



Oregon CURE

Summer 2013
Volume 42

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

A Newsletter for Families and Friends of Incarcerated Individuals

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Through a Child's Eyes *by Michele Esser*

One of the quintessential events in every child's life, an event that marks you for life with memories – sights, sounds, tastes - is a carnival. I cannot speak for anyone else, but my first taste of cotton candy ranks high on the list of my choice childhood experiences. Today I volunteered and painted faces at a carnival for kids of all ages. Face painting sticky happy faces with butterflies, lightning bolts, fire-breathing dragons, flowers etc. is enough to make anyone's day special. The opportunity to connect with a child and grant wishes is truly amazing, even priceless. Did I mention I had glitter to top these colorful facials? Pure joy for four hours straight.

But the carnival I volunteered at was not a typical carnival. This carnival is orchestrated annually by the Wilsonville Rotary for the children and families of the women in custody at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. For over ten years, the Wilsonville Rotary has put on this event with the help of the Oregon Department of Corrections INSIDE the facility.

Every summer, the women incarcerated at CCCF and their families are treated to crafts, games, pictures, face-painting, and all the hamburgers, hotdogs, popcorn, snow cones and cotton candy you can eat. The event takes place in the yard behind the razor-wire and miles of chain-link fence. I was one lucky volunteer serving these adults in custody and their one hundred families today. Sure, when you think about it, the circumstances of these families pulls on your heart-strings, but for every unfortunate story, this event yields exponential joy. All of those kids today got to go to a real carnival with their mommy who is not at home right now.

I could spend hours sharing each and every poignant moment with you about my day today, but there is really not a way to express what today felt like for me. I am truly honored to have had the opportunity to paint face after face. I worked the booth with two beautiful and creative women residents, B. and A. (Initials used to protect their privacy). I wish I knew the name of the woman in blue and red who regularly brought me cold water and snow cones. She kept me hydrated on a hot July day. And I cannot fully express my gratitude to all of the patient children who loved my elementary renderings of the flowers, butterflies, dragonflies, dragons, and spider webs I drew upon their faces. It must have been the glitter's magic touch. We'll all be washing it off of ourselves and out of our hair for days.

This opportunity came to me through Gretchen, the president of Oregon CURE. Today's memories are priceless and are at the heart of why I volunteer as a member at large creating and updating the Oregon CURE publications and their website. Regardless of what paths and events led the women of CCCF to their temporary prison home, or any other adult in custody throughout the United States and the world, the men and women behind bars serving their time are human beings just as deserving of love, compassion, respect and joy as we are.

Mark your Calendars!!

Oregon CURE Annual Meeting

***Guest Speaker: Colette Peters
Director, Oregon Department of Corrections***

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Beaverton Library, 12375 SW Fifth St., Beaverton

Check our Website for more details www.oregoncure.org

Publication Notice

This newsletter is a publication of Oregon CURE. Oregon CURE is a 501 (c) (3) 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 Oregon CURE.

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Oregon CURE is an all-volunteer organization. Oregon CURE volunteers typically work at other jobs.

Oregon CURE is not a service organization. Do not send us any legal documents. We are not a legal service. We are not qualified to assist you in legal matters.

Legislative Recap

By Gretchen Vala

In the 2013 Oregon Legislative session, 2,679 measures were introduced.

1019 passed the House

932 passed the Senate

570 bills were signed by Governor Kitzhaber

We've recapped the status of some of the bills that Oregon CURE followed. For those bills that showed no movement – it's a message to us – we needed to be the legs to carry them forward! It is our responsibility as citizens of Oregon, and constituents of our representatives and senators to voice our concerns and opinions. Our lawmakers can't begin to know where we stand on public safety issues, unless we tell them. We can make a difference! If we sit back and leave it to someone else – we may not see the change we want to happen. We urge you to get involved – your vote and your voice will have an effect on the decisions that the Oregon Legislative assembly makes. They will hear us!

