

OREGON CURE

(Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants)

A newsletter for family and friends of Incarcerated Individuals

Summer 2007 Volume 29

INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEETING:

“Earn to Learn to not Return”

By: Gretchen Hite

The 2007 annual meeting of International CURE was held in Leavenworth, Kansas, May 3-6, 2007.

More than 20 state chapters were in attendance as well as NDRAN (National Death Row Assistance Network) and SORT (Sex Offenders Restored through Treatment).

Highlights of the conference included a tour of a welding company, Zephyr Products, which employs approximately 45 people currently in minimum security at Lansing Correctional Facility. Fred Braun, founder of the Workman Fund, presented his concept of privately held companies' hiring and training people in marketable job skills. Everyone wins -- the employer, the person employed, and the state (in taxes and other fees paid to the state).

We then visited Lansing Correctional Facility and walked through two Prison Industry Employment shops. The first shop monogrammed shirts and sweatshirts; the other was a woodshop that built cabinets.

We also met with six men who are taking college courses through Donnelly College, which has on-site instruction at the prison.

Tom Petersik, a Labor Economist, spoke about the need to propel ex-offenders back into the labor force as if they had never been incarcerated. He said that the best economic boost is productive employment and that post-conviction discrimination needs to be eliminated.

John Linton, the Director of Correctional Educational Association, encouraged employment programs that can channel prison fines into the mainstream economy. He said that work release programs need to be started and partnerships built with community colleges.

Rudy and Betty Cypser, of New York CURE, presented the *Second Edition of the Dignity of the Individual*, which concentrates on prisons in South America.

We're still working on HR 1593 and S 1060, the Reducing Recidivism and Second Chance Act of 2007. This Federal Act would provide competitive grants to promote innovative programs aimed at reducing recidivism rates. Efforts would be focused on post-release housing, education, and job training, substance abuse, mental health services, and mentoring programs – to name a few!

Also, International CURE is still advocating for HR 555, the Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, which would direct the FCC to consider prescribing rules regulating prisoner telephone service rates.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the International CURE staff, in particular, Charlie and Pauline Sullivan, co-founders of CURE, for their constant dedication and sincere efforts in working towards criminal justice reform.

Publication Notice

This newsletter is a publication of Oregon CURE. Oregon CURE is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to reduce crime through criminal justice reform.

The opinions and statements contained in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Steering Committee of Oregon CURE.

Contributions of articles, letters to the editor, notices, etc. are welcome, but may be edited or rejected for space considerations.

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Memberships and Inquiries can be directed to:

Oregon CURE
1631 N.E. Broadway, #460
Portland, OR 97232
Telephone: (503) 977-9979 (Portland area)
1-877-357-CURE (2873) (Outside Portland)
Website: www.oregoncure.org

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A Message From the Chair - - -

By Cindy Van Loo

This past quarter has been a very busy one for me and members of Oregon CURE. On a personal note, I became a grandmother for the first time when our grandson, Jacob, decided to enter the world 10 weeks early on March 24! It was a very scary start, but I am happy to report that Jacob and mom and dad are doing fine and I love my new role as grandma.

While I was completely distracted by our grandson's birth, members of Oregon CURE continued to work hard in my brief absence. I honestly do not know what I would do without my steering committee. They are an awesome group of individuals who do not hesitate to commit to anything I ask of them -- thus, this longest-ever newsletter. I think you will find it full of a little bit of everything and all such good information. We have updates on Federal and State legislation, book reviews, video reviews, upcoming events, past events, information for those who will be released soon, support group information, orientation group information, and the list goes on. My point is that we are a very small group of individuals who accomplish a lot! If you are not part of this group of "do-ers," see the section in this newsletter to sign up to help us.

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming "Annual Board Meeting" on **October 14**, which is open to the public and all Oregon CURE members. Dr. Rachel Hardesty will be our featured speaker and I have heard nothing but good things about her. In addition, we will have raffle items and refreshments to make it all worth your while.

It has been more than two years since our son was released from prison and, while some individuals may think once your loved one is released from prison your work is done, I find that is when your "next" journey begins. There are many issues that released prisoners face when they come out of prison and Oregon CURE is working on these issues, so pay close attention to our newsletter for information, visit our website at www.oregoncure.org, or call us for answers to questions you may have.

Best wishes,

Cindy

Oregon CURE Awarded Metro Grant

By: Cindy Van Loo

Oregon CURE was recently awarded a grant from Metro North Portland Enhancement Committee Funding Program to be used to benefit North Portland neighborhoods. Funds will be used to expand our membership by reaching out to North Portland families who may have a loved one in prison or transitioning back to the community. We hope to help these families develop effective strategies to empower their incarcerated loved ones to make positive changes in their lives that will affect the community and protect the public safety.

