-Sticks and crushed peanuts on top of the pie. Let sit for 30 minutes. Slice and serve.

Darrington offers job source fair, following 'Man Up' summit

John Stephens
Darrington Unit Reporter



A job source fair is the closing ceremony for the "Man-Up" Summit, part of the Darrington Unit's faith-based programs. The summit is a two-month opportunity for offenders interested in learning the virtue of manhood, family values and job search skills, along with GED and EA tutoring. These growth opportunities are provided by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) students, Darrington administration, and TDCJ's Chaplain Knapp. Along with a certificate of completion and a current resume, the 28 participants received information and support from the local community.

Vendors on hand for the job source fair included M. Encalade from Legacy Health Services, which offers health services to parolees and their families. Legacy Health Services provides a variety of services ranging from adult family care to pediatrics, dental care, and HIV/AIDS/STD screening. The Hepatitis C task force was also on hand to inform offenders and A. Taylor Hughes came ready to answer any and all questions concerning Hep C., with information available in six different languages.

Another guest, Aspire To Win Inc., provides reintegration classes to recently paroled offenders.

The classes address anger management, substance abuse, and domestic violence. These classes are geared toward offenders that have served at least 10 years. The classes focus on life, social and coping skills, as well as pre-employment readiness. Program founder R. Ruiz emphasized the importance of offenders to the program saying, "You guys matter to us."

C. Thomas, a representative of the City of Houston's Community Reentry Network, also attended. Community Reentry Network is a four-week program aimed at helping newly-released offenders with resume development, life skills and resource referrals.

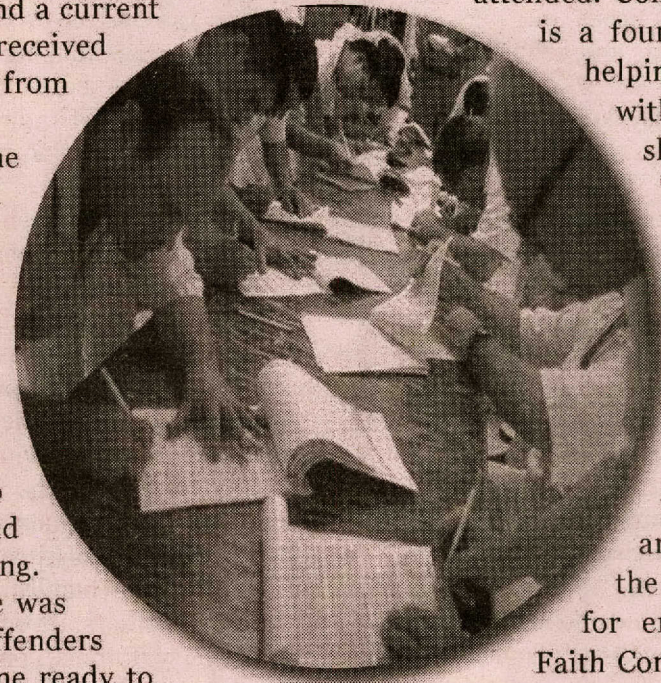
Their motto is: "There are no shortcuts to successful reentry."

Another vendor, Work Faith Connections, offers transitioning men and women tools for a new life through work and faith. P. Taul, D. Thomas and M. Murphy explained the eligibility requirements for enrollment into the Work Faith Connections crisis center and described their eight-day workshop. Their

intent is to encourage and support an offender's commitment to a new life of integrity.

G. Lane, representing Fertile Ground Christian Transformation Center of Houston, quickly pointed out that the facility is not a halfway house but a family-oriented living center. He also stressed the importance of accountability and said he prays the men discover something new and leave the penitentiary behind permanently. Fertile Ground, under Lane's guidance, has a track record worthy of boasting: a recidivism rate of only seven percent.

For more information about these and other services available to offenders — especially those about to parole — contact the unit chaplain. ➔



Sudoku

Easy

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

Difficult

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