

# ***OREGON CURE***

(Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants)

A newsletter for family and friends of Incarcerated Individuals

Winter 2008 Volume 30

## **DON'T FORGET TO MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!!**



If you are over the age of 18 years and have recently been released from prison – you can vote! If you are in prison, please ask your family members to register so they will be able to vote in the November 2008 elections. REMEMBER! You and your loved ones can make a difference! If you would like to see a change – you can be a significant part of steering the future of the United States and the state of Oregon! Please do not let this opportunity pass you by. This is an opportunity to let your voice be heard!

The top reasons why you should vote are as follows (from workshop at Partnership for Safety and Justice, January 2008):

- **Voting is a way to speak your mind and let your voice be heard!**

Your vote is your voice. When we vote, we are actually telling elected officials and lawmakers how we feel about education, public safety, social security, health care, and other important issues.

- **One voice, one vote really does count!**

Remember: there is power in numbers, and when we vote and get our family members to vote, we can truly make a difference. If you don't vote for what you believe in, others will - - and you may not like the outcome.

- **Voting is part of the American Dream, and we are all entitled to it!**

By the virtue of simply being an American, you too are entitled to the constitutional right of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" . . . don't let anyone tell you otherwise, or take your piece of the rock.

- **Our children are depending on us to represent their voices too!**

Because our children can't vote, we have to do it for them. That's how we make our concerns about schools, safety, housing, and other issues heard. When we vote, we are looking out for our kids, and their futures.

(continued on page 3)

## 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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## A Message From the Chair - - -

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By Cindy Van Loo

While I was assembling the articles for this newsletter, I was trying to determine which was the most important to put on the first page. After much thought, I chose the article about voting because that is where our voices can be heard in the most powerful way. Don't think your vote does not count, because it does! In the months to come as the candidates and measure information starts flooding our mailboxes, read them, make notes on them, and save them in a folder until you get your ballot. Then, take them all out to use and refer to before you vote.

When our son was sent to prison, I made the decision to not curl up in a ball and hold the covers over my head until he returned home. I decided to become proactive in my approach to the reasons that led to his incarceration. Some of the ways I have been able to do this is to keep current on information about legislative decisions by writing or talking to lawmakers in Washington D.C. and in Oregon, being involved in the legislative action team through the Partnership for Safety and Justice, sharing information with coworkers, neighbors, friends, and family about upcoming issues on the ballot, and reading my local paper daily, especially the editorials and letters to the editor.

If you are incarcerated, your voice can be heard by writing to your lawmakers and reading all the information you can about particular issues or candidates and discussing that information with your family and friends. Also, encourage your family and friends to vote and when you are released from prison, remember you are eligible to vote as long as you are registered.

Best wishes,

Cindy

### Corrections to Fall 2007 Newsletter:

In "Dr. Rachel Hardesty, Guest Speaker Restorative Justice," reference was made that " At one time, Dr. Hardesty said she spent hours listening to a member of Parents of Murdered Children show a memory book of a son who was murdered by the Green River killer." **Correction:** The man's son had not been killed by the Green River killer, but Dr. Hardesty had met this man during the Green River murder investigations.

In "Mental Illness and Prison," the reference made that "Mental HEALTH is not a crime punishable by prison....**Correction:** Mental ILLNESS is not a crime punishable by prison...."

- **Voting changes communities!**

Do you ever wonder why one neighborhood gets passed over for things it needs, while another seems to get it all? One big reason is voting. When we vote, we can get results that we can actually see.

- **Vote to effect change!**

It was through elections that we voted in officials who were champions for civil rights. Voting is our chance to make a difference in our own lives and within the world.

- **Believe it or not, voting is a way of honoring our history!**

As long as our country has existed, there have been people who didn't want us to vote. There were several freedom fighters that stood up for the right to vote. Well, those times may seem ancient, but there are still people today who don't want us to vote. It's now our turn to stand up and vote to preserve the honor of those who went before us.

- **Last but not least, because it gives you credibility!**

**Ofentimes**, we voice our concerns to elected officials, but if we aren't voting, our concerns *may not matter at all* to them. Voting can actually give you the credibility to make your concerns a top priority for legislators.