**HOME FOR GOOD IN OREGON
REGION VI
(Part three in a series)**

By: Judy Farrell

Clackamas County

Rick German and Chuck Simpson are the two contacts for Home for Good in Oregon in Clackamas County. They represent two organizations that assist those in transition from prison to the community—Home for Good in Oregon and Bridges to Change. Rick and Chuck both visit the prisons to talk with inmates about the assistance they can provide upon release, and often the parole officers will refer to them for clean and sober transitional housing, food, clothing, positive affirmation mentor groups, anger management and job search assistance. They also help newly released prisoners develop positive habits like attending regular AA/NA meetings and obtaining a clean and sober support group. They both participate in the transition fairs in the prisons and are eager to speak with the inmates about their needs.

Rick German: Community Coordinator
207 Seventh Avenue
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-933-2440

Chuck Simpson: Director, Bridges to Change
503-465-2749 Office
503-380-7495

Multnomah County

Because Multnomah County receives the majority of released inmates in Oregon, its Home for Good program is very active. Chaplains and volunteers do “reach-ins” to all the institutions around the state once or twice yearly to discuss the services provided by the program. Following are the contacts for Multnomah County:

Furlton Burns, Regional Chaplain 503-493-9211
Peter Schamanski, Reentry Liaison Volunteer 503-975-5276
Layla Assem, Chaplain 503-449-5098
Mona Brown, Chaplain 971-533-1226
Derek Rasheed, Chaplain 503-280-6646, Ext.249
Wali Lucas, Chaplain 503-975-5276

Mailing address: c/o RAP
1100 NE 28th Ave.
Portland, OR 97232

Inmates who are interested in assistance with release back into the community may request a Home for Good application from their prison chaplain or transition counselor and record their particular needs on the application (such as housing, food stamps, Oregon ID, clothing, transportation). The applications are returned

to the chaplain who sends them to Salem where they are then distributed to each county. Sometimes the HGO volunteers visit or write to the applicant, but it is always a good idea for inmates who want to participate to write to the HGO program in his/her county. It is always helpful to provide information about children and family.

The volunteers are trained and experienced. They are especially sensitive to the fear and stress felt by men and women returning to the community after incarceration. HGO believes that a positive reentry depends on supportive links in the community—church, neighborhood, employer, special programs—and HGO helps with mentoring to provide those links.

Any questions and comments may be directed to Judy Farrell at Oregon CURE, 1631 NE Broadway, Portland, OR 97232, 503-977-9979.

Recommendations from a Prisoner’s Mother

By: Judy Farrell

Because we occasionally receive requests from family members asking us to recommend an attorney for a criminal defense or an appeal, we are publishing a recommendation that came to us from a parent in Multnomah County. Her son is incarcerated in an Oregon prison after receiving a long mandatory sentence which is currently on appeal. She speaks very highly of the appeal attorney, Raymond Tindell, whose office is on N.E. 122nd Street in Portland. She states that his fees are reasonable, his reputation highly rated among his peers, and yes, he returns his calls. She states that he works diligently on appeals in every attempt to shorten the 12 to 18-month time they often take to resolve. Mr. Tindell can be reached at 503.257.9268. His e-mail address is: raytdxlaw@comcast.net

Employing Individuals with Legal Histories

By Gretchen Hite

Better People, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Sexual Abuse Clinic, presented a seminar on Tuesday, June 5, 2007, entitled: ***Employing Individuals with Sexual Offenses: Misconceptions, Controversies and Benefits.*** Local employers were invited to attend and learn about restrictions placed on people who have been convicted of a sex offense and how they can work with community supervision agencies. Panel members represented the states of Oregon and Washington, The Oregon Youth Authority, Multnomah and Washington counties, and two people from the medical field. Better People’s mission is to significantly reduce the rates of recidivism in the Portland Metropolitan Area by helping its clients change their lives to become more productive citizens, and by doing so, contributing to the health and safety of our local communities.

