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To Our Readers

By D. Razor Babb, Feature Reporter

WELCOME TO THE July *Mule Creek Post* insert for the *San Quentin News*. Fresh from the recent colon cancer screening town hall gatherings on Facilities D and E, we're reminded that informed medical care professionals advise that annual cancer screenings are recommended after age 45. If you have concerns about other cancers, specific testing of your kidney, thyroid, liver, etc., can be ordered by your primary care physician.

We're looking forward to the one-year anniversary of the Prison Seminary Program, the first of its kind in California. A celebration is planned with numerous guests invited to the prison. The event will be held on Facility D, August 30. Last year, Secretary of Corrections Jeffery Macomber attended along with several high-profile guests from faith groups and corrections departments in California and Louisiana.

Joseph Haytas, author of *36 Strategies to Suitability* has written another book on parole board preparation. *Inside Out: From Doing Life to Reclaiming Your Life* is available on Amazon.com. Haytas' column on parole suitability appears monthly in the *Post* and includes board preparation tips and excerpts from each chapter.

There is talk of reinstituting the Incarcerated Journalist Training Program at Mule Creek. The 10-week course covers basic reporting and writing skills and provides introductory journalism basics for future reporters. The search for a sponsor is underway with hopes of an updated version of the workbook to be provided for new students.

On October 31, the inaugural Mule Creek Marathon is scheduled to run on Facility E. Numerous runners are in training and plan to compete, including members of Mule Creek custody staff, and possibly outside visiting runners.

We look forward to news from where you're at. Submission guidelines are on page 4.



The Land Together program brings life and color to the gray of Facility D. From Left: Standing—David Grey, Jill Plumb, Rande Crissinger, Joanna Cote, Kevin Wyman, James Collins, Margot Reisner, Alanna Aubry, R. Pearce Wagener, Michael Naranjo, Vince Yarbrough, R-Ché Archuleta, Rogelio Avalos. Kneeling—Aorrell Burrell, Adrian Torres, James Hill. (J. Davis / Mule Creek Post)

Guardian of Gardens Visits MCSP

By Fred Munch, Post Columnist

RESIDENTS ARE FAMILIAR with the Garden of Hope on Facility D at the Mule Creek State Prison. They see the planters filled with flowers, herbs, and vegetables as they're walking laps. What can't be seen is the classroom session each week in which students cultivate their “inner” gardens.

On March 5, 2025, the group led by Land Together coordinator Jill Plumb was seated in a circle for the check-in. Everyone answered the question she posed, “What is alive in me?” Afterwards, she announced they would be filling a new planter box outside the building with soil just as the dump truck arrived bearing a load of crucial black cargo. Each week, the planter boxes outside education receive a new saying written in chalk



Margot Reisner and Ronald Lanphear attend one of the planter boxes throughout Facility D. (J. Davis / Mule Creek Post)

on the side, such as “You're never too old to sprout,” “Every thorn has a purpose,” and “Everyone has a blossom in their life.”

Plumb led a breathing meditation, read a short piece on breath, and said a prayer for the life it gives to plants and animals. Then the group took a break and drank a specially brewed tea made exclusively with herbs from the garden. It was hot, soothing, and flavorful, with a hint of mint and lemon verbena. While they savored the herbal beverage, several read from the journals where they record thoughts, feelings, and observations from garden experiences.

Next, Alanna Aubry gave a Vision Tree presentation, where she passed around a tree of life drawing with all the big branches cut off and piled as symbols of a previous self, the words “selfishness,” “denial,” and “abuse” on them. Sprouting out of the trunk were new green growths with “family,” “education,” and “recovery” written on them.

After class ended, students worked on moving soil from the pile to fill the new planter using buckets and a cart. While the new slogans were chalked onto the planter, starts of salvia flowers were transplanted into the freshly packed earth. More hard

(continued on page 4)



CSU Seeks Solutions to Funding Challenges

By Jesse Carson, Editor-in-Chief

IN 2023, THE California State University, Dominguez Hills campus decided to reboot its master's degree program for incarcerated students, which has provided an education to hundreds over the past 40 years. With the recent increase in bachelor's degrees awarded in prisons throughout the state, making a master's degree available to incarcerated students was the next logical step.