#### **Where and how to register:**

You can get a voter registration card at any of the following places:

- Any county elections office
- Any United States Post office
- The Secretary of State's office
- Some state agencies such as the Division of Motor Vehicles
- Print out a registration card online at [www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org)

#### **Update your voter registration if any of the following information changes (the last day to update your information is the 21<sup>st</sup> day before an election):**

- Your home address
- Your mailing address
- Your name
- Your signature
- To change or select a political party (as long as it is 20 days before the Primary Election – postmarks do not count).

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**HOME FOR GOOD IN OREGON  
REGION VII  
(Final Part in a Series)**

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By Judy Farrell

HOME FOR GOOD IN OREGON  
REGIONS 7 and 8  
**Deschutes, Jefferson, Malheur, Wasco, and  
Baker Counties**

This article concludes the description of the services offered to releasing inmates transitioning from prison to any one of eight regions in Oregon. Remember, Home for Good in Oregon (HGO) is a work in progress, and is adding services and new counties all the time. It is necessary six months prior to release to request an HGO application from your prison chaplain, complete the application, and return it to your chaplain. It is very important to attach information about your past work experiences and to write about your hopes and plans for the future. HGO is a faith-based program, and some counties give priority to those released inmates who wish to participate in religious services and studies.

**Deschutes County**, Bend county seat, is very fortunate to have several HGO volunteers that are totally committed to assisting those coming out of prison, especially those who are interested in participating in a faith-based program, but really open to all who are eager to seek a better life.

In **Jefferson County** HGO is quite active. There are resources available for housing, including for releasing sex offenders. The preference is for those applicants who practice a religious faith. Contact:

Dee Werner, Coordinator  
PO Box 1055  
Madras, Oregon 97741  
541-475-7163

Resources in **Malheur County**, which includes Ontario, are scarce. Besides writing to the following contact person for Malheur, inquiries may also be sent to Chaplain Welbourne in Bend:

Chaplain Francis Davis  
PO Box 495  
Payette, ID 83661

For those releasing to Wasco and Malheur Counties, contact Steve Welbourne in Deschutes County as listed above.

There are resources for housing, jobs, and treatment. Those who are interested in writing to seek further information from Deschutes, Wasco and Baker Counties should write to:

Steve Welbourne, Regional Chaplain  
PO Box 9281  
Bend, Oregon 97708

Others who are very active in Deschutes County who will respond to your letters of inquiry are:

Chaplain Henry Porter  
PO Box 7646  
Bend, Oregon 97708  
541-383-2500, Monday through Friday,  
8 am to 5 pm

Chaplain Fred Clark, Chaplain  
PO Box 3336  
La Pine, Oregon 97739  
Will meet at the gate of prison  
Strict requirement of commitment to the  
Lord

Also, the Salvation Army in Bend will provide some limited services:

Captain John Tumey, Chaplain  
PO Box 6177  
Bend, Oregon 97702

The chaplains and coordinators in Regions 7 and 8 are all volunteers who are very committed to assisting those coming out who are serious about pursuing a good life. Inmates who need assistance are invited to write to those in the county they are returning to and request more information.

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## **“CAN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CHANGE LOCAL PRISONS?”**

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An Opinion/Editorial By Eileen Kennedy

During March 2006, I took an educational trip to Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula. At my request, my guide there introduced me to a prison reformer from the Merida prison facility. The reformer, an educational volunteer, and I talked for several hours, and she confided to me concerns about the use of a sweat box (also called a "black box"). A prisoner can be locked in this small, fully enclosed unit for hours- or days- under the sweltering Yucatan heat. The prisoners always experience the black box without food and water. My prison-reformer friend noted that, upon release from this box, the prisoners were ill and emaciated. She spoke directly with the prison director, but could not persuade him to discontinue its use. The director said he needed the sweat box for security, for discipline, and for control.