SAVE THE DATE!!
Oregon CURE Annual Meeting
(Oregon CURE members and General Public invited)

Sunday, October 14, 2007
3 pm to 4:30pm
Hillsdale Community Church, 6948 SW Capitol Hwy
Portland, Oregon 97219

Dr. Rachel Hardesty, keynote speaker
"Restorative Justice"

**A Conversation with Dr. Rachel Hardesty
on Restorative Justice**

By: Eileen Kennedy

"This makes me think that justice is also unfolding and is not as much about redressing balance as it is about rebuilding trust." -Dr. Rachel Hardesty

The 2007 Oregon-CURE annual meeting will host Dr. Rachel Hardesty as keynote speaker on the topic "Restorative Justice." The focus of restorative justice is not on punishment and incarceration, but on promoting repair, reconciliation, and the rebuilding of relationships. Restorative justice processes give victims the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, to get answers to their questions, and to receive an apology. It gives the offenders the chance to understand the real impact of what they've done and to do something to repair the harm. Restorative justice holds offenders to account for their crimes, personally and directly, and helps victims to get on with their lives. Restorative approaches seek a balanced approach to the needs of the victim, the offender, and community through processes that preserve the safety and dignity of all.

Dr. Hardesty is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice Division at Portland State University. She teaches courses in restorative justice, crimes against humanity, and death sentencing. All her courses are online. In the past, she has been the executive director of Oregonians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and has a blog at www.deathwatching.info.

Come with your questions and concerns. The criminal justice system seems to increase injury to all involved and ignores the needs of victims and offenders alike. What changes are necessary to heal and rebuild trust for the victim, the offender, their families, and their communities?

Volunteer Opportunities

Support Group Leader: If you would be willing to donate a couple hours a month to lead a Portland support group, please contact Oregon CURE at (503) 977-9979. We will train you and get you started and in return, your reward will be great! This is your chance to support and help those who walk a lonely path and need the support of others.

Mentor: Portland Partners Re-Entry Initiative is looking for mentors to offer support, encouragement, and motivation to an adult who has been incarcerated. Must be at least 25 years old, clean and sober for at least three years, emotionally mature, stable, patient, and kind. Contact Cynthia Harrison, Volunteer Coordinator, (503) 772-2300 or email: charrison@seworks.org.

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

By: Judy Farrell

On June 16th, the Oregonian printed a short article headlined "State prison meals get an 'acceptable' review." The director of the Oregon Department of Corrections, Max Williams, hired an outside review team whose report concluded "Inmates are provided with nutritionally adequate meals that are prepared and served in a manner that meets established governmental health and safety codes." While giving the food a passing grade, the review team recommended establishing regular inspections, implementing a food-borne illness prevention program, and increasing consistency of menus and recipes.

The article did not mention that input from inmates was requested or considered. Because the members of Oregon CURE continue to hear that the meals, especially the meat, are not edible, we would like to hear from you. Please write and let us know if you notice a positive change in the quality of the meals served and, if not, what foods you are purchasing in the prison commissary to supplement your diet. We do not expect the prison to serve all the delicious foods like many of your mothers used to cook; we do want to know if you are noticing a positive change in the quality of food being served. You can write to us as the address on the newsletter.

"Voices from the Inside"

To Our Incarcerated Friends:
Please send us, for future publishing in our newsletter, a short essay on what life is like for you on the inside to give those on the outside a better understanding. Please give us a brief description of yourself. You may include pictures or artwork. All submissions will become the property of Oregon CURE and will not be returned to the sender. If selected for publishing in our newsletter, submissions may be edited. Please mail directly to: Oregon CURE, 1631 N.E. Broadway, Suite 460, Portland, OR 97232.

**OREGON CURE SPONSORS RED HATS BEHIND BARS
-- FIRST PRISON CHAPTER IN THE WORLD!**

By: Jan Singleton

After four-plus months of obtaining permission from both the Red Hat Society and the administrators at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (CCCF) – and much planning, the Oregon CURE-sponsored chapter of Red Hats Behind Bars held its first get-together on October 25, 2006. From the response we received from the Red Hat Society membership chair, we believe this is the very first Red Hat chapter of this kind anywhere in the world!

The Red Hat Society is an organization that emphasizes friendships among women. Members wear red hats and purple dresses if over 50 or pink hats and lavender dresses if under 50. The attire was inspired by the poem “When I am an Old Woman,” from Warning, by Jenny Joseph. Activities may include many different kinds of events, and will be modified somewhat to fit the inside culture.

Twenty-two ladies had signed up to attend the first get-together – and the room was full! First the Queen-for-the-Day, Stella Ann Kiser, was chosen by pulling her name at random from a Red Hat. The next order of business was to select a name for the chapter from nominations submitted by the attendees. The winning name was “The Madam Hatters of Wilsonville (at Coffee Creek)!”

