



Oregon CURE

Fall 2013
Volume 43

Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants

A Newsletter for Families and Friends of Incarcerated Individuals

1631 NE Broadway, #460 Portland, OR 97232
(503) 977-9979 (Portland Area) 1-877-357-CURE (Outside Portland)

DOC Director Highlights 2013 Annual Meeting

Each year, the Oregon chapter of CURE holds an annual meeting for members. This meeting highlights the projects and accomplishments of the chapter for the year. Typically this event also features a guest speaker from the community. This year the Oregon CURE board's feature speaker was the new Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections, Colette S. Peters.

Ms. Peters spoke for about 45 minutes and then took questions for another 30 minutes regarding the vision she has for the Department of Correction's future. Despite significant budget and culture challenges, Ms. Peters thinks that change is possible and the majority of the attendees in the audience shared in the optimism by the end of her presentation.

Director Peters has a long and full history with Oregon DOC, including a few years spent leading the Oregon Youth Authority. During her tenure at OYA, she was able to implement and enhance educational programs for youth. For this reason, the Oregon CURE Board of Directors specifically requested that Ms. Peters share and discuss her vision for educational program reform at the DOC level with our members at the annual meeting.

We were very happy to hear that Director Peters intends to invest in rehabilitation and quoted statistics regarding the reduction of recidivism through higher education. Oregon's current recidivism rate is at 26.5%, which can be reduced to 14% if the person in prison earns an Associate's Degree, which is further reduced to 6% with a Bachelor's Degree and plummets to a 0% recidivism rate if the person in prison earns a Master's while incarcerated. With statistics like these, it is hard to ignore the value of providing educational programs to adults in custody. Optimism aside, currently, there are only sporadic programs offered at various facilities, so a great deal of work will need to be done to make a significant impact upon Oregon's current recidivism rate.

While it's really too early in her tenure to demand a report card, Oregon CURE is encouraged to hear that the Director has her eye on the prize of lowering Oregon's recidivism rate by examining how the DOC can steer the formerly incarcerated to successful reentry and employment upon release by increasing access to education.

Another area that Director Peters spoke at length upon is that the Oregon Corrections Enterprise is being restructured. At this time 1100 people are employed through OCE and Director Peter's goal is to greatly expand this number. This will mean more jobs not only for individuals in the private sector, but for adults in custody as well. Ms. Peters is intending the jobs, which go to incarcerated individuals to provide practical on-the-job experience, and skills that can be later used after release, increasing the potential of the individuals at finding better jobs than are available to them now.

Director Peters covered several other topics during her presentation, but the last one that we'd like to highlight here is how the DOC is planning on dealing with the mandatory changes in health care. The DOC will assist people in prison due to release as of 1.1.14 to apply for the Affordable Health Care Act. This will allow people to be covered the day of their release. If your loved one is coming home soon and requires any type of medications, you can be proactive and research doctors and clinics, and even make that first appointment, so that their health care / medications will be uninterrupted.

Upon reflection, Education, On-The-Job training, and Medical Coverage are not topics that one would expect to hear as the chief concerns of a state department of corrections agency. When the meeting began, the room was tense and the audience was skeptical and even prejudiced towards the person tasked with maintenance of an organization, which often seems to be working against our loved one's hopes and desires for better futures.

By the end of the evening, the atmosphere had changed and it seemed everyone left the meeting feeling more positive about the future when they arrived. Ms. Peters seems genuinely concerned about the welfare of those under her care and with their futures. We are lucky to be in a state where DOC leadership is humanistic in its scope and hopefully its application. Only time will tell.

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.

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

Articles may be copied in its entirety with credit going to the author or to the publication.

2011-2013 Board of Directors

Gretchen Vala – President
Kris Vala – Vice President
Bonnie Nusser – Secretary
Members at Large:
Michele Esser
LaRae Conley
Rebecca Read

Newsletter Editor: Bonnie Nusser

Contributions and Inquiries can be directed to:
Oregon CURE
1631 NE Broadway, #460
Portland, OR 97232
Telephone: (503) 977-9979 (Portland area)
1-877-357-CURE (2873) (Outside Portland)

Website: www.oregoncure.org

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.

From the Editor:

This time of year is filled with contradictions. Many are spending first holidays without loved ones at your tables... Yet for others this is a time of joy, celebrating their return. Whatever your circumstance, however you celebrate, I am thinking of you and send you peace.

Bonnie Nusser

Changes to Non-Cash Incentive OAR 291-077-0035

Oregon CURE met with DOC staff to review the proposed changes to the structure of the Non Cash Incentive administrative rule. Our primary concerns were the restriction of personal property if the adult in custody experienced a reduction in their incentive level to level 1, and the recommendation for relieving overcrowding in visiting rooms (which was removed from the rule).