This prison reformer asked if I might have some contacts that might be able to help. I agreed to assist when I returned to the U.S. Fortunately, CURE members, such as myself, have worked with our executive director, Charles Sullivan, on a book about Latin American prisons: “Dignity of the Individual, Evaluation of Prisons in the Organization of American States.” I found the e-mail address for Claudia Gerez, of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT). This association is an international non-governmental organization based in Geneva. APT leads a worldwide campaign for the adoption and effective implementation of the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

In response to my e-mail, Ms. Gerez responded that the United Nations was currently holding subcommittee meetings on torture, and that Mexican officials were facing this subcommittee soon. Claudia said she would tell APT members who were watch-dogging the subcommittee meetings to ask about sweat boxes during the time for questions. Moreover, Ms. Gerez had contacts within the Mexican government who were overseeing the implementation of OPCAT.

Mexico has recently signed and ratified the OPCAT treaty against torture, and Claudia hopes that these officials will use their influence to end the use of sweat boxes at Merida. It is procedural for the prison director to hear this sweat box concern from an administrative superior, rather than from an educational volunteer. The director of Merida eventually heard that the box violated national and international law, and that he needed to stop. The government of Mexico has taken this treaty seriously, joining more than 34 nations to ratify OPCAT, calling for an end to torture.

Briefly, OPCAT calls for frequent unannounced visits, by independent monitors, to centers of detention, to prevent the use of torture. With this legal document, the Association for the Prevention of Torture can:

1. Train personnel for monitoring places of detention;
2. Instruct the police and judiciary on legal norms and safeguards against torture; and
3. Provide advice on legislative reforms to better prevent torture at the national level.

In this way, prisons, and what happens in them, become visible to the public.

Can international organizations change local prisons? Yes, but national governments need to sign and ratify these international agreements.

United States has yet to sign OPCAT. The main reason has been the legacy of Senator Jesse Helms, who for decades chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Senator Helms never allowed any international treaties out of committee for ratification by the Senate. President Bush has continued this failure to sign and ratify international treaties, regardless of importance.

We might agree that local, national, and international are interconnected. This parallels CURE, which has grown from Texas-CURE to National CURE, and is now International CURE. The international environment clearly has marked influence over nations. Further, we as citizens should support and work to strengthen international institutions. Currently the international community is comprised of mostly human rights advocates, which is good news for prisoners. Many of the basic rights written into the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights affect people in prisons.

The next time you read a newspaper, you will find that the role of the United Nations is peacekeeping and peacemaking, with the goal to safeguard human rights. Much of the international community holds values that we, as CURE members, hold dearly about our loved ones. This community is one to join and perhaps embrace.

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## **Mandatory Sentences for Drug Dealers, ID Thieves, Burglars and Car Thieves**

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An Opinion/Editorial by Eileen Kennedy

Many of you have heard about Kevin Mannix and Initiative Petition 40 concerning mandatory sentences for nonviolent crimes – specifically those committed by drug dealers, ID thieves, burglars, and car thieves. What you may not know is that more than likely it will qualify for the 2008 election as a ballot measure. Mannix has already turned in twice the number of signatures needed to qualify, and more are on the way.

When IP 40 reaches the stage where it is given a ballot number, the number will NOT be 40. The ballot measure will probably be in the 50s or higher, therefore, the important thing to remember is the ballot title because that will not change. The title of the Mr. Mannix's initiative is: **“Mandatory Sentences for Drug Dealers, ID Thieves, Burglars and Car Thieves.”**

What is wrong with this mandatory minimum ballot measure?

### **1. Mandatory minimums are costly.**

Right now, Oregon has the fastest growing prison budget in the United States. We spend more on prisons than on higher education.

### **2. Mandatory minimums increase the prison population.**

Projections given by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission estimate the increase to be between 4100 and 6400 prisoners within 3 years.

### **3. Mandatory minimums will necessitate more prison building.**

Oregon will need to build three new prisons at a cost of \$250,000,000 to \$400,000,000 each to house the increased number of prisoners.

### **4. Property crimes are going down.**

In Oregon, property crimes like burglary and car theft were down 16 percent in 2006. Where is the need for such a costly “solution” as mandatory minimums?

### **5. It diverts money from the state budget for prisons.**

This increased prison spending will be at the expense of needed state programs such as education and human services.