Those from the outside who were approved as volunteers to present this program are: Jan Singleton, Lori Manning, Gretchen Hite, Cindy Van Loo, Robin Franklin, Elaine Armstrong, and Sharon Arnett. The volunteers brought in hats, both red and pink, together with decorations of feathers, ribbons, and flowers, and each “inside” lady then decorated her own hat. (By the way, all the hats and decorations were purchased by Oregon CURE from donations received from various individuals and from members of the Red Hat Tomatoes and Fabulous Feline chapters.) After solving a word-scramble game with a fall theme, and partaking of refreshments from the CCCF bakery, it was time to leave.

The second get-together, February 16, 2007, had a Valentine’s Day theme, with heart-shaped cookies and tea being served. Liysa Northon’s name was then chosen as “Queen-for-the Day.” The topic for this get-together was “Hopes and Aspirations,” with each lady speaking to her dream and what she would like to accomplish when she is released. After solving a word-scramble game with a Valentine’s Day theme (thanks, Lori) and listening to and singing along with Josh Timonen on music video, our get-together was over all too quickly!

Our third get-together, with a Fourth of July theme, was held Friday evening, June 29, 2007, and by all accounts may have been our best yet! After choosing Cindy Rowe as our Queen-for-the-Day, and solving the obligatory word-scramble game (thanks again, Lori), we settled into a serious motivational mode. Jan spoke of seven powers in our lives over which only we have control –friendship, goal-setting, learning/education, positivity, self-esteem, caring for yourself and others, and forgiveness. Jan proceeded to speak about the power of friendship in our lives. After the talk on friendship, there was a period of sharing in which many of the ladies present told of events in their lives that highlighted positive friendships.

The ladies have decided that they would like to “give back to the community” and we are exploring how this can be done, whether by making crafts that will be sold to enable the group to donate money to a charity, or possibly making quilts to be donated to the homeless, elderly, or infants.

The next get-together of the Madam Hatters of Wilsonville (at Coffee Creek) is scheduled for the end of September. If anyone is interested in making a donation to defer the cost advanced for start-up, please send a check or money order, payable to Oregon CURE, and marked for Red Hats, to Oregon CURE, 1631 NE Broadway, Suite 460, Portland, Oregon 97232.

Suggested Reading

By: Jan Singleton

Chicken Soup for the Prisoner’s Soul, by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Tom Lagana. Published by Health Communications, Inc., and available through Success Solutions, PO Box 7816, Wilmington, DE 19803. Also available through Amazon.com. This book is a series of 101 short stories intended to “open the heart and rekindle the spirit of hope, healing, and forgiveness.” The stories in this book were collected over a period of three years by Tom Lagana and

his wife, Laura. Most of the stories were written by prisoners, ex-prisoners, loved ones, prison volunteers, prison staff, and those concerned citizens who volunteer to make a positive difference in our criminal justice system. I read many of the stories through tears. I highly recommend it to you!

Messages From the Heart, by Edwin Allen Lee. ISBN # 0-75964-062-9. Published by 1st Books in cooperation with Wino Publishing. Copyright © 1997 by Kenneth Monse’Brotten. Available through Success Solutions as well as Amazon.com. This book is a collection of short stories written by Edwin Allen Lee aka Kenneth (“Duke”) Monse’Brotten. There is no particular order to the short stories, other than that they are factual. Duke referred to himself as an “old convict.” He was in prisons in three states – Washington, Texas, and Oregon – where he was a prisoner at Oregon State Penitentiary, at Snake River Correctional Institution, and later at the Oregon State Correctional Institution. His stories, written from prison, are so powerful that it takes time to “wrap your head around them.” I highly recommend this as the next book you read. With permission, I am including the following excerpt from the short story “Addiction” from this book, and hope you find it as powerful as I did.

Addiction Has a First Name

*By Edwin Allen Lee
a.k.a. Ken “Duke” Monse’Brotten
(Reprinted by Permission)*

Over the years I’ve fought many tough men with my fists in prison yards. Two of those men were ranked heavyweights. The single toughest opponent I’ve ever faced, the most dangerous one – the one that truly hurt me the most and scares me yet today—is the one that beat me so badly that my entire family suffered from it. That opponent is called Addiction.

Addiction has a first name, several of them—and they’re all tough ones. Drug Addiction, Alcohol Addiction, Cocaine Addiction, Crack Addiction, and Heroin Addiction—to name a few. Addiction fights us all differently and is so slow and cunning you don’t even know it’s destroying you and your family. And worst of all, it will convince you that it’s your friend, while getting you to drop your guard for a split second, so it can kill you. Yes, that’s the toughest opponent I’ve ever faced.