Funding, however, was an issue to solve. The state waives tuition for those in prison working toward associate degrees through community colleges, and Pell grants are available to students working toward a bachelor's. But for a student seeking to earn their master's degree, there are no funding opportunities.

“We're the first ones to offer a program like this,” says program director Dr. Matthew Luckett, “so there is no funding ecosystem that exists for it. We need to build it from scratch.”

Luckett found a solution in the state's Depart-

ment of Rehabilitation (DOR), an agency dedicated to assisting individuals overcome disabilities to reenter the workforce. Many incarcerated students have impairments that make them eligible for DOR's services, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or a mobility issue. With the help of prison educators, Luckett organized interviews with DOR counselors and covered the tuition for the first cohort of master's students. By the time the second cohort was getting started, however, funding became a problem again. Students accepted into the program who began classes on good faith were told in September 2024 that they were not eligible for services.

“DOR's position is to not offer services to students who are [serving life without the possibility of parole],” says Luckett, “presumably because they are not going to be entering the job market anytime soon.”

“However, our problems with DOR transcend this,” he continues. Many qualified students were

(continued on page 2)

Penanz’s Penance

By Nemo Burgos, Post Reporter

Repent, move on, amend it. / Your whining won’t fix it. / Life is what you make it.

JASON ROSACIA LOOKS out over Facility D as he sings the lyrics above. He’s not preaching; he’s taking us on a journey through his personal demons and coming to terms with his crime. He is sharing the search for redemption through penance.

Prison music is by nature rehabilitative and healing, but in Rosacia’s case, every lyric, every melody, even the band’s name — it’s all about penance. Performing and creating music with his Penanz band mates is just one of the paths to making amends for their crimes. Rosacia is committed to showcasing original music created by the residents here at the Mule Creek State Prison. Like most musicians, he hopes that one day they’ll record their songs. The ultimate goal would be to market songs with proceeds going to victims of crime.

Those seem lofty goals for any band, though not that farfetched for someone with Rosacia’s entertainment industry background. Their signature song, “Life is What You Make It,” was originally an instrumental for a short narrative film Rosacia wrote and produced in 2017. The film was featured at California State University’s Northridge Film Festival. It was even selected for the world-renowned Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. He wrote the lyrics at Mule Creek during a low point of contemplation. He recalls, “I was coming to terms with my crime and I didn’t feel I deserved life.” Ironically, it was actually inspired by a resident endlessly whining about his life sentence. That was the catalyst to some deep, painful reflection and accountability. He sings, “Reflect, get up, move on, amend it.” It’s a cathartic trek toward rehabilitation.

Music has always been a huge part of Rosacia’s life. At 11, he taught himself to play guitar. The piano, drums, and bass quickly followed. By 13, he was recording original music. This was ideal as he creates his own scores and soundtracks as an independent filmmaker. “I used to be in three bands on the street. We played jazz, gospel, and Top 40.” In 2007, he entered a songwriting competition. “The judges loved the melody I made. That inspired me to continue making melodies and writing songs.”

Rosacia has nothing but flowers for his band mates. “They also have their own bands. They’re the most talented and collaborative group I’ve ever worked with.” They love and support each other’s projects, yet he’s adamant about not covering songs or sticking to one genre. “I formed the band so other people can collaborate with me when they have inspirational rehabilitative songs. I didn’t form the band to be exclusive. It’s open to all collaborations. I’ll just be the music arranger. Penanz is a Mule Creek band.”

This soft-spoken artist’s future plans are all aspirations for his rehabilitative self. He is going to continue pursuing his music and film. He’s also working toward his college degree. He’s going to advocate for both victims and those seeking penance. Like the chorus of his song, “Life is What You Make It.”



Penanz members R-Che Archuleta, Glen Kauffman, Jason Rosacia, and Gary Gamino perform on Facility D. (J. Davis / Mule Creek Post)



California’s Resentencing Pilot Program: The Final Report

By Dale Hurd, Post Reporter

California’s pilot program allowing prosecutors to look back and remedy unjust sentences, Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing (PIR), was established to support and evaluate a collaborative approach to exercising the prosecutorial resentencing discretion authorized by Penal Code §§1170 and 1172. Nine counties were selected to participate in the program: Los Angeles, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Riverside, Contra Costa, San Diego, Yolo, Merced, and Humboldt.