### **6. It adds to required state spending.**

This ballot measure requires the state to reimburse counties for the actual cost of pretrial incarceration, thus adding to the state’s expenses.

### **7. Mandatory minimums are a one-size-fits-all solution.**

This ballot measure requires the same prison sentence for property crimes and does not consider the age of the offender, the severity of crime, or whether he/she is a repeat offender. It does not give an option for alternative programs; it mandates prison.

### **8. Mandatory minimums increase prison time for youth.**

Youthful offenders will have lengthy prison time for nonviolent offenses that could be dealt with in the community. It will keep youth locked up, thus, damaging them since they will not be involved in developmentally appropriate activities – things that young people do as part of maturing into adults and good citizens. Prison is the school of “hard knocks,” not community college.

### **9. Mandatory minimums increase the number of mentally ill in prison.**

Already the Oregon Department of Corrections estimates the prison population with mental illness to be at 27 percent of the general population. Oregon correction experts are concerned with this trend of sending increasingly sick people to prison. There is no matrix in this ballot measure for diverting the mentally ill and those with drug problems from the criminal justice system.

### **10. Mandatory minimums makes prison our primary human service provider in the State of Oregon.**

Services for the mentally ill, drug users, the unemployed, and youth are at an all time low. Funding is simply not available. Mandatory minimums come with an incredibly high cost, making it difficult to increase money and services to the various Oregon counties. It is not fair that in order to receive state help, a person needs to go to prison first.

When I spoke to Kevin Mannix on the telephone two months ago, he told me that he knew he was asking a lot from the Oregon Department of Corrections, but that he was giving them 18 months to do their “rehabilitation” and have these offenders ready to return to society. I think these “rehabilitation services” come at too high a monetary cost, but also too high a human cost for the offender and the rest of society. We do not need more

prisoners and ex-offenders. We do need strong people who think well of themselves and who can make good choices about respecting the rights of others. I think this kind of nurturing and teaching can be best achieved in a community setting with a variety of services available. Kevin Mannix's mandatory minimum ballot measure is moving Oregon in the wrong direction.

(Information for this article is from Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, Partnership for Safety and Justice, NAMI, and *The Oregonian*).

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**“Voices from the Inside”**

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**A Day in the Life – Happy Holidays**

I woke up today in one of my regular moods of disgust at my situation of (not only being in prison) being in IMU: the penitentiary of the penitentiary. I was a bit confused at breakfast when they served up some good-sized cinnamon rolls on this Thursday morning. Pastries come on Fridays for breakfast at Snake River in Ontario, Oregon. We also got a little brown sugar to put in our oatmeal—which is almost unheard of around here. Still, having filled my belly more than the norm, I rolled over and went back to sleep.

It's hard to stay positive when few treat you kindly. I awoke again about an hour before lunch. Still trying to shake this funk I'm in (but not trying too hard), I get up, crack my back and neck and stretch out. I brush my teeth. I wash my face. I sit back down to read a three-day old newspaper. Lunch comes. People start talking again. I hear pumpkin pie is on our tray. Pumpkin pie? For lunch?

The fog engulfing my disposition to form this snit I'm in lifts and recedes like darkness at dawn as it becomes evident why our meals are not abnormal after all. Today is Thanksgiving! I think of my family; I give thanks for my family. I think of my health; I give thanks for my health. I think of release day, as far off as it is (10 years to go). This, too, I give thanks for. My neighbor upstairs, who I'll call George Washington to give him substance, calls down through my vent . . . “Happy Thanksgiving, homeboy” . . . “Happy Thanksgiving to you, too, George.” I get my tray. I bow my head. I give thanks and praise. I dig in.

For some, the holidays bring gloom from being away from their loved ones. For me, I feel closer to them now than any other time in the year. I feel closer than the hundreds of miles of separation suggests. Indeed, I am thankful! I know it may not mean much, but from my little hole in the wall, in the Snake Pit's IMU – to whoever may read this: Happy Holidays. Your loved ones still love you. If you have a loved one locked up, or you're locked up yourself, keep your head up. And, if you're by yourself, keep your head up . . . don't feel so alone, me and George are here with you!