If that’s the opponent some of you face, I want to ask you to do me a favor. Read this carefully. I ask you to never give Addiction the chance to beat you like it beat me. I would ask you to recognize and never doubt for a second the cunning of this murderous devil. I would ask you to stay close to others who fight Addiction daily. Fight it in GROUPS as AA and NA teach us—NEVER do it ALONE. Never ever give Addiction a chance. Beat it for me and a million other people who have suffered its sadistic wrath.

You see, if you can help me teach young people how to beat Addiction, at this time in their lives, at their young age, not only have you rescued their entire family from Addiction, but you’ve paid for an insurance policy in full, which guarantees that they and their family will no longer suffer from the wrath of Addiction. I will have made a million guys just like me winners through you, in a fight with the most dangerous opponent I’ve ever faced.

So, do me a favor. Help me teach others how to win the fight against ADDICTION, and make us all winners.

“In 2004, Ken (“Duke”) Monse’Brotten asked me to make his work available to help others. Kenny felt passionate about that.” Tom Lagana – www.TomLagana.com, Co-author: *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner’s Soul, Chicken Soup for the Volunteer’s Soul, and Serving Time, Serving Others.*

Ken “Duke” Monse’Brotten, pen name Edwin Allen Lee, died on April 7, 2007, approximately two weeks after he was released from prison. He was a grandfather and great grandfather originally from Park River, North Dakota. He had written numerous articles and short stories. He is a contributing author with five stories in *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner’s Soul* and also has stories in *Touched by Angels of Mercy* and *Serving Time, Serving Others*. These books may be purchased through Success Solutions, PO Box 7816, Wilmington, DE 19803

You Can Make a Difference!!

We must be the change we want to see in the world. If you’re not happy with the way things are, you may work to effect a change in Oregon’s criminal justice system. Contact Oregon CURE for volunteer opportunities.

Support Groups

For Adult Family Members & Friends of the Incarcerated Monthly Meetings

PLEASE CALL TO REGISTER

<u>Beaverton</u> <u>1st Wednesday</u> 7 – 8:30 p.m. Beaverton Comm. Center 12350 SW 5 th , Ste. 100 (FREE PARKING) (503) 350-0236 (Gretchen)	<u>Central Oregon**</u> <u>3rd Thursday</u> 6-7:30 p.m. Redmond Library Board Room 827 SW Deschutes Redmond (FREE PARKING) (541) 475-2164 (Tina)	<u>Eugene</u> <u>1st Thursday</u> 7-8:30 p.m. Private Residence 4745 Brookwood (FREE PARKING) (541) 935-1182 (Ken)	<u>Medford</u> <u>2nd Monday</u> 6:30 – 8 p.m. United Methodist Church 607 W. Main (FREE PARKING) (541) 944-3304 (Sam)
<u>John Day</u> <u>2nd Tuesday</u> 6:30 – 8 p.m. Presbyterian Church of Mt. Vernon 171 E. Main St., Mt. Vernon (FREE PARKING) (541) 932-4446 (Julie)	<u>Ontario</u> <u>4th Saturday</u> 6 – 8 p.m. The Family Place 390 NE 2 nd St. (FREE PARKING) (541) 889-3826 (Sue)	<u>Salem</u> <u>1st Saturday</u> 11 a.m. -12:30 p.m CALL FOR LOCATION (503) 566-9190 (Butterfly)	

** Serving Bend, Sisters, Redmond, Prineville, Madras, and LaPine

***Serving Grant County (John Day, Prairie City, Mt. Vernon, Long Creek, Monument, Dayville, and Mitchell)

Update on Oregon CURE Support Groups

By: Jan Singleton

The last four years have seen the Oregon CURE Support Groups grow to seven, with support groups now located in Medford, John Day, Ontario, Redmond, Beaverton, Salem, and Eugene. There is no longer a group in Portland, but Oregon CURE is currently seeking a leader and a new location in Portland to hold these meetings.

Sam, of Medford, reports that the support group meetings there will now be held on the second Monday of each month at the United Methodist Church, 607 West Main. Julie, leader of our John Day group, reports that this new group is just getting started and the attendees are motivated. Sue, the new leader at the Ontario group, reports good attendance as does Ken, of Eugene, and Tina, of Redmond. Gretchen, of Beaverton, reports record attendance and Butterfly, of Salem, reports that she will soon be looking for a new facility to house that Support Group. We are currently talking with two people in the Klamath Falls/Chiloquin area concerning starting a support group there.