HOUSE BILLS:

HB2234 (at the request of Governor John Kitzhaber, M.D. FOR Dept of Corrections) eliminates sunset of provision authorizing supervisory authority to place offenders on inactive post-prison supervision. **HB 2234 has passed the House and Senate 5/23**

HB2549 (at the request of House Interim Committee on Judiciary) Establishes general rules regarding community notification based on results of risk assessment. Authorizes State Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision to conduct hearings to reclassify certain sex offenders and to relieve certain sex offenders of obligation to report. Applies to recent offenders on January 1, 2014, and remaining offenders on January 1, 2017. Declares emergency, effective on passage. **Passed July 6, 2013**

HB2552 (at the request of House Interim Committee on Judiciary) Authorizes persons convicted of sex crime for conduct occurring when person was under 16 years of age to petition for relief from obligation to report as sex offender under certain circumstances. Authorizes persons convicted of, or adjudicated for, sex crime in Oregon to obtain relief from reporting requirements when person does not reside, attend school or work in Oregon. **No movement**

HB2574 / SB58 (at the request of House Interim Committee on Judiciary) reduces minimum duration of special alternative incarceration program from 270 days to 240 days. **No movement**

HB2986 (Chief Sponsor Representative Michael Dembrow) Permits court, after suspension of driving privileges for failure to pay fine, to reinstate person's driving privileges if person is enrolled in pre-apprenticeship program or is registered as apprentice. **Signed by Governor Kitzhaber, May 28, 2013. Effective Date January 1, 2014.**

HB3054 (Sponsor Judiciary) modifies circumstances under which person arrested, charged or convicted of offense may have arrest, charge or conviction expunged. Modifies circumstances under which person arrested, charged or convicted of offense may have arrest, charge or conviction expunged. **No movement**

HB3194 (Public Safety) relating to crime, appropriating money, declaring an emergency; providing for criminal sentence reduction that requires approval by a two-thirds majority. The Governor's Commission on Public Safety proposed 19 recommendations for the 2013 legislature to review and consider. Although we had hoped for unanimous approval of all segments, the recommendations relative to sentence reductions were removed. One of the most important things to recognize is that there were thoughtful and careful discussions, and through testimony, phone calls, e-mails and visits to our lawmakers, we were heard. The house passed the modified version on June 27th and the Senate followed suit on July 1, although the final outcome is still in debate as the Senate votes came up 1 vote short for the 2/3 suggested to pass HB3194.

Please Note:

Due to the high cost of printing materials Oregon CURE charges \$2 each for booklets requested. **We will continue to provide all items free of charge to adults in custody.** Those booklets currently include: "Sometimes You're the Hammer, Sometimes You're the Nail," "Free-er – but Not Free," and "Keeping Love Alive." When making your request, please include a check made out to Oregon CURE. Thank you.

Does He or Doesn't He - Only Social Security Knows or, A Trip Under the Proverbial Rabbit Hole

by Becky Smith

My adventure to find a way to apply for Medicare benefits for my husband, prior to his release, has taken me down the proverbial rabbit hole and I found myself landing in the Social Security Wonderland. I always found myself wondering what answer I would get to my many questions each time I spoke with a representative; not to mention, how Social Security gets anything done when it's so difficult to get the same answer twice. In adventure I went to offices in four different cities and made six separate phone calls. All of which led me straight back to the rabbit hole. I did not embark on this journey alone. A friend of mine also is trying to get Medicare for her husband.

I tried the more personal direct approach, only to find myself chasing the Mad Hatter, screaming "I'm late, I'm late!" along the way. Little did I know, at the time, how true those very words would turn out to be.

Close to the end of January I attempted to take my husband's filled out and signed application directly into the local Social Security office. However, the only thing I was able to do is make a telephone interview appointment. Two weeks later I got the call from whom I'll refer to as the Queen of Hearts. The rabbit hole has begun. I explained to the Queen my husband's situation, with hopes she could tell me how to get it done. She adamantly insisted that my husband could not apply for his Medicare benefits while still incarcerated. That he would have to wait until he was released. She should have just said "Off with his head" for all the dread I was feeling at the time.

Then there is my friend's journey, which was more like the kiddie train rides at the zoo. Much to my chagrin, she had his card already in her red hot hand. She simply did an online application for her husband during the general enrollment time. She got a call from a Social Security rep, which she explained to her what she was trying to do. They mailed her an application for him to fill out, sign, and send back. Once that was all done, it was only a matter of weeks before she had his Medicare card. Some people have all the luck.