*(Submitted by R.C at SRCI)*

**(Excerpts from a letter from Jeffrey A. Laffoon dated December 29, 2007)**

“ . . . Although I am in Texas, the Oregon CURE office has been overly exemplary in assisting me. . . Without going into detail I wish to extend millions of multitudes of praise, appreciation, gratitude and any other form of exaltation upon each and every volunteer and staff member that has had a hand in assisting me thus far.

“ . . . I just want people to know how dedicated these volunteers truly are to helping those of us who are truly and sincerely doing our best to change our life styles as well. I speak of lifestyles after serving time “off and on” for 28 years as of March 2008. . . . Please take it for what it's worth that these people are true soldiers to the many, many causes we have, and can only do so much with what they have.”

(Oregon CURE appreciates Mr. Laffoon's gratitude).



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## FAMILY RELEASE ORIENTATIONS – MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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Upcoming 2008 Release Orientations for family and friends in Multnomah County will be on the following dates:

Tuesday, March 4 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 1 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 6 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, June 3 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, July 1 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 5 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, September 2 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 7 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 4 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, December 2 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

For location of the orientation, please contact Susan Ziglinzki at (503) 988-3820 or [susan.ziglinzki@co.multnomah.or.us](mailto:susan.ziglinzki@co.multnomah.or.us).

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## Upcoming Tenth Annual International CURE Convention

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By Gretchen Vala

We will once again meet in Washington, D.C. for the 2008 annual convention. Our focus on Capitol Hill for this session will be advocating for HR 555, The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act; The Second Chance Act, and the return of federal parole. We are scheduled to meet with our House Representatives on Monday, April 14, and with our Senators on Tuesday, April 15. The Annual Board of Directors meeting will include an update concerning CURE chapters organized in Africa last year at a Prison Reform Conference on the Ivory Coast.

The Second Chance Act will help states better address the needs of people released from prisons and jails. This will include providing drug and mental health treatment, job training and educational opportunities, housing, and other necessary services to help people successfully transition back into our communities and stop the turnstile of recidivism!

On November 13, 2007, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly 347-62 to pass the Second Chance Act. Please note that each of Oregon's congressional representatives—Earl Blumenauer, Peter DeFazio, Darlene Hooley, Greg Walden, and David Wu—voted for the Second Chance Act. The Act still has to pass the Senate and not be vetoed by the President. Please phone, write, or e-mail Senator Gordon Smith and Senator Ron Wyden and ask for their support of this extremely important legislation. For contact information if you have Internet access, you can go to: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/findyourreps.xpd?state=OR>. Or, you can mail a letter to the following addresses:

Senator Gordon Smith  
**Washington, DC Office**  
404 Russell Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202.224.3753  
Fax: 202.228.3997

Senator Ron Wyden  
**Washington, DC Office**  
223 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-3703  
(202) 224-5244

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## PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT (PREA) Implemented by Oregon DOC

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By Jan Singleton

On December 14, 2007, two members of Oregon CURE's steering committee – Gretchen Vala and Jan Singleton – attended a meeting at the Dome Building, called by Kimberly Hendrix, DOC's PREA coordinator, and chaired by Max Williams, DOC Director, to share with "stakeholders" and others the progress that the DOC has made in implementing PREA. Representatives from the DOC, the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Response Team, the Cascade Aids Project, and the Partnership for Safety and Justice also attended.

PREA was passed by Congress in 2003 to establish a zero-tolerance standard for the incidences of prison rape in prisons in the United States, to make prevention of prison rape a top priority in each prison system, and to increase the accountability of prison officials who fail to detect, prevent, reduce, and punish prison rape. The DOC has a zero tolerance policy regarding sexual assault and rape inside its institutions.

PREA applies to all Oregon, federal, and local prisons, jails, police lock-ups, private facilities, and community settings such as residential facilities, housing adult and juvenile offenders as well as parole and probation supervision.

Since 2004, DOC has been implementing various PREA strategies. In the 2005-2007 biennium, PREA implementation was one of DOC's primary strategic objectives. Some of DOC's efforts include:

- Development of staff and inmate curriculum
- Annual staff training
- Use of PREA educational videos for inmates at intake – that's right – these are shown at Coffee Creek!
- Inmate training available in English and Spanish
- Creation of an Inspector General's Hotline
- Development of PREA materials for use by inmates
- Formation of Sexual Assault Response Teams in all DOC institutions
- Hiring of a PREA coordinator
- Distribution of informational posters posted in all facilities
- Ongoing newsletter articles for both staff and inmates
- Integration of PREA into DOC rules, policies, and training

Additionally, DOC received a One Million Dollar discretionary grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the "Right to be Safe in Prison" project. With legislative approval, the DOC uses this grant money to complete and implement an automated tracking system for inmate misconduct, inmate grievances, incident reports, and security threat management—all as outlined in the discretionary grant. The grant also provides for the installation of security electronics in areas of limited visibility and supervision.

A special report prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics concerning the nationwide implementation of PREA since its enactment in 2003 will be discussed at the next PREA meeting to be held on February 25, 2008. Oregon CURE's representatives plan to attend. *Portions of the above report were taken from Issue Brief – 2007, Oregon Department of Corrections, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)*

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## OREGON CURE Support Groups

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For Adult Family Members & Friends of the Incarcerated  
Monthly Meetings

PLEASE CALL TO REGISTER

<u><b>Beaverton</b></u> <u><b>1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday</b></u>  7 – 8:30 p.m. Beaverton Comm. Center 12350 SW 5 <sup>th</sup> , Ste. 100 (FREE PARKING) (503) 350-0236 (Gretchen)	<u><b>Central Oregon**</b></u> <u><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday</b></u>  6-7:30 p.m. Redmond Library Board Room 827 SW Deschutes Redmond (FREE PARKING) (541) 475-2164 (Tina)	<u><b>Eugene</b></u> <u><b>1<sup>st</sup> Thursday</b></u>  7-8:30 p.m. Private Residence 4745 Brookwood  (FREE PARKING) (541) 935-1182 (Ken)	<u><b>Medford</b></u> <u><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Monday</b></u>  6:30 – 8 p.m. United Methodist Church 607 W. Main  (FREE PARKING) (541) 944-3304 (Sam)
<u><b>John Day****</b></u> <u><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday</b></u>  6:30 – 8 p.m. Presbyterian Church of Mt. Vernon 171 E. Main St., Mt. Vernon (FREE PARKING)  (541) 932-4446 (Julie)	<u><b>Ontario***</b></u> <u><b>4<sup>th</sup> Saturday</b></u>  6 – 8 p.m. The Family Place 390 NE 2 <sup>nd</sup> St.  (FREE PARKING) (541) 889-3826 (Sue)	<u><b>Salem</b></u> <u><b>1<sup>st</sup> Saturday</b></u>  11 a.m. -12:30 p.m The Christian Center of Salem 1850 45 <sup>th</sup> Ave. N.E.  (FREE PARKING) (503) 930-0330 (Alicia)	

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

\*\*\*No meetings November – March due to weather.

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

### Update on Oregon CURE Support Groups

By Gretchen Vala and Jan Singleton

#### Beaverton Support Group

At the December meeting, our guest speaker, David Bellwood, of Washington County Community Corrections Probation and Parole, answered questions from attendees regarding release issues. Mr. Bellwood works specifically with people released from prison with sex offenses and he offered valuable information regarding housing, employment, and suggestions for released prisoners so that they can successfully transition back into our community.

At the January meeting, both David Bellwood and Eli Lopez attended. We learned that each prisoner should meet with a release counselor six months prior to release. The forms that are filled out will then be sent to the appropriate community corrections officer. Mr. Lopez is notified by the DOC between 30-90 days of anyone releasing to Washington County. Mr. Lopez' goal is to meet with each individual in any of the prisons along the I-5 corridor and go over what they can expect upon release and work with them on their release plan.

The Community Corrections officer will review each person's situation as to whether or not they are a sex offender, require housing, mental health programs, or drug and alcohol programs. Most treatment programs fall on a sliding scale. There are people who find employment with health benefits that will cover the costs of drug, sex offender, and anger management programs that fall within the probation plan.

Family support can be a key element for a successful re-entry. Housing is a priority and if you will soon welcome a loved one home from prison, you may find that many of your questions can be answered by either Mr. Bellwood or Mr. Lopez.

Either or both of these gentlemen have offered to attend the first meeting of each quarter. If you would like to find out more about Washington County Community Corrections, and the rules and regulations that deal specifically with release issues, please attend the Beaverton meeting on April 2, July 2, or October 1, 2008.

Please make a note! We meet at the Beaverton Community Center the first Wednesday of each month from 7 to 8:30 pm; however, the Center will not be available on June 4<sup>th</sup>. On that date only, we will meet in the Beaverton Public Library in the Library Conference room.

### **Remaining Support Groups**

The CURE committee on support groups has been hearing good reports from the seven support groups around the state. As previously reported, the Ontario support group will be inactive during the winter, but will begin meeting again in the spring. Watch our website for information on their first spring meeting!

Ken, of the Eugene support group, reports good attendance and was pleased to report that the son of one of their faithful attendees was recently released from prison and was a surprise visitor at their January meeting!

Julie, of the John Day support group, told us that she had been interviewed by a local radio station. Likewise, Alicia of the Salem group, and Tina of the Redmond group, gave positive reports and said they were pleased with recent attendance. Gretchen, of the Beaverton support group, also is pleased with recent attendance at the meetings held there. (See Gretchen's article above concerning attendance by Washington County Community Corrections officers.)

Also, we are in the process of establishing a support group in North Portland at the Center for Family Success. We hope to be up and operating by the end of March. We invite anyone who lives in that area to attend. Please check our website, [www.oregoncure.org](http://www.oregoncure.org), for further information.

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**ENVY**

**By: Ken "Duke" Monse'Brotten**

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To the man, tired to the bone and having less than ten dollars in his pocket, coming home from work to a house that needs paint, a yard that needs mowing and is full of kids' toys and screaming children.

To the man who drives an old pickup that can't last much longer, one he still owes several payments on, who comes home to a wife, dressed in old blue jeans, who's a little overweight, in a bad mood, wearing no makeup, and having uncombed hair and bad breath.

To the man whose dinner will consist of chicken noodle soup and hot dogs; from the prison cell from which I'm writing this, I say, "God, how I envy you!"

*Envy*. Reprinted by permission of Ken "Duke" Monse'Brotten. ©1996 Ken "Duke" Monse'Brotten from *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner's Soul*.

Ken "Duke" Monse'Brotten, pen name Edward Allen Lee, died on April 7, 2007. He was a grandfather and great grandfather originally from Park River, North Dakota. He had written numerous articles and short stories. Ken is author of "Messages from the Heart" and co-author of "Cissy's Magic," and contributing author with five stories in "*Chicken Soup for the Prisoner's Soul*." He also has stories in "Touched by Angels of Mercy" and "Serving Time, Serving Others."

## Must See

*Reviewed by Gretchen Vala*

***From Prison to Home.*** Films for the Humanities and Sciences; an imprint of Infobase Publishing.

Ex-convicts face formidable odds, and for African-Americans, conditions are usually even more difficult. This documentary, produced and directed by Adam Blank and Brian Huston, traces the experiences of four black ex-inmates over the course of a year, focusing on their challenges with employment, housing, addiction and reconnecting with family – as well as their participation in the nontraditional African-American Program for parolees. The parole officers who work with these men are also interviewed.

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### RED HAT LADIES AT COFFEE CREEK DONATE TO COMMUNITY

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**By: Jan Singleton**

The Madam Hatters of Wilsonville (at Coffee Creek) – the Oregon CURE-sponsored Red Hat Society Chapter Behind Bars – created handmade Christmas ornaments from pingpong balls and from puzzle pieces and donated them to a nursing home in Wilsonville. We understand they were well-received! Their next project will be to crochet baby blankets and donate them to a local nursery or hospital. Thank you, ladies!

*If you would like to make a donation to the Red Hat group “Madam Hatters of Wilsonville” to help defray the cost of materials, please send your check or money order to Oregon CURE, marked specifically for “Red Hats” and send it directly to Oregon CURE at 1631 N.E. Broadway, #460, Portland, OR 97232.*

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### Suggested Reading

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By Jan Singleton

*Mountains Beyond Mountains, The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World*, by Tracy Kidder (2004 Random House Trade Paperback Edition). ISBN # 978-0-8129-7301-3.

I began reading this book on the recommendation of a friend. I couldn't put it down! Pulitzer Prize winning author Kidder brings to life the story of Dr. Paul Farmer, a man who would cure the world! Dr. Farmer, a medical anthropologist and physician, has dedicated his life to treating some of the world's poorest populations and, in the process, has helped to raise the standard of health care in some of the most underdeveloped areas of the world. *“In medical school, Dr. Farmer found his life's calling to cure infectious diseases and to bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. Mr. Kidder's account shows how one person can make a difference in solving global health problems through a clear-eyed understanding of the interaction of politics, wealth, social systems, and disease. Profound and powerful, [his book] takes us from Harvard to Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia as Farmer changes people's minds through his dedication to the philosophy that ‘the only real nation is humanity’.”* From Farmer's treatment of AIDS in Haiti to his treatment of MDR (multiple drug resistant) tuberculosis in a Russian prison, you will find this a most fascinating book. I recommend it to you.

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## Volunteer Opportunities

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**Support Group Leader:** If you would be willing to donate a couple hours a month to lead a North 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](mailto:charrison@seworks.org).

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### Excerpt from Letter from Matt Matteo

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“ \* \* \* I’m impressed with your newsletter as it seems to be NOT a lot of empty well-meaning words. I specifically found Dr. Rachel Hardesty’s speech on Restorative Justice to be ‘on target,’ as the System does make the crime the defining moment for all parties involved, holding everything in place about the criminal event. This seems particularly apt to me, as I was convicted and sentenced to a lengthy prison term in 1990 when I was 22 years old. I’ll soon be 40 and at my preliminary hearing I was told ‘due to the high-risk nature of your crime, we will not be supporting you for parole.’ This is my third parole hearing and no attention has been given to my demeanor and thoughts as an older and more reflective man than I was in 1990. Each hearing focuses solely on my crime, which I don’t dispute or wish to obscure, but it sure would be nice if Dr. Hardesty’s perspective were accepted because I really don’t believe my perpetual incarceration benefits anyone.”

*This is an excerpt from a letter sent by Matt Matteo to Oregon CURE after reading Oregon CURE’s Fall 2008 newsletter. Mr. Matteo is an accomplished artist and cartoonist who would welcome letters addressed to him as follows: Matt Matteo, BS7345, 801 Butler Pike, Mercer, PA 16137.*

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### You Can Make a Difference!!

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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.

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### QUOTED WORDS OF WISDOM

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SUCCESS IS NOT A PRODUCT OF FATE, CHANCE, OR LUCK; IT IS THE RESULT OF A BURNING DESIRE THAT KNOWS NOT DEFEAT.

-Dennis Kimbro

IT IS WHAT WE MAKE OUT OF WHAT WE HAVE, NOT WHAT WE ARE GIVEN, THAT SEPARATES ONE PERSON FROM ANOTHER.

-Nelson Mandela

START WHERE YOU ARE, USE WHAT YOU HAVE, DO WHAT YOU CAN.

-Arther Ashe



Reprinted by permission of Christian Snyder from *Serving Time, Serving Others*, by Tom Lagana and Laura Lagana. Christian Snyder is currently serving a 5-to 15-year sentence in New York State. He launched a career in freelance cartooning while incarcerated. He has been published in numerous magazines and trade journals. His cartoons are also published in *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner's Soul*, *Chicken Soup for the Volunteer's Soul*, and *Serving Time, Serving Others*. Cartooning has been a positive rehabilitative tool for him, and he plans to pursue freelance cartooning as a full-time career upon his release.

I DO WANT TO HELP **OREGON CURE** CONTINUE ITS WORK IN 2008

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)-----

Oregon CURE  
1631 N.E. Broadway, #460  
Portland, OR 97232