If you live within close traveling distance of any of these support groups, we would especially appreciate your attendance. Also, we would appreciate it if inmates would urge their friends and families to attend one of our support groups. And, if there is no support group in your area and you would be willing to lead a support group, please write to us at Oregon CURE, 1631 NE Broadway, # 460, Portland, Oregon 97232, or call (503) 977-9979, or toll-free at 1-866-357-2873. For your convenience, below is a list of the Oregon CURE support groups.

THANK YOU!!

Oregon CURE's Steering Committee would like to publicly thank Aba Gayle for her selfless dedication in leading the Salem Support Group for many years. She recently advised us that she will be stepping down from this long-time leadership to allow her to spend time with her son and daughter and to accommodate her busy traveling schedule with the several organizations in which she is active. Aba Gayle has told us that as her schedule allows, she will help out with the Salem group. Butterfly, who has assisted Aba Gaye, has graciously agreed to continue leading this group.

Recommended Video

By: Sandi Meyer
(as taken from the Portland Art Museum's N.W. Film Center newsletter)

"Finding Normal", Director: Brian Lindstrom. The film work reflects an ongoing concern for social issues and people who engage the challenges. His new film takes an unflinching look at the daunting difficulties in overcoming addictions and the dynamic within Portland's Central City Concern's recovery mentor program. With a 70% success rate, the program's strength lies in its ability to promote a strong sense of community and connectedness with peers themselves. "The film is raw and real, filled with undeniable moments of pain and elation and human personality. It's impossible to imagine a more honest look at this all-too-common world." Shawn Levy, *The Oregonian* (77 minutes)

Financial Balance - - That's the Point

By: Judy Farrell

Recently some inmates have expressed an interest in opening savings accounts in banks and credit unions so that they may have a financial safety net upon release. Unfortunately, due to the Patriot Act, most financial institutions will not open accounts without encountering the customer face to face along with his/her identification to establish identity. Also, the Department of Corrections does not support opening outside accounts at this time because there is an effort to establish savings accounts within the DOC trust account.

Often, due to former lifestyles, inmates experience barriers to opening bank accounts and obtaining credit cards after release. Point West Credit Union, with branches in Portland and shared branches all over Oregon, is willing to work with released persons who are interested in establishing a responsible financial history. With so many financial issues, money management can feel overwhelming. Point West Credit Union has a

fitness program that makes it easy for members to get on top of a rocky financial history. Money-management counseling, debt-management plans, and credit-report reviews are available with a counselor.

All released persons who have a recent history of working inside an Oregon prison in an Oregon Corrections Enterprise job are eligible for membership in Point West Credit Union. Others with family relations who are members or who work for one of the hundreds of member organizations are also eligible. The President/CEO, Robert Brazier, understands that reentry is a difficult time, and that becoming a responsible member of the community involves establishing a healthy financial reputation. Point West Credit Union is there to help.

READY TO RENT

By: Judy Farrell

Ready to Rent is a program for landlords and tenants, and the goal of the program is to increase housing access for tenants with rental barriers which include evictions, credit/financial problems, bad references, no rental history, and criminal backgrounds. Such issues make it difficult to obtain rental housing. The program consists of a 12-hour tenant education class that usually takes place over four to six weeks. Currently, there are more than 40 agencies in the Portland Metropolitan area that offer the class.

Instructors help students

- *Create a realistic housing plan
- *Develop a workable budget
- *Review housing options
- *Succeed in the application and screening process
- *Understand a rental agreement
- *Review Tenant/Landlord law

In addition to tenant education, Ready to Rent offers participating landlords a Landlord Guarantee. When a Landlord rents to a person that has a current Ready to Rent Certificate and has taken the class in Multnomah, Washington, or Clackamas County, the Landlord can apply for a Ready to Rent Guarantee that protects the Landlord up to a certain dollar amount for damages to the property, nonpayment of one month's rent, and court costs for termination of tenancy. The good news is that this is rarely an issue because tenants who have graduated from the course are responsible and successful renters.

READY TO RENT - CONTACT INFORMATION

Multnomah County
Housing Authority of Portland
Contact: Suzanne Therrien
Phone: 503-802-8494
R2R Hotline: 503-802-8315
E-Mail: SuzanneT@hapdx.org
Mail: 135 SW Ash, Portland, OR 97204

Mail: 210 SE 12th, Hillsboro, OR 97123
Clark County, Washington
YW Housing
Contact: Victoria Clevenger
Phone: (360) 906-9117
E-Mail: vclevenger@ywcaclarkcounty.org
Mail: 3609 Main Street, Vancouver, WA 98663

Washington County
Community Action Organization
Contact: Larry Houth
Phone: 503-640-3263
E-Mail: lhauth@caowash.org

Clackamas County
Social Services Division
Contact: Abby Ahern
Phone: 503-650-5618
E-Mail: abbyahe@co.clackamas.or.us
Mail: 2051 Kaen Rd., Oregon City, OR 97045

Pilot Program for E-Mail at SRCI and Warner Creek

By: Jan Singleton

In April 2007, the Oregon Department of Corrections ("DOC") signed a contract with Electronic Message Solutions, Inc. ("EMS"), to provide a one-year pilot program at Snake River Correctional Institution ("SRCI") and Warner Creek for the delivery of e-mail to the inmates at those two institutions. To participate in this program, you need computer access to the Internet. The purpose of this program is to provide cost-effective communication between inmates and their families and friends.

For a cost of \$12.50, plus a convenience fee of \$1.50 each month, you can send 30 messages to your loved one in prison and receive 30 messages in return. (With first-class postage rates at .41 cents for the first ounce, this is almost a 50 percent savings over US Postal Service rates.) Those preferring to participate with inbound messages only pay \$9 plus a convenience fee of \$1.50 each month. You will need to use a credit/debit card to pay for the e-mail transactions.

This product from EMS provides near real-time messaging with inmates at participating facilities. Messages created on EMS's website will be sent to the inmate electronically, utilizing a printing device within the inmate's facility. Once received by the facility, each message remains subject to that particular facility's process and procedures utilized for standard mail. Likewise, facilities participating in the EMS outbound process will allow inmates to create messages (on a form provided to the inmate, which will be scanned in the institution's mailroom) that will be available for viewing on EMS's website in near real time.

Each message may contain 5,000 characters, or 40 lines. The website contains a counter to make sure your message stays within the character limit.

To become a part of this new program, you should ask your loved one at SRCI or Warner Creek to mail sign-up information to you. After the evaluation period, the DOC will make a decision whether or not to continue the program and to expand it to other prisons within the DOC.

Federal Legislation Update

The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act H.R. 555 by Eileen Kennedy

The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, HR 555, as of July 1, has seven cosponsors. Four of the cosponsors are members of the Telecommunications and Internet subcommittee where CURE hopes to have a hearing on this bill. Pauline Sullivan, of International CURE, has visited the House Telecommunications and Internet subcommittee members and explained the importance of this legislation. She has told them of the devastating effect prohibitively high telephone bills have on the families of prisoners, and of the unfairness of paying more than other telephone customers just because a family member is incarcerated.

International CURE has discussed with Rep. Edward Markey of Massachusetts, chairperson of the House Telecommunications and Internet subcommittee, the possibility of a hearing before this committee. So far, Markey is

positive about such a hearing. There is greater optimism about the passage of the Family Telephone Act because it can become an amendment to a larger telecommunication bill that the subcommittee is considering. Charles Sullivan indicated that CURE members will be able to advocate for the inclusion of The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act as part of this larger bill when members come to the April 2008 CURE convention.

In the meantime, there is much Oregon-CURE members can do. Representative Greg Walden is a member of the House Telecommunications and Internet subcommittee, but is not yet a cosponsor. He needs information about this bill. Please send him a copy of your telephone bill and/or a letter in support of The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, HR 555, to his D.C. office:

The Honorable Greg Walden
1210 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
or call him:
1.202.225.6730
or fax him:
1.202.225.5774

Congressman Walden represents much of Eastern Oregon and the Medford area, and prisoners from his district and their families should feel free to write. You can receive a brochure for HR 555 by writing to Charles Sullivan, International CURE, P.O. Box 2310, Washington, D.C. 20013. Send the brochure with the letter to Congressman Walden, if you wish. You can also type "thomas" into an internet search box, and online, at the thomas site, type in "HR 555" and read the complete text. "Thomas" is a site that contains proposed congressional legislation.

* * * * *

"Second Chance Act SB 1060"
By: Eileen Kennedy

Gene Guerrero, the policy analyst for the Open Society Center, is guardedly optimistic that SB 1060, The Second Chance Act, will pass the Senate and House this year, maybe as early as October. This is a comprehensive bill to provide money for programs for people on post-prison supervision. These programs will be designed to reduce the rate of post-prison reoffending by providing support for employment, drug counseling, and other necessary services.

Oregon Senators Ron Wyden and Gordon Smith have yet to co-sponsor, and Guerrero suggests that Oregon-CURE members call the senators and encourage them to sign on.

They can be contacted at: Senator Ron Wyden 1.202.224.5244; Senator Gordon Smith 1.202.224.3753

Be sure you indicate the bill number, its title, and how you feel about it. You will not need to defend it. They will, however, always ask for your zip code, so be sure you know all the above information before calling.