Being totally frustrated with the direct approach, and armed with what I thought to be reliable information, I set out to try the online approach myself. It was early March when I placed the application online and by the last week in March, I too received a phone call from a Wonderland representative, I'll call her the Cheshire cat. Initially she also told me NO my husband couldn't file prior to release. But unlike the Queen, she was willing to listen to my questions and look into the matter for me. She was very interested in the fact that my friend was able to get her husband's Medicare card. It was almost the end of March, just a few days to go, when she finally called me back. She went on to explain that it could be done. In her long elaborate explanation I gleaned that -

1. My husband needed to send in a written request to enroll in Medicare during the open enrollment period, which would end on the upcoming Sunday, on March 31. In the case that the 31st falls on a weekend it must be post marked by the first Monday after the 31st. In this case it was April 1st.
2. He had to write the letter himself.
3. It must be mailed from the institution he is at so they can validate that he, personally, has made the request.
4. I could not make the request for him or act as a Representative Payee.
5. He could also call to make his request.

I was able to see my husband the next day and he was able to get the letter in the mail. Later that week, my Cheshire cat finally got back to me. Yes, they did receive his letter, and yes it was post marked on the 1st. Now it's June and we just now got word back from Social Security. We still need to fill out an application and get it mailed in, but what we didn't get was another NO. So in answer to the questions of filing for Medicare before release, this is what I learned-

1. Can a person apply for Medicare benefits prior to release?

Answer: Yes, but only for Medicare not for any other benefits. This does not apply to those filing and seeking a disability claim

2. If so, how is it done?

Answer: The person being released needs to mail an application or write to Social Security and request to file for his/her Medicare benefits. It must come from them and be post marked before March 31st.

3. Which office to go to?

Answer: You need to go to the office closest to the place where the person being released will be residing.

4. What forms to fill out?

Answer: It will be an application for Medicare benefits only. Form SSA-1020-OCR-SM

5. When to make the application?

Answer: You need to file during the "general enrollment period" of the year of the release-, which is January 1st to March 31st. If you miss this deadline you must wait until the following year to apply. Coverage will not begin until July. If your expected release date is after July you will be required to pay the monthly premium for the months prior to release or you will lose your benefit. It is still unclear if there will be a 10% per year penalty for the years we had to wait to file after he turned 65.

So there you have it. If there were one thing I learned from my ordeal that I would like to pass on to you it would be -

DO **NOT** TAKE **NO** FOR AN ANSWER if you are trying to apply for Medicare prior to release.

"Education Behind Bars Newsletter" by Kristine Vala

"Education Behind Bars" is not only a very informative and well-researched reference book by Christopher Zoukis on the impact of education on our nation's prison population, it is also a current newsletter published by Middle Street Publishing. It does not charge subscription fees, and accepts original manuscripts.

The latest edition June/July 2013 includes a recommended reading list. Articles on "Why Prison Education is Effective", by Ross Van Ness, Ed.D., Prof. Emeritus, Ball State University, explaining how "higher education helps any person, in or out of prison, 'learn how to learn', and a detailed description by Christopher Zoukis on what prison education can look like at several levels. According to Mr. Zoukis, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs, which are often literacy programs, are more common than high school diploma programs in correctional institutions. They allow incarcerated students to earn a GED much faster than it would be possible to earn a high school diploma.

Some prisons offer Adult Continuing Education (ACE) or Adult Basic Education classes, which can be taught by incarcerated instructors or prison staff and can help speed progress for the GED. English as a Second Language classes are important for English proficiency and help to pass GED exams. Vocational training and apprentice programs for learning marketable skills to help with employment on release include electrical, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, and machine shop, among other areas, and can also include real work. College correspondence courses are allowed in some prisons and usually require the student to pay all costs. These courses have been shown to reduce recidivism and increase employment possibilities when released.

Mr. Zoukis is no longer the editor, or in a management role, but interested contributors may contact the Editor at Education Behind Bars Newsletter, Middle Street Publishing, Postal Annex, 3900 Pelandale Avenue, Box 319, Modesto, California 95356. The website for the Newsletter is WWW.PRISONEDUCATION.COM/ and can also be reached at TWITTER@PRISONEDU. In closing, I would like to quote Derrick Falkenberg, from his article in the "Education Behind Bars Newsletter" titled "Prison Administrators Should Support Advanced Education": "With so many obstacles facing the incarcerated upon release, education should not be one."

Recommended Reading

Education Behind Bars
By Christopher Zoukis
ISBN: 978-1934597774
Sunbury Press 2012
Available through www.Amazon.com;
www.BarnesandNoble.com

Financial Peace Revisited
By Dave Ramsey
ISBN: 978-0-670-03208-2
Viking 2003

Mandela's Way - Fifteen Lessons
on Life, Love, and Courage
By Richard Stengel
ISBN: 978-0-307-46068-4
Crown Publishers/New York 2009

The New Jim Crow
By Michelle Alexander
ISBN: 978-1-59558-103-7
The New Press 2010

Also helpful for ordering and mailing is:
Powell's City of Books
1005 W. Burnside
Portland, OR 97209
503-228-4651 and 1-800-878-7323/
www.powells.com

Marion County Chaperone Program by Alicia, Salem CURE Facilitator

I recently had the opportunity to participate in the chaperone program. The class, provided by Marion County, teaches you that one key element for the success of the ex-offender is having a positive pro-social support system. As a chaperone, you will become part of a collaborative team in assisting the individual to be compliant with their supervision and treatment. During the class you will hear presentations from a Marion County DA, a sex offender treatment provider, a victim advocate and a parole/probation officer.

You will learn about the special probation conditions and the necessity of having a safety plan. As a chaperone you must be committed to promoting community safety and offender change. Specific instruction is provided to increase understanding of sexual deviance and offense cycles, to promote community safety and offender support.

The class I attended was very full. We took short breaks often and had lunch provided, though participants may bring their own lunch.

This class is available to any person requested by a convicted sex offender on probation or parole. The participants can be a spouse, parent(s), other relatives or friends who show interest in supporting sex offender compliance in the community, in order to reduce prohibited contacts and relapse behavior.

- The individual must be 18 years or older
- Class attendance (approximately 7 hours) is a pre-requisite
- Program participation does NOT guarantee acceptance (must pass criminal background check)

The ex-offender must submit the name(s) to their PO ahead of time to register for the class. The cost is \$25 for the first participant and \$15 for each additional person. The class is usually offered every 3-4 months, however the next class for Marion County will be Fall 2013.

To ensure you receive your copy of the Oregon CURE Newsletter, please remember to send us your change of address so we can update our database.

Legislative Update (Continued from page 2)

The following recap for HB 3194 appeared on oregonlive.com on July 1, 2013 at 4:15 By [Christian Gaston, The Oregonian](#)

[House Bill 3194](#) will flat-line state prison growth over the next five years and save the state \$17 million over the next two years, with the savings aimed at shoring up local community corrections departments in an effort to reduce recidivism. The reform package is the result of two years of work by lawmakers and members of the Oregon Commission on Public Safety. The commission originally urged lawmakers to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences for three felonies covered by ballot Measure 11, but the bill was scaled back during negotiations with district attorneys, sheriffs and chiefs of police from around the state. Instead, the bill would reduce sentences for certain property and drug crimes and establish re-entry programs intended to reduce recidivism. The new policies would sunset in 10 years and save the state \$362 million over the next decade. [Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene](#), one of four lawmakers that co-chaired a joint legislative committee that developed the legislation called it a “compromise” that lawmakers need to follow-up on in the coming years. “Failure to move forward in five years would just be kicking the can down the road and we don’t want to do that,” Prozanski said. The House passed the bill last week in a 40-18 vote. Supporters hoped to see it pass the Senate by the same two-thirds margin. While Legislative Counsel ruled the reforms could be passed on a simple majority vote, the ruling is controversial because the bill changes provisions of Measure 57, which could require a two-thirds vote. Approving the bill by that margin would have insulated it from potential legal challenges, but the Senate vote came up short at 19-11. [Sen. Jackie Winters, R-Salem](#), also served as a co-chair of the joint committee. She praised the bill, calling it a step toward improving the state’s criminal justice system. “It is a modest first step toward a smarter public safety system,” Winters said. “This is an important opportunity that should make our state safer.”

SENATE BILLS:

[SB70](#) (at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary) Eliminates July 1, 2013, sunset of provision that limits length of incarceration court may impose when certain probationary sentences are revoked for reasons other than commission of new crime. **No movement**

[SB78](#) (at the request of the Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary) modifies rate of reimbursement that city or county may seek from inmate confined in local correctional facility. **No movement**

[SB93](#) (at the request of the Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary) authorizes the Dept of Corrections to make grants to counties for provision of reentry support and services to certain offenders under 19 years of age. **SB 93 was signed into law 4/12/13**

[SB187](#) (at the request of Governor John Kitzhaber, M.D. for Dept of Corrections) modifies time period within which Dept of Corrections must comply with court’s direction to prepare certain proposed release plans. **SB 187 was signed into law 4/11/13**

[SB 463](#) (Chief Sponsor Senator Chip Shields, Regular Sponsor Senator Jackie Winters) requires Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to create, upon request of member of Legislative Assembly, racial and ethnic impact statement for proposed legislation or state measure. **Signed by the Governor July 1, 2013, Effective date of January 1, 2014**

[SB464](#) (Chief Sponsor Senator Chip Shields) requires the court to inform the jury of certain mandatory minimum sentences prior to deliberation. **No movement**

[SB620](#) (Chief Sponsors Senator Betsy Close and Senator Betsy Johnson) defines “rate of recidivism” for purposes of evaluations conducted by Oregon Dept of Administrative Services, Dept of Corrections, Oregon Criminal Justice Commission and other public bodies. **No movement**

[SB638](#) (Sponsor Judiciary) approves adoption of and modifications to rules of Oregon Criminal Justice Commission regarding OAR 213-018-0037. **SB 638 passed the Senate on March 27, 2013 and passed the House on May 8, 2013**

10 Things Employers Expect Their Employees to Know: *A Soft Skills Training Workbook* by **Frederick H. Wentz** Recommended Reading by Gretchen Vala

It’s never too early – or too late – to learn a new skill – or to improve or enhance one that you already have! Frederick Wentz developed this material while helping recently incarcerated individuals find employment. Soft skills are the non-technical skills that people need to utilize in the workplace. *Teaching people how to find a job is one of the most important elements of a job-training program. Teaching people how to keep a job is even more important.* Work attitude and work behavior are two of these skills. Attitude is how you feel about your job – and your approach to the job. Behavior is the way you do your job and how the job gets done. A positive work attitude and work behavior includes knowledge, hard work, dedication and skill!

A variety of topics are explored in this work book, including (but not limited to):

- ✓ Important factors in getting hired – most common reasons for getting fired
- ✓ Adult life is not easy - maturity – attitude – advancement
- ✓ Education – emotional intelligence
- ✓ Foregoing immediate pleasures
- ✓ Sacrifice – goals - honesty – choice – anger – self esteem
- ✓ Accepting responsibility - Performance standards
- ✓ Respect – habits – teamwork – decision making

Beaverton Support Group *Gretchen Vala*

I have facilitated the Beaverton Support Group for over 8 years! There is a core group of people who attend and we are always anxious to hear how their loved one in prison is doing, and what those on the outside are doing to get through the sentence. The circumstances that led to the conviction do not have to be discussed; it is enough to know that we are all going through a grieving process, which usually turns into a growing process! And yes, we all have growing pains. I know that knowledge is the answer – we need to understand the processes and procedures that our loved ones must live by, and by accomplishing this, we can effect change.

We draw from each other's experiences to help us cope with the new challenges in our lives. Amazingly enough, we often find things to laugh about, and there are always situations to celebrate! Whether it's "my son has been able to stay out of seg for 9 months!," "my husband was approved to move into Honor's housing," or "my loved one has a job and is tutoring other adults in custody," we cheer for the tremendous strength of character that our children, spouses, and friends exhibit by finding a way to get through their sentence in a positive and constructive manner.

At the July meeting, Randy Geer, Chief of Inmate Services for DOC, spoke to the group and told us about his 30 years with the DOC, which actually began before he was formally employed, because his father also worked for the Oregon DOC. Through Randy's story, we were all reminded that everyone has had tragic circumstances in their lives, and it's how we deal with these circumstances that can lead us to greater compassion and understanding of others.

Randy confirmed that DOC is going to start using new language and will begin removing the term "inmate" and replace it with "adult in custody" wherever possible. We applaud the DOC's efforts to humanize our loved ones by removing the label and crafting a term that is factual but not degrading. Randy spoke with the attendees who introduced themselves and spoke a little bit about their loved one in prison. Randy and his assistant Kelly generously stayed longer than scheduled and answered questions and explored solutions for a little more than 2 hours. Randy had quite a list of things and situations to research and we will try to incorporate the responses to any general concerns in upcoming newsletters.

Dawnell Myer, responsible for education and work based education for Oregon DOC will be at the September meeting, co-facilitating with Oregon CURE and Larry Bennett, head of Intake Services at Coffee Creek. Please join us on September 4, 2013 at 5:30 pm in the Beaverton City Library.

Tel-Mate Video Phone Calls *Gretchen Vala*

DOC has recently advised us that 11 of the 14 prisons have set up video phone calls. The three remaining facilities: OSCI, OSP and TRCI are scheduled to have this option set up and running within mid-August. Although the calls are expensive, \$19.60 for a 30-minute call, you will be able to see your loved one – and know that they are safe. The video phone calls can also be utilized by people who are not able to visit in person, whether from infirmity, or if they have not been approved by DOC to visit in person, or just the high cost of driving across the state! There is no charge to deposit funds into your loved one's phone account if you do this through the Tel-Mate website, however, there is a fee if you deposit funds into a trust account.

Hands Across the Bridge and Oxfest: The Largest Recovery Event in the Northwest! *Patty Katz*

Eleven years ago, two women in recovery read an article about National Recovery Month and realized people all over the United States were celebrating their recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. They decided they would stand on top of the bridge at daybreak to celebrate that they were no longer under the bridge in their addictions. This decision marked the beginning of the Hands Across the Bridge event, a collaborative effort between Oregon and Washington to celebrate "National Recovery Month."

The first Hands Across the Bridge celebration was held on the I-5 Bridge in 2002 with about 200 people and over the next eleven years, the event grew with more than 2500 people joining hands in 2012. Each year, people come together, tell stories, elected officials are invited to attend, and one year the governor of Oregon attended. The media covers the event; the governors of both states send proclamations. Gil Kerlikowske, nominated by President Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy sends his best wishes and a message that is read to the crowd.

Many of the folks that plan this event have a "history" with the criminal justice system. Patty Katz and Louise Wedge, (founding directors of Hands Across the Bridge Project) are formerly incarcerated women. They have each served time (and time again) in prison.

The co-organizers include:

Harry Olsen founder of PHEONIX Rising Transitions. PHEONIX is a nonprofit organization in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. They reach in to people in prisons and the community partnering with those who are incarcerated to make a smooth and successful transition into the community as they are released.

Shawn Bower, co-founder of Iron Tribe, a Community Organization of Ex-Cons in Recovery, men and women who have been incarcerated and are now engaged in a program of living that is based upon recovery, peer support and building community.

Jimmy Williams, coordinator for Washington County Bridges to Change, an organization that is committed to stop the revolving door of recidivism.

People Can Change and We Do!!

Who: Hands Across the Bridge
What: Community event to Celebrate National Recovery Month
When: September 3, 2012 10:00 – Noon
Where: OREGON Red Lion On the River
909 N. Hayden Drive. Portland

WASHINGTON Esther Short Park
(8th and Columbia) Vancouver

Please Join Us! Repondez s'il vous plait! 360.903.4645

A Fond Farewell to Support Group Facilitators

Ken Olson, Eugene

Matt Olson had only six months left on his five-year prison sentence when his parents, Ken and Marilyn Olson, decided to drive from their home in Veneta west of Eugene to Salem for their first CURE meeting. "It was a local group and at that time there were not that many committed members," Ken said. He decided to start a new branch in Eugene. He put down a \$125 deposit and rented the Singer Room in the Eugene Public Library for the Eugene chapter's first meeting on the first Thursday in October 2004.

The venture wasn't an immediate hit. A few people showed the first couple months, but not all returned. About the time Matt was released in March, 2005 a small nucleus had formed, and someone found out that Ken had been paying \$25 a month for the room. The group decided to ease the burden on Ken and to hold monthly meetings in local restaurants. Even though his son was out of prison, Ken stuck with the group, making reservations with restaurants and even lining up speakers.

"It was important for us to be able to talk about our experiences and our hurts, about our disappointments and dreams," he says now in retrospect. "Everything needs to come out and it doesn't come out for most. They don't get a chance to talk and that's the main thing." Not only has CURE been helpful to him and his family, it's been fun. They've had good times and made many friends and began such things as a writers and walkers group. "Barbecues, picnics, carpooling for visits to prisons in eastern Oregon, helping one another, it's a dynamic process, solving problems by talking," he said.

After graduating from Washington State with a teachers' credential in 1962, he didn't return to teach in his hometown of Kirkland. He traveled to the Philippines to teach. He landed next in Kansas City at the Nazarene Theological Seminary, where he met Marilyn. He didn't enroll in the seminary and instead taught a year at a school of 200 students in Grass Range, Mont. When his one-year contract was up, he moved to take math classes at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. Marilyn, meanwhile, was putting out newsletters at the Church of Nazarene headquarters nearby. They were married Aug. 17, 1968.

He earned a masters degree in French from the University of Illinois. The next year, they decided to venture west to Eugene. They adopted Tim in 1974 and Matt in 1980. Tim is now a youth pastor in California. After teaching middle school for seven years in Cottage Grove, Ken taught two years in Korea (1992-1994) and then returned to teach in Oregon State Correctional Institute east of Salem for a year.

Now at 74, he can look back on his years of service and realize that few experiences have been more rewarding than CURE.

While Ken is passing the spoon, the symbol of who has the floor in Eugene CURE meetings, he says he will stay connected with the group he founded.

After his release from prison, Matt overcame school difficulties because of dyslexia and earned a degree from the University of Oregon.

Alicia, Salem

Alicia has facilitated the Salem Support Group for the past six years. She brought warmth, generosity of spirit and compassion to every meeting, along with a really nice assortment of teas, coffees, muffins, and other snacks! The Salem group grew from one or two people to as many as 25-30 "regulars" who came to share their situations, update the group on how their loved one was coping inside, and how they were coping on the outside. They helped the families of the newly incarcerated find their way in the direction their lives have taken.

Another son came home, and Alicia will step back from her role as facilitator. She will be missed! At this time, the group is scheduled to meet at the same location in Salem with co-facilitators who have been consistent members of the group. Please check the support group section of www.oregoncure.org for updates.

Support Group Meeting Information

Monthly Support Groups are held throughout the state. Please refer to our website: www.oregoncure.org for contact information dates and times.

Transition

Preparing for life on the outside is a concern all of us share for our loved ones. It seems dependent on their location as to what transition planning is available and offered. Whether it's a treatment program or how to write a resume, the adult in custody who is able to soak in any bit of information may find just the extra confidence to face the outside. I encouraged my son to take everything and anything offered. What else did he have to do to fill his time, I asked.

Once home it was difficult to watch as my son filled out each online resume and made each phone call. He finally found an employer willing to hire him, but still set higher goals for himself. He has met one of those employment goals with a clear path for his future. There is respect from employers and co-workers. Getting a job was actually easier than finding housing. The list for apartments given to him from his probation officer was basically useless. None of the listings was viable. Again, pounding pavement and hoping to find an owner who did not require any kind of background check. Bingo! Housing found, poor quality outside the city. We were in a position to purchase a rental property in a better area. We rent to our son and his "former roommate," a very nice young man. No question about it, my son is one of the lucky ones. What happens to everyone else?

I have a relationship with my son I would never have had prior to his incarceration. We have built closeness through visits, phone calls and letters during his time away we never thought possible. I watch him build relationships with his young niece and nephew, born while he was away. I know how important it was for us to be in touch and involved while he was gone. All of us did a bit of growing up. I found becoming involved in CURE helped me heal and get through the tough parts. I stay because there is so much more to do.

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



Thoughts for the Day:

All things are difficult before they are easy. Thomas Fuller

I had some words with my wife, and she had some paragraphs with me. Bill Clinton

The great question... which I have not been able to answer... is, "What does a woman want? George Clooney

Always forgive your enemies, nothing annoys them so much. Oscar Wilde

When asked if my cup is half-full or half-empty, my only response is that I am thankful I have a cup. Sam Lefkowitz

I've learned that when you harbor bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere. Andy Rooney

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Send your Member donation to: **Oregon CURE 1631 NE Broadway #460, Portland, OR 97232**

Be sure to include: Your Name, Address, City, State and Zip, Phone/Email, Name of Adult in Custody with SID# and Facility

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