FOR THE NINE counties participating in the Prosecutor Initiated Resentencing (PIR) Pilot Program, 1,146 case reviews were undertaken resulting in 174 individuals being released from prison. The pilot ran from Sept. 1, 2021, until Jan. 31, 2025, during which time \$28 million was spent implementing the program, mostly for personnel salaries.

The Rand Corp., a nonprofit research organization based in Santa Monica, California, was selected by the state legislature to independently evaluate the pilot program. Rand issued its final report in February 2025. The report summarizes the results of Rand’s analysis of the pilot program data. The final report notes, “Cases involving third-strike sentences were a clear priority of PIR. Only 7% of the individuals incarcerated in state prison in the pilot counties are serving third-strike sentences, but such cases accounted for 43% of all cases referred for resentencing.”

Key factors hindering the program are a less-supportive political environment, staffing shortages, and a shortfall in reentry planning. Final report recommendations are to develop a formal protocol governing interactions between the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and counties; a formal protocol regulating counties’ access to prisoners’ documentation and to prisoners themselves; formal training for county staff relating to the review process; and greater emphasis on the process of reentry planning. Subsequent research will follow the recidivism outcomes of prisoners resentenced under the program.

Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing (PIR) Pilot Program						
Reduction in Sentence	Reduced 10 Years or Less	Reduced 10 to 15 Years	Reduced 15 to 20 Years	Reduced 20 to 40 Years	Reduced More Than 40 Years	Reduced from LWOP / Condemned
Number of Individuals	70	37	40	38	22	17

(from **CSU Seeks Solutions**, pg. 1)

unable to reach their DOR counselors to have their eligibility interviews within the 60 days required by the agency, leading to students’ inability to be assured of funding assistance. The university registered students anyway, having faith that the DOR promises of funding would come through, only to find that they would not; “as a result those students had negative balances on their accounts,” shares Luckett. “We were barely able to fundraise enough money to offset these balances. The delays created a lot of anxiety for our students and problems for our administrators.”

As a general rule, Luckett says, the DOR focuses on supporting individuals who will be able to reenter the workforce within about three years. Incarcerated students with release dates or parole hearings much beyond this window, or those without either, are unlikely to receive services.

“My mistake was believing that they [DOR] would give us, and more importantly our students, more time to prove this program is successful,” he says. “It’s a shame that this state government administration, for all its talk about prison education, did not have the courage to see it through.” He

remains hopeful, however. (continued on page 4)



 [jstor.org/site/reveal-digital/American-prison-newspapers/mulecreekpost-30018421/?so=item_title_str_asc](https://www.jstor.org/site/reveal-digital/American-prison-newspapers/mulecreekpost-30018421/?so=item_title_str_asc)

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Administrative EditorAW E. Pedersen
Supervising EditorJ. Iniguez
PublisherJ. Mitchell
Media Specialists.....M. Johnson, H. Kim

Additional Research
Pamela Cipriotti, Sandra Viens Davis, Mary Anne Ellis-Jammal, Claudia Pérez, Prayer Warriors Alliance

Columnists
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Spanish ReporterFabián García
Reporters
Nemo Burgos, Dale Hurd, Jayson Rosacia, Dortell Williams

Contributors
Herbert Gene Ervin Jr., Alex Rosales

The Mule Creek Post • Mule Creek State Prison • % MCIC Associate Warden • P.O. Box 409090 • Ione, CA 95640
www.ledger.news (“Archives” tab) • <https://fliphtml5.com/bookcase/zudxq> • on the GTL tablet (Facility Messages app)

The Mule Creek Post’s mission is to present content and messaging that encourages rehabilitation and pro-social values, and enhances a sense of community, creativity, and positivity.



The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the contributing writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the facility or the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

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A New Kind of Hard Time

Making the decision to “drop out” from mainline population to PC/SNY/NDPF is not an easy choice, and many individuals resisted the move for up to several decades. This series explores the reasons individuals chose to remain in the stressful and toxic environment for as long as they did; what prompted them to change; what the actual process looked like for them; and what they see as the benefits and drawbacks of being on “the other side.”

Taking the Responsibility to Change

By Herbert Gene Ervin Jr., Mule Creek State Prison

HELLO, MY NAME is Gino Ervin. Here in these few words, I offer a glimpse into how I ended up behind these prison walls, living a life filled with darkness and pain. It’s probably a story not so different from other women or men, formerly or currently incarcerated.

Sometimes it’s hard living alongside others who have not even started addressing the personal issues that placed them here. Even at the ages of some of the men here, you will come across someone trying to get around things and creating problems for everyone. Just the other day, I was faced with a challenge. I thought that I was going to have to deal with it the old-fashioned way. However, I made a decision not to behave like I once did.

Before entering prison for murdering William, I never had a healthy relationship. It all started while in my mother’s womb before I was able to take my first breath of air; I was born addicted to drugs because of the decisions my biological parents made in their lives. It didn’t help them any by having their own struggles with mental health, and the physical and sexual abuse they experienced in their lives. I was addicted to heroin from birth until two months old. After this, I was moved over a dozen times into different foster homes. Throughout these moves, my sister and I were malnourished, neglected, physically and sexually abused by the hands that were supposed to protect us — the hands of my foster mother and her son.

Growing up in foster care wasn’t pretty. A lot of what was inflicted into my life was direct learned behavior and, trust me, it really wasn’t the best examples a child should see. As a young teenager, I thought that I wasn’t fitting in with everyone else, at least the good kids, so I started hanging out with the kids who were cutting classes. All that did was cause me to become more dysfunctional and make more poor decisions, which set me up to be involved in criminal behavior. As a young man at the age of 19, I com-



mitted the crime of murder by taking the life of a man who didn’t deserve it.

When I got to prison, I continued to put up walls and wear a fake mask that said I was the hardest dude there. I was actually scared of all the violence that I was seeing on a daily basis. So, instead of becoming a victim, I started hanging around gang members so that I wouldn’t be alone. But that choice only made my situation and life within prison walls even more stupid and difficult.

As time went on, I started to develop a change in my thinking. I also noticed that others were making the decision to participate in a program called a non-designated programming facility. In this program, guys like me are given an opportunity to put down our old beliefs that we kept with us for so long; that kind of belief where I can’t allow another man to see me cry or see me weak just because I don’t want to be involved anymore with the nonsense.

Well, in 2016, I decided to change my life and work on myself. I wanted to be the best person I knew was deep down inside of me. I came to this side so that I could explore who I was at the time of my crime and why I committed my crime. I worked to become the man I am today, and I continue this work to be an even better man when I am back in my community and society. Being at Mule Creek has allowed me to develop into a person of understanding who is responsible for everything that I have done wrong. While here, I have found that there are many who have been in the same situation as me while growing up. We were all wounded little boys and girls who became victims at the hands of people who said they loved us — but showed different.

Here at Mule Creek, I started going to groups like CHILD, Healthy Relationships, GRIP, anger management, and so many others. These groups allowed me to explore my emotions and pain; they showed me how to start the healing process, and my transformation was on its way. I no longer needed to walk around thinking that I had to be hard. I experienced for the first time other men who simply wanted to be good people — just as I wanted it for me.

Now, I’m able to talk about my responsibility and accountability for why I committed my crime and the harm I caused. If it wasn’t for the opportunity that the CDCR provided me to come to a facility like Mule Creek, I never would have been able to open up and change. I just want to say “thank you” to the department, its staff, and all the other people who made it possible.

GRIP Provides a Path Home from Prison

By Alex Rosales, Mule Creek State Prison

CALIFORNIA’S 100,000-PLUS incarcerated citizens desperately need to get home. But, “home isn’t a building without bars,” says Jacques Verduin, the founder of the Guiding Rage Into Power (GRIP) program, “it’s a path of living in integrity, with compassion, as master of your own decision-making process.”

As of January 2024, more than 1,500 people in eight California state prisons have taken the GRIP path home, even before leaving prison. Seven hundred and fifty graduated the program and subsequently returned to their communities. Of the released graduates, only 1.71% reoffended.

Now, with the release of his new book, *Leaving Prison Before You Get Out: A Transformational Healing Journey for Incarcerated People to Learn How to Guide Rage Into Power (GRIP)* (Sounds True, 2024), Verduin makes it easier for more and more incarcerated citizens to get home. *Leaving Prison Before You Get Out* is the GRIP program’s step-by-step instruction manual that helps participants develop awareness, process pain and trauma, understand the roots of their violent behavior, and gain empathy for their victims and survivors.

The GRIP program and path home can be traced back to 2011, when it began as an in-person class to help offenders stop their violence at the California State Prison, San Quentin. Taking this “difficult yet rewarding” path, says Verduin, “will make you a member of the GRIP tribe of dedicated peacemakers.” A peacemaker, or “wounded healer,” as Verduin describes it, “is someone who has gained insight into the roots of their violence by having done their own healing and uses this wisdom for the benefit of others.”

Trevor Heard and Jose Herrera are wounded healers who, as incarcerated individuals, co-facilitate the GRIP program at the Mule Creek State Prison on Facility E. Each year, a new cohort is formed that consists of 30 to 35 participants who were interviewed and selected by outside facilitators to be part of the GRIP tribe. During this selection process, potential tribe members express their courage and willingness to be vulnerable among a group of others as they unpack past traumas. Tribe members are continu-

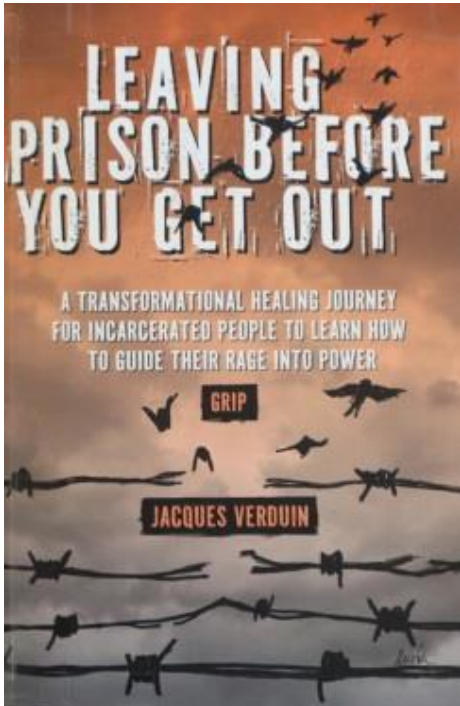
ously required to practice patience, understanding, and compassion for self and others.

When asked about the new book, Heard spoke about a time many years ago when GRIP program materials were bundles of photocopies in plastic binders. These were “awkward” and presented in pairs, he recalls being told, so “many people forgot one or the other.” With the new book, he adds, “the curriculum is combined in one, and has been made simple to read and understand.” Nothing has been overlooked. “All the GRIP cards are at the back of the book, so they can’t get lost,” he adds with excitement.

Herrera said his favorite part of the curriculum is cultivating mindfulness, specifically with emotions that are instinctual. “Love,” he says, “is an instinctual emotion that people should recognize and understand.”

When asked about one takeaway he hopes participants will get from completing the GRIP program, Herrera hopes participants will learn to recognize their emotions and stop unwanted behavior. He celebrates the idea that participants can learn to “stop their violence by using tools, like Q-TIP and walking away.” Q-TIP is an acronym for Quit Taking It Personal, a strategy tribe members use to reframe a situation and decrease the likelihood of it escalating to violence.

Herrera says Mule Creek’s next cohort of GRIP program participants started March 15, 2025, and “they will be the first to receive a copy of the new book.” The GRIP alumni group, which is comprised of all GRIP graduates and tribe members at Mule Creek, received a copy in March as well, says Herrera. All GRIP tribe members will have their own copy to use as a guide and reference as they uphold their commitment to be peacemakers.



Call for “A New Kind of Hard Time” Submissions

Do you have a story similar to Gino’s about making the decision to leave the mainline? Are you interested in sharing that story, with the hopes of encouraging others to make the jump? The Mule Creek Post is seeking writers who can talk about the reason they chose to stay on the mainline for as long as they did, what prompted the change, how the process went, and what they see as the benefits and drawbacks of making the decision. We are not looking for war stories or the names of victims or perpetrators of violence, but first-person accounts of what life was like and what contributed to the decisions to stay and to eventually leave. Interested writers should keep their submission under 750 words, include information about how long you served on the mainline and how long ago you left, and answer the question “What do you wish younger you knew?” Please send your pitch to the address on page 4.

Sources: Jacques Verduin. *Leaving Prison Before You Get Out: A Transformational Healing Journey for Incarcerated People to Learn How to Guide Rage Into Power*, Sounds True, 2024. Adam Hochschild, “Prison Break,” *Mother Jones*, vol. 50, no. 2, Mar. 2025.

Are you a GRIP graduate preparing for release, with questions about reentry, etc.?

GRIP’s reentry coordinator position is open; contact BonaFide at (415) 659-8406





My Sister's Fishing Disability

By F. Orlando Wells, Post Columnist

HAVING SPENT MY early childhood in an urban setting, I was not exposed to outdoor leisure activities. I was adopted at 9 years old and was moved to a small but growing cow town. There was plenty of countryside to explore, and I spent much of my time getting acquainted with outdoor life.

My adopted father was a good man and found out I'd never learned to fish, so he piled us kids in the car, drove to K-Mart, and bought us fishing gear and tackle. We got back home and he showed us how to tie a weight onto the line to teach us how to cast. After all of us were set up, he lined us up and showed us how to release the button on the reel at the right time to cast out. My brothers and I got fairly good in just a few casts, but our sister was a complete disaster. We boys continued to practice until I cast too far and my weight went through the neighbor's front window, which ended our lesson.

A week later, Dad again piled us into the car and we were off for our first fishing expedition at Austin State Park. There were several places to fish, one of which was a starter pond for kids fishing for the first time. Essentially, you could pretty much put anything on your hook and you'd catch a fish. My brothers and I immediately started pulling up fish after fish, filled with excitement and joy at our success.

After a few minutes, our sister came to take her turn at catching some fish. She drew her arm back preparing to cast, and threw it forward, never checking behind her. Our neighbor's son chose just that moment to walk behind my sister just as she jerked the pole forward to cast, and she snagged him right through his left ear lobe. Not realizing that she'd hooked the boy, my sister began to violently yank on her pole, jerking the boy's head with every pull. My brothers and I turned around just in time to witness this hilarious scene unfold as she yanked over and over, each time the boy would just say "Ow. Ow. Ow," as she tugged away at what she thought was her hook stuck in a tree, and that by yanking she would somehow free it.

We were in hysterics. I was on the ground laughing so hard that I dropped my pole, which had a fish on it. My fish and pole scooted into the water so I lost both because I couldn't stop laughing long enough to retrieve my gear.

Our fathers came to investigate the hullabaloo and discovered the issue fairly quickly; they tried to maintain their composure. The boy was crying by this time, and the laughing ceased as we all watched our fathers try to figure out how to re-

move the treble hook from the little boy's earlobe. It was then I noticed that the hook had perfectly pierced his ear for an earring. Our dads finally decided to cut the barb and were able to remove the hook, all without laughing, but we knew. My sister doesn't fish to this day, but I guess you could say her first cast caught a whopper.

I think fondly of those days, especially now that my dad passed some years ago. It's funny the things you remember when you don't fixate on all the negative experiences anymore; you find that your life hasn't always been as bad as you made it in your head.

Keith Evans

Out of Love

By Marty Williams, Production Editor

KEITH EVANS DOESN'T have a degree. He's a veritable mountain man, preferring the rural, rocky hills of northern California to any town or city. But he prepares guitar and music students for university undergraduate degrees, from bachelor to master, and his students go on to become teachers in universities as well as prison. For him, this is a better laurel than any degree could grant.

Evans has only been with the Williams James Association for two months, as part of the Arts In Corrections program. Before that he taught at the Sierra Conservation Center, where one of his students, a San Francisco State University master's postgraduate, is currently running his own workshops.

His journey with the guitar began at the age of 9, a gift from his father. Coming from a rough childhood (like many artists), Evans found refuge in the guitar. Later in life he became an electrical engineer, leading to doing sound engineering with Alesis Corp. He played in bands as a young man, but has not performed professionally in 40 years. Teaching in prison has been an act of intention; he doesn't see criminals, he sees students. Music was a gift to his personal pain growing up, and he sees a great deal of it inside the prisons, people who are in — and act out of — their pain. He wants to bring music to that.

Regardless of one's faith, Evans considers joy evidence of spirituality. When he is in the presence of people in prison discovering joy through creativity, connection, and the sense of self value from learning a new thing, he feels validated by his choice to come here.



Keith Evans (J. Davis / Mule Creek Post)

Keith Evans runs a guitar workshop every Wednesday in the Facility E Hobby Room, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. If you are interested in learning guitar, or just honing existing skills, fill out and turn in a Form 2016 to the CRM's office. He also donates musical insight and instruction on page 29 of the Mule Creek Post.

(from CSU Seeking Solutions, pg. 2)

"It was never our intention to solely and always rely exclusively on DOR support for our students," he shares. "Our plan from the beginning was to cultivate a heterogeneous and multifaceted funding stream for this program." Luckett describes several options available to students and those wishing to support them.

Tuition is just over \$1,000 per class, meaning a student could graduate for about \$11,000 over a period of two to five years. "A company, organization, or benefactor can fund one student's entire tuition to this program for \$5000 a year," Luckett says. "Or, if someone was feeling particularly generous, they could fund it forever with a \$5 million endowment that would render all of this discussion moot." He also explains a company could fund a student's education, offering a work internship, and after their release use the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to offset the tuition cost "while gaining a well-trained, hard-working employee." Local and regional organizations can also create scholarship opportunities to help a single student each year. Loved ones of students have already set up a GoFundMe page, [GoFundMe.com/f/Help-Incarcerated-Students-Continue-Their-Studies](https://www.gofundme.com/f/Help-Incarcerated-Students-Continue-Their-Studies), to fund the program.

"All of this is to say that there are a lot of different ways to potentially fund this program, because for most non-incarcerated folks there is already a system for providing different kinds of funding for students," Luckett says. "We just need to translate that diversity and richness of options to this underserved yet highly deserving population."

Dr. Luckett encourages anyone with a desire to help solve this problem to contact him directly at mluckett@csudh.edu.

(from Guardian of Gardens, pg. 1)

work ensued in moving the remaining soil to the garden where it will be added to the beds and planters on another day.

On this day, special guest Margot Reisner joined the circle to talk about Land Together, the nonprofit where she has worked for the last seven years. She is the leader of the Northern California garden program for prisoners that started 20 years ago at the California State Prison in San Quentin. Land Together now has projects at nine California prisons, including the California Health Care Facility in Stockton, the California State Prison–Solano, the Avenal State Prison, and the California State Prison–Los Angeles County in Lancaster. The nonprofit provides curriculum for the classroom and funding for salaries and infrastructure.

Reisner became involved with judicial reform before leaving high school where she found herself in trouble often. She told the class that if it wasn't for white privilege, she would have ended up behind bars. Hence, it was easy for her to empathize with the incarcerated, especially since her grandparents were interned in the camps during the Holocaust. She shared a bit of her private life, that she lives and works on a farm where she tends 50 fruit trees she planted herself. Still in her 20s, she's an impressive young woman — idealistic and energetic with long black braids and a friendly smile — a gifted guardian of a greener, more fruitful and just future for California and beyond.



(J. Davis / Mule Creek Post)

MULE CREEK POST Submissions

Freelance writers, staff, and others may submit articles or material to the Mule Creek Post, % MCIC AW's Office, P.O. Box 409090, Lone, CA 95640, or by interdepartmental mail if living at MCSP. Submissions may be edited for length (please keep under 600 words) and content and become the property of the Mule Creek Post (authors retain intellectual rights to original material). When submitting legal news articles, include source material documentation. Include your name, CDC#, and address.

For more information regarding the Board of Parole Hearings, write to:

BOARD OF PAROLE HEARINGS

P.O. Box 4036
Sacramento, CA 95812-4036

(916) 445-4072
www.cdcr.ca.gov/BOPH

or read the *California Parole Hearing Process Handbook* in the Free section of your state-issued tablet, under the "Newspapers" tab in the Facility Information app.

The Prayer Warriors Alliance (PWA) is a non-denominational organization of volunteers who will assist anyone of any faith with research. The PWA charges no fee; return postage (up to 20 pages per request) is paid by PWA. See the July 2023 edition of the Mule Creek Post for more information about the PWA.

PWA follows all departmental mail restrictions and guidelines. PWA cannot search for legal or case information or individuals. Donations are gladly accepted.

Prayer Warriors Alliance
P.O. Box 28352
San Diego, CA 92198-0352
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