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

GOVERNOR CREATES RE-ENTRY COUNSEL

June 1, 2007 – 3:55 p.m.

(re-printed by permission from Partnership for Safety's website)

On Friday, May 25, 2007, Governor Ted Kulongoski signed an executive order that created a 19-member Re-Entry Council to explore ways to safely reduce barriers for people returning home after being imprisoned. With top officials from a number of agencies, the council is charged with finding ways to help reduce recidivism.

Key to the efforts of the council will be an examination of housing issues, employment prospects, obtaining valid ID's, access to treatment and cognitive behavioral programs, and a myriad of other barriers facing people as they re-enter their communities from prison.

The formation of such a task force was one of Partnership of Safety and Justice's top legislative priorities.

House Doubles Prison Treatment Dollars

(Reps. Barker and Shields carry Corrections bill to easy passage)

Salem, OR – June 12, 2007 – State Representative Jeff Barker (D-Aloha) carried the budget bill for the Oregon Department of Corrections to passage on the floor of the Oregon House of Representatives. Rep. Chip Shields (D-N/NE Portland), Chair of the Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways and Means, assisted in the floor presentation.

Senate Bill 5539, the Oregon Department of Corrections budget, doubles spending to \$12.8 million. The budget includes \$1 million to ensure that offenders at the highest risk to re-offend will receive evidence-based cognitive-behavioral therapy, which has been demonstrated to reduce recidivism.

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES FUND

Oregon CURE members, as part a coalition of the Partnership for Safety and Justice, were successful in their efforts to seek an increase in the ODSVS fund. This Fund was established to help victims of domestic and sexual violence find help and shelter in Oregon. The Fund was increased to \$4.5 million for the '07-'09 budget, almost double the amount from the '05-'07 budget!! All those postcards, phone calls, personal visits, and e-mails from every corner of Oregon did not go unnoticed by our lawmakers!

"Clean Slate" Protects Public Without Adding Prisons

The [Clean Slate](#) bill, which is based on a highly successful community program launched by the African-American Chamber of Commerce, is a way to help those with past minor criminal and civil offenses on their records start over and reintegrate into the community. The Clean Slate Program recognizes that many offenders find the process of returning to their communities difficult and alienating. This, combined with a lack of assistance and options, can lead to a cycle of repeat offending.

"When [Chamber President] Roy Jay approached me with the idea of implementing The Clean Slate project on a statewide level, I knew it was an idea whose time had come," says Representative Shields. "This bill will go a long way toward breaking the cycle for Oregon's former inmates." The Clean Slate bill was funded at \$275,000, and is designed to help reformed offenders and the communities to which they return, because when a person successfully turns their life around, everyone benefits.

My First Lobby Day

By: Bonnie Nusser

I attended my first Lobby Day at the Oregon Capitol with Partnership for Safety and Justice on March 8, 2007. We met with our State Senators and Representatives and discussed specific issues. I had prepared for this day by attending a workshop in February held by PSJ. At that time, we were given material on the issues to be discussed, process for discussion, maps, and pointers for the day.

I was assured I would not be alone. A staff person from PSJ would join a group of two to four of us. I went home and worried about what I would say, how I would say it, and most important, would I forget what I wanted to say?

March 8th came and I was lucky to carpool with Cindy Van Loo, who immediately set me at ease. Our first meeting was with Senator Ginny Burdick, which went off without a hitch. She was very supportive of our issues, as well as a delight to speak with. It gave me a chance to get my feet wet.

My second meeting was to have been with Representative Larry Galizio, but due to other commitments, he was unable to meet with us. We did meet with an aide, who listened to each of us, asked questions, and took notes to share with Representative Galizio.

The staff from Partnership for Safety and Justice was great! I received an education from them as well as from our state leadership. I appreciated the added support from my co-members of the CURE Steering Committee for the extra boost of knowledge (and confidence). I look forward to next time!

I DO WANT TO HELP **OREGON CURE** CONTINUE ITS WORK IN 2007

Here is my tax-deductible contribution.

- _____ \$3/yr. Prisoner
- _____ \$15/yr. Individual
- _____ \$25/yr. Family
- _____ \$50-100/yr. Sustaining
- _____ \$100-250/yr. Sponsor
- _____ \$250/yr. Benefactor
- _____ \$50/yr. Organization
- _____ \$ _____ Other

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

[optional]

Name of Incarcerated Loved One: _____

SID # and Address: _____

------(tear off and return)-----
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Oregon CURE
1631 N.E. Broadway, #460
Portland, OR 97232