DOC has stated that these non-cash incentives were developed to encourage pro-social behavior and to motivate adults in custody towards positive institutional behavior and program compliance. There will no longer be a waiting period for people entering DOC to purchase televisions or MP3 players, however, the adult in custody could lose the use of their property if their incentive level is reduced to Level I due to a disciplinary sanction. This will go into effect on February 1, 2014.

Weekly canteen spending limits have been increased as well as monthly visiting points for all adults in custody who are at either Level II or III. These increases will go into effect on December 1, 2013.

Although the use of specific incentive property and the manner in which it is restricted may differ by institution, each institution will create, maintain and make available to all adults in custody an outline detailing non-cash incentive services and privileges available at each incentive level for that specific facility.

Oregon CURE advocated for a less rigid structure particularly for those people sanctioned to segregation time to regain full use of their property upon their return to general population. We were able to negotiate a slight modification that changed the verbiage from mandatory to optional. Oregon CURE is appreciative of the assistance from a key volunteer that worked closely with adults in custody in preparing our comments and recommendations.

We are updating our database! Please note that this will be your last newsletter if we haven't heard from you within the last year! *We will make exceptions if you are in prison.* Oregon CURE does not share our database with any other organization other than National CURE. If you donate to Oregon CURE you will be added to the National CURE database and will receive the U.S. newsletter 3 times a year.

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.

Newsletter Sponsorship

Thirteen years ago my world was shattered. My nineteen-year-old son was convicted of a felony and went to prison. As I stumbled numbly through the initial shock, the shame, the overwhelming helplessness, I was introduced to Oregon CURE. Meeting others that had, or were, experiencing these same emotions was a comforting as a mother's embrace. I attended the local support group, and I began to grow stronger and to heal.

Over the months, as I gained strength and my life returned to its regular pace, I quit attending meetings. For years I have sung the praises of how the CURE support group carried me through the most challenging time of my life, thinking that support groups were the sole function of Oregon CURE.

Last year, after retiring, I received my CURE newsletter, and I decided to check the box to indicate that I would be interested in volunteering. That, my friends, is when my eyes were opened. I had visualized myself slapping address labels on newsletters, or learning how to run a support group. And although that is an important function of CURE, it is certainly not a complete picture of what we do. Oregon CURE is also actively involved in advocating for those incarcerated at the state level, and by providing those incarcerated with publications.

Our nonprofit organization spends approximately \$1100.00 each year on printing publications and postage, primarily for those who are incarcerated. Publications include newsletters, informational brochures about CURE, pamphlets providing information on release, how an adult in custody can maintain relationships while incarcerated, tips on securing medical attention, and various other topics.

We are proud to say that over half of the people on our database are adults in custody who are currently receiving our newsletter, with additional requests coming in regularly. However, of those receiving our newsletter, the majority do not have the means to make the monetary contribution suggested that helps to offset the cost of publishing and mailing. With paper and postage costs rising, this places a burden on CURE's budget for other correspondence and publications.

We are looking for SPONSORS. As a sponsor, you would support one, or more adult(s) in custody for their annual copies of CURE's newsletter. Our goal is to have 50% of our non-paying recipients sponsored by March of 2014. And it is easy! Simply complete the form below and send it in with your contribution.

I would like to be the 2014 sponsor of:

* One individual (\$5) * Two individuals (\$10) * Three individuals (\$15) * _____ Individuals (\$_____)

You can choose to be recognized as a sponsor in our next newsletter, or your sponsorship can remain anonymous. Please confirm if you'd like to be listed as a sponsor.

Be sure to check our website monthly to see our progress!

Oregon CURE is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Oregon. All donations are tax deductible according to state law.

Despair By - SABN

There was a time, back when, if you asked me what despair looks and feels like, I wouldn't be able to give you an answer. These days if you asked me the same question I would, and will, give you that answer. It's probably not going to be a direct answer, but here it is anyway, in my personal experience. Recently I happened across a friend I knew a few years ago. Actually this friend is my brother-in-law. I'll say it's been about 10 years since I've seen him. I won't say he was my favorite brother-in-law, but nonetheless I got along with him whenever we were around each other. Anyway, the last couple times I had stopped to visit with him and my sister they were vibrant, busy, stressed out people trying to raise a child and keep up with life, just like everyone else. We'll come back to him in a bit.

I actually didn't really figure this out until my recent visit stated above. It was actually after that visit, I realized what despair really feels like. To me it's not having any hope for the future. The idea of getting up each morning to the same thing, getting dressed and going to eat something that might or might not be edible or to just stay in bed and not eat. The latter is what is starting to win out.

Despair, sitting behind a locked door for an hour or more feeling like you are going to go crazy and then 5 minutes after coming out, being so totally bored and frustrated you are ready to go back being behind your locked door.

Despair, just not having the strength to care anymore, about anything.

Despair, wanting to end it all but not having any way of doing it.

Despair, you know... Just, despair.

Now back to my brother-in-law. In an unfortunate place and at an unfortunately bad time in my life and his for that matter, we met with eye contact. He had a listless look of nothing on his face. He didn't say anything to me and I didn't say anything to him, mostly because I wasn't positive it was really him. Once he was finished doing his thing, he headed back to his locked door with the same listless look on his face. As for me, I had to make a phone call. I needed to make sure he was who I thought he was. Sure enough it was he.

Continued on Page 6

Oregon CURE... What Do We Do?

We have received several comments on the website over the last few months questioning what is the purpose of Oregon CURE. What do we do?

The stated mission of Oregon CURE is “to reduce crime by advocating for effective criminal justice policies and programs. Oregon CURE encourages pro-family policy throughout the corrections system in improved visiting guidelines and pre-release programs. We advocate to improve treatment programs, broaden education and job training, advocate for legislation that promotes effective corrections policies and support effective transition programs from prison back to the community.” On September 23, 2013, several of the Oregon CURE board members met with Colette Peters, Director of Oregon Department of Corrections, and several department heads for our annual collaboration meeting. This annual meeting is one of the regular methods Oregon CURE has to check in with the DOC and advocate for changes in department policy and procedures.

Prior to the meeting, the board reviews previous meeting agendas and progress. Working with a state agency is a slow and arduous process for several reasons that are outside the control of CURE and often the DOC. The DOC can only rapidly make changes to its procedures that are not budget related. Furthermore, the DOC is a machine with an intricate system of pieces that fit together, so changing one item might affect an area that cannot be changed. Combine that with the fact that management of the DOC recently changed and with management changes come changes in operational procedure. Positions within the DOC rotate frequently, so you might set an agenda with one group and then 6 months later have to restart the conversation with an entirely different group of people or the same people who now have different roles and responsibilities. For these reasons, our 2013 meeting agenda items were very similar to previous years.

Despite these known challenges, the CURE board proposed several ideas and changes to the DOC this year. Our main focuses this year are communication, education, rehabilitation and reentry. It's no coincidence that these focuses are derived directly from our mission statement quoted above. To increase communication, we talked about streamlining the process of notification cards going to families of adults in custody who recently enter the Department intake facility at Coffee Creek. It seems that these cards are being distributed, but often the adults in custody don't send them. Intake is a stressful experience after often a lengthy and stressful justice process. The DOC agreed that the cards need to be distributed and adults need to be reminded of their purpose and to send them out to family members. Furthermore the DOC agreed to translate the cards into Spanish and add CURE information to both the English and Spanish versions.

In addition to the notification cards, CURE requested to be placed in contact with each of the Public Information Officers at each of the Oregon Prisons. The purpose of this is for Oregon CURE to receive copies of the institutions' newsletters at a minimum and hopefully build that relationship so that CURE can leverage the PIOs to keep the public aware of important happenings at each prison. Watch for prison updates in 2014 as a result of this new communication channel.

On the subject of education, CURE again proposed leveraging the prison television network for educational purposes. The idea is that educational DVDs can easily be played over the current network so that adults in custody can use their televisions, and now MP3 players, as educational sources. During the meeting CURE discovered that the DOC has been testing a similar program at the Oregon Youth Authority and there was an overwhelming sense of positivity that this is something that we should see implemented soon within the wider DOC organization.

Issues with visiting, specifically the recent increase in sensitivity of metal detectors at Coffee Creek Correctional Institution, were discussed and within a week after our meeting, the detectors were recalibrated and this was fixed.

Lastly, the subject of a perceived lack of reentry programs was discussed. CURE has often talked about six months being too close to re-entry to begin the re-entry process and discussion. We have also noted many inconsistencies between the roles of counselors in the lives of those assigned. Some adults in custody interact with counselors and some never do. Counseling appears to vary widely between institutions. This is disturbing given that the counselor is specifically set up to be the one person on the inside of the prison with the ability to advocate on behalf of the incarcerated. Having a counselor interact as policies suggest versus no interaction seems to be directly proportional to the success of the adult within the institution(s) over the entire time of custody with the DOC. During the meeting we learned that the DOC is also investigating the inconsistencies among prison counselors and reentry processes within the institutions. We were relieved to hear that the DOC and CURE are on the same page about the role and importance of counselors. We learned that the DOC is taking another look at improving the re-entry process.

Overall the meeting was very successful. Since the meeting, we've learned that the PIOs have added CURE to their email distribution list. The notification cards distributed during the intake process have been translated into Spanish and CURE information is being distributed to families of the newly incarcerated sooner than before. The board is optimistic that we will see progress on our agenda items with the DOC under the new leