

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

There is so much to be done, and so much that we can do—rather than we COULD do—if more members were to get actively involved. We would love to see CURE accomplish even more, but we need actively involved members to work on planning, organizing, and on keeping track of what's happening and what needs to happen next.

Telephone numbers: Portland: [503-977-9979](tel:503-977-9979)/ Outside Portland: [1-866-357-CURE \(2873\)](tel:1-866-357-CURE). For information about Support Group Meetings, Orientations to ODOC and to Release (Multnomah County), leave a message and someone WILL call you back. We are not able to accept collect calls.

1631 NE Broadway #460, Portland, OR 97232 or tbs2k2@comcast.net, or www.oregoncure.org.

MEMBERSHIP in Oregon CURE provides:

- ☆ a purpose and pathway for achieving safer communities;
- ☆ a voice to advocate for improvements in the criminal justice system;
- ☆ information and resources to support local and national efforts to create safety, prosocial skills and attitudes, and hope for incarcerated citizens;
- ☆ opportunities to gain knowledge and skills to help others.

Prisoner\$3.00/year
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Oregon CURE
1631 NE Broadway #460
Portland, OR 97232

OREGON C.U.R.E.

CITIZENS UNITED FOR REHABILITATION OF ERRANTS

SUMMER/FALL 2006

VOLUME 27

CURE International Convention

WASHINGTON, D.C.

June 24-27, 2006

By: Gretchen Hite

Oregon CURE members Cindy Van Loo, Mike Van Loo, Gretchen Hite, Kris Vala, and Sandi Meyer attended the CURE International Convention in Washington, D.C., June 24-27. CURE founders, Charlie and Pauline Sullivan, laid the groundwork to prepare CURE members from 35 states to meet with their respective state's senate and congressional delegation on a number of prison-related issues before the House and Senate.



Oregon CURE members (left to right) Kris Vala, Gretchen Hite, Sandi Meyer, Mike Van Loo, and Cindy Van Loo meet with David Wu's Legislative Director Brian Branton (second from right) while in Washington D.C. June 26.

We chose two of the bills to highlight during our meetings with the legislative directors or staff members from the offices of Senators Ron Wyden and Gordon Smith, and our Congressional members Darlene Hooley, Peter DeFazio, Greg Walden, David Wu, and Earl Blumenauer. We presented HR 4466: The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, and HR 1704: The Second Chance Act.

The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act (HR 4466) would prescribe maximum uniform rates for interstate calls, require debit and collect calling, prohibit commissions paid to prisons and jails, and allow more than one provider so there is a choice for consumers and NO provider would be able to block a call if there is not a contract with the local exchange carrier.

(The Second Chance Act (HR 1704 and S 1934) is summarized by Cindy Van Loo in this newsletter.)

The international segment of the convention included the unveiling of "Presentation of Dignity of the Individual," a 120-page report about prison conditions in the 35 countries of the Americas. Two gentlemen with the Organization of the American States and Charlie Sullivan discussed the organization and the need for independent oversight. Alvin Bronstein, with the International Board of Penal Reform, advised that, at this time, the United States has no independent outside inspection of jails and prisons. All other nations have an inspector, and facilities can be inspected without notice. The American Correction Association sets standards with written policies, however, no one checks to see that these policies are followed. It was agreed that there should be a protocol to inspect prisons and that staff needs to be trained in international human rights.

Despite record rainfall, which made national news and which affected some aspects of the conference, Oregon CURE members agreed it was a productive conference and were encouraged by their visits with Oregon lawmakers. Oregon CURE plans to maintain these very important relationships with lawmakers by setting up quarterly meetings with as many of them as possible to keep the needs and concerns of our organization visible. Since attending the conference, representatives of Oregon CURE have met with Earl Blumenauer's legislative director at his Portland office and have scheduled a tentative appointment with Greg Walden.

"The object of the law is to reform criminals and prevent crime, and not to punish maliciously or from a spirit of revenge."

PRISON SEGREGATION

By Bonnie N.

Segregation of prisoners has become increasingly common over the past 20 years, and indeed has become a permanent measure of punishment or control in the prison environment, bringing with it a myriad of issues. Lockdown and isolation, confinement of a prisoner to his or her cell for 23 to 24 hours a day, has been used as a temporary measure of punishment. The psychological effects of confinement in these segregation units is counter-productive, often causing violence inside facilities and contributing to recidivism after release. The units are known by a variety of names: Management Control Units, Controlled Movement Units, and Disciplinary Segregation Units to name a few. These units rely on sensory deprivation to control inmates. Solitary confinement has long been used as a form of discipline for infractions of prison rules.

“Separating dangerous or vulnerable individuals from the general prison population is part of running a safe correctional facility. In some systems around the country, however, the drive for safety, coupled with public demand for tough punishment, has had perverse effects: Prisoners who should be housed at safe distances from particular individuals or groups of prisoners end up locked in their cells 23 hours a day, every day, with little opportunity to be productive and prepare for release.” (Gibbons, John J. Katzenbach, Nicholas de B. Commission Co-Chairs. 2006 Confronting Confinement: A Report of the Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons.)

In many cases, prisoners live in cells the size of small bathrooms, with nothing more than a toilet, bed, and stool attached to the ground. They may or may not have a window. Restrictions include lack of educational or therapeutic programming, solitary exercise, limited visits behind a barrier, and lack of telephone calls. In some areas, mail from family and friends as well as reading material is severely restricted or censored. Isolation and sensory deprivation aggravate or even cause psychiatric symptoms. “Prisoners subjected to prolonged isolation may experience depression, despair, anxiety, rage, claustrophobia, hallucinations, problems with impulse control, and an impaired ability to think, concentrate, or remember.” (Kamel, Rachael, Kerness, Bonnie 2003, “The Prison Inside the Prison: Control Units, Supermax Prisons, and Devices of Torture. A Justice Visions Briefing Paper. Philadelphia 2003.)

Recommendations made by Confronting Confinement: A Report of The Commission on Safety and Abuse in America’s Prisons regarding segregation include:

- ◆ Make segregation a last resort and a more productive form of confinement, and stop releasing people directly from segregation to the streets. Tighten admissions criteria and safely transition people out of segregation as soon as possible. And go further: To the extent that safety allows, give prisoners in segregation opportunities to fully engage in treatment, work, study, and other productive activities, and to feel part of a community.
- ◆ End conditions of isolation. Ensure that segregated prisoners have regular and meaningful human contact and are free from extreme physical conditions that cause lasting harm.
- ◆ Protect mentally ill prisoners. Prisoners with a mental illness that would make them particularly vulnerable to conditions in segregation must be housed in secure therapeutic units. Facilities need rigorous screening and assessment tools to ensure the proper treatment of prisoners who are both mentally ill and difficult to control.

The cost of housing prisoners in segregation units is higher and its misuse works against the process of rehabilitating people--threatening public safety. The state of Oregon has released 945 prisoners from solitary confinement to the streets in the past five years. Of these, 757 were released from disciplinary segregation units. “They are released lacking basic necessities, such as food, jobs and housing. ... Rule breaking inmates ... lose their access to transitional services.” (Gustafson, Alan 2006, “From solitary to the streets: Abrupt transition puts public and inmates at risk, data show. Statesman Journal, 16 July.)

In closing, while security and control must exist in segregation, so must dignity and mutual respect between prisoners and officers. Paramount is officer recruiting and retention, transition services for inmates approaching their release, and reduction of overcrowding. Inmates, whether in general population or segregation, must have the opportunity for production and rehabilitation as the majority of them will be released back into society.

Gary Kilmer is New CRCI Superintendent

Gary Kilmer, former administrator of DOC Labor Relations, has been appointed the new superintendent of Columbia River Correctional Institution, effective August 28. He succeeds Michael Gower, who was named Institutions Administrator in June. Oregon CURE is looking forward to working with Gary in his new role through the Prison Advisory Committee as well as volunteering at CRCI for special events held for fathers completing the parenting program.

Oregon CURE SUPPORT GROUPS – Monthly Meetings

For Adult Family Members & Friends of the Incarcerated

Portland 3 rd Tuesday 6:30 pm – 7:45 pm Fairview Columbia Library 1520 NE Village St.	Salem 1 st Saturday 11:00 am–12:30 pm Call for Location	Beaverton 1 st Wednesday 7:00 pm–8:30 pm Beaverton Community Center 12350 SW 5th, Suite 100	Eugene 1 st Thursday 7 pm–8:30 pm Deb’s Restaurant 1675 Franklin Blvd.	Medford 2nd Tuesday 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm Medford Library 205 South Central
Free Parking 503-666-8432 (LaRae)	503-873-4363 (Aba Gayle)	Free Parking 503-350-0236 (Gretchen)	Free Parking 541-935-1182 (Ken)	Free Parking 541-944-3304 (Sam)



SUGGESTED READING

The Perpetual Prisoner Machine, How America Profits from Crime, by Joel Dyer. Westview Press (2000)

“The Perpetual Prisoner Machine is a bold and deep-probing analysis of our criminal justice system. It raises serious questions about crime and punishment which reflect not just on our prisons, but on our profit-driven society.” Howard Zinn

A Small Candlelight between the Darkness, by Betty Jean Nobles. Infinity Publishing. (2005)

Inspired by actual events in the life of the author and her son, Larry Thompson, this book takes mother and son through one day at a time as Larry is currently serving time in a Pennsylvania state prison. They are thankful even as they approach each new moment with a great deal of uncertainty. Simply mandating longer prison sentences without programs that meet the physical, mental health, and educational needs for individuals will not solve the problems associated with crime. The current Criminal Justice System and the Prison System do not go far enough to rehabilitate or educate inmates.

Finding Freedom: Writings from Death Row, by Jarvis Jay Masters. Padma Publishing. (1997)

...“like a letter from an old friend--no defensiveness, no complaining, no posturing—Masters’ writing lets us know what the timeless spiritual journey feels like--our journey--from within the walls of one of the nation's most notorious prisons. I wish everyone in America would read this book.” Bo Lozoff, Author of We're All Doing Time.

“Finding Freedom is a deeply moving, life-affirming memoir written from the netherworld of San Quentin’s Death Row. Offering us stories that are sometimes sad, funny, poignant, revelatory, frightening, soul-stirring, painful and uplifting, Jarvis Masters traces his remarkable spiritual growth in an environment where despair and death are constant companions. His book is a testament to the tenacity of the human spirit and the talent of a fine writer.” Robert Allen, Senior Editor of The Black Scholar, Coeditor of Brotherman: The Odyssey of Black Men in America.



– Our Thanks –

Oregon CURE hereby expresses our sincere gratitude to Metro Print of Portland for its donation of printing services: With their help we are able to do more with our resources.



503.252.4009 • Fax 503.252.4086

14105 NE Airport Way • Portland, OR 97230
info@metroprint.net • www.metroprint.net

CURE Presentation at Portland State University

By: Jan Singleton

At the invitation of Songcha Bowman, of Multicultural Counseling Services, and instructor in Portland State's Women's Studies Summer Special Studies Program, Oregon CURE Steering Committee members, Cindy Van Loo, Gretchen Hite, and Jan Singleton, on August 5, 2006, participated in Ms. Bowman's class entitled "Community Advocacy and Activism." Cindy, Gretchen, and Jan spoke first about how they became involved with Oregon CURE, then spoke concerning the specific services they provide to the organization. Cindy explained the orientations she leads in conjunction with an Oregon Department of Corrections official for families and friends of newly incarcerated prisoners, Gretchen told of her involvement with the various Oregon CURE support groups, and Jan spoke about the many letters Oregon CURE receives from prisoners throughout the United States and her efforts to respond to each one. After the presentations, the class members participated in a lively question and answer session – which went overtime.

After breaking for lunch, Aba Gayle, an at-large member of Oregon CURE's Steering Committee, presented her story to the class. You could have heard a pin drop as she, over the 40 minutes allotted to her, took the class on her journey from anger, rage, and lust for revenge to forgiveness and eventually to her visits with the man who murdered her daughter as he sits on death row in San Quentin prison. (To read Aba Gayle's story online, see www.catherineblountfdn.org or, if you do not have access to a computer, write to Oregon CURE and we will print it out and send it to you.)

The presentation was well-received, and Ms. Bowman has asked Oregon CURE to participate in her class again next year.

Change of Address

Please contact us if you have a change of address and would like to continue receiving our newsletters. You may either write us at 1631 N.E. Broadway, #460, Portland, OR 97232, or call us at (503) 977-9979 (Portland area) or 1-866-357-CURE (2873) (outside Portland).

☆ STEERING COMMITTEE ☆

Cindy Van LooChair
Sandi MeyerVice Chair
Terry SteinRecording Secretary
Jan SingletonCorresponding Secretary
Judy FarrellTelecommunications
Coordinator

Members At Large

Dana Anderson, Mike Van Loo, Aba Gayle,
Tammy Anderson, Mike Giertych,
Gretchen Hite, Kris Vala

SECOND CHANCE ACT (H.R. 1704 and S. 1934)

By: Cindy Van Loo

Oregon CURE members Cindy Van Loo, Mike Van Loo, Gretchen Hite, Kris Vala, and Sandi Meyer met with all seven Oregon lawmakers while in Washington D.C. for the International CURE Convention June 24-27 to discuss the federal Second Chance Act (HR 1704 and S 1934). If passed, the bill would inject millions of dollars into re-entry and mentoring programs across the country, which could potentially help some of the 3,000 people in Oregon who will leave prison next year.

The Second Chance Act has 112 co-sponsors in the House and 33 in the Senate, with Earl Blumenauer being the only Oregon representative who has signed on as a co-sponsor. The Second Chance Act will reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and help states and communities better address the large numbers of people returning to communities from prisons and jails. The bill focuses on four key areas: jobs, housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and strengthening families.

The bill has passed the House and is currently before the Senate. Oregon CURE urges you to write to your congressman or senator to ask him or her to sign on as a co-sponsor and to pass the bill this session. You can contact our U.S. Senators and House Representatives at the numbers below:

- Representative Earl Blumenauer (503) 231-2100
- Representative Peter DeFazio (541) 465-6732
- Representative Darlene Hooley (503) 588-9100
- Representative Greg Walden (541) 389-4408 and (541) 776-4646
- Representative David Wu (503) 326-2901
- Senator Gordon Smith (541) 278-1129 and (503) 326-3386
- Senator Ron Wyden (503) 589-4555 and (503) 326-7525

SEX OFFENDER SUPERVISION AND TREATMENT IN MULTNOMAH COUNTY

By: Judy Farrell

There are approximately 900 men and women convicted of sex offenses who are on probation and post-prison supervision in Multnomah County. They are under the supervision of approximately 20 Parole and Probation Officers (PPOs) in the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice who work out of five district offices. PPOs in the Sex Offender Unit have a double responsibility — community safety and providing supervision and service for the offenders. Immediately upon release to Multnomah County, approved housing is established with family, friend, subsidized housing, or single-room-occupancy hotel.

PPOs frequently confer with the Sex Offender Unit Clinical Coordinator, Katie Gotch, who studies the clients' offending histories and behaviors during incarceration. Upon determining treatment needs, Ms. Gotch recommends the appropriate treatment program. Many factors are considered to meet each client's individual special needs, including type and frequency of offense, presence of remorse and behavior during incarceration, level of denial, disabilities, physical or mental illness, psychopathology, and medication.

Sex offender treatment programs vary in their approach. However, cognitive-behavioral treatment is the most widely used treatment model for sex offenders. Cognitive-behavioral therapy focuses on learning to recognize feelings and identify and change thinking errors, which can result in behavioral change. Group therapy is the typical structure for sex offender treatment, although individual therapy may occur for those who do not do well in a group. In view of the focus on public safety, considerable weight is placed upon risk assessments performed by the treatment programs. Risk assessment is the process of identifying the probability or likelihood of future dangerousness or harm, such as a sexual offense. In the last ten years, the relative accuracy of risk assessment has improved substantially as it pertains to sex offenders and their likelihood for sexual reoffense.

In order to be approved by Multnomah County Department of Community Justice and to be used as a recommended referral source, each treatment program must meet strict requirements and standards established by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. There is also a bill being prepared for proposal to the Oregon legislature addressing the certification, regulation, and oversight of the practice of sex offender treatment programs and therapists. Most sex offender treatment programs require two and one-half to three years to complete the treatment components through mandatory weekly attendance in a group or one-on-one. Aftercare programs are also a frequent requirement of sex offender treatment programs.

Some of the standard requirements for sex offenders on post-prison supervision are:

- ◆ Sex offender treatment
- ◆ No contact with minors without PPO approval
- ◆ No contact with the victim(s)
- ◆ No possession of pornography
- ◆ Random polygraph testing
- ◆ Search and seizure
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Paying fees

Each approved sex offender treatment program must address the following:

1. Sexual arousal
2. Anger, stress, anxiety, and impulse control
3. Social relationships and support
4. Reoffense prevention
5. Life skills such as problem solving, money management, employment, and use of leisure time
6. Special needs such as mental illness, medications, and addictions
7. Special issues such as family reunification
8. Identification of key areas for PO monitoring, including establishing safety plans

The goals of treatment for sex offenders include the following:

1. Diminishing attraction to sexually deviant behavior.
2. Developing internal controls consistent with healthy and offense-free lifestyles.
3. Creating and maintaining pro-social attitudes and behaviors.
4. Developing skills in forming and maintaining healthy age-appropriate relationships.
5. Understanding personal risk factors and developing relapse prevention strategies.

Optimal Lifestyles, Inc.

By: Judy Farrell

Optimal Lifestyles, Inc., is one of several programs in Multnomah County that practices a behavioral/cognitive model of therapy for those who have committed sex offenses.

Joy Esch and Sandi Chowning provide therapy for those persons released from prison in Oregon who have served sentences for sexual offenses. Diane Neely-Esch provides hypnosis and counseling therapy for their clients who are also experiencing anxiety and panic disorders. The staff at Optimal Lifestyles believes that their clients have special therapeutic needs related not only to the nature of their offenses, but also to the difficulties they encounter as they reenter the community. The therapeutic environment is accepting and supportive while expecting strict adherence to the program rules. The therapeutic model is cognitive/behavioral, and the group program is structured on an initial psychological and risk assessment followed by eight modules, which usually require two to three years to complete. Individual therapy is also provided in certain circumstances.

The therapeutic goals at Optimal Lifestyles are to support and educate the clients to develop self awareness, respect for self and others, and to provide the behavioral techniques, insights, and capabilities to lead responsible lives in the community.

For more information, you can contact Optimal Lifestyles, Inc., at: 1730 NE 42nd Portland, OR 97213; telephone: 503-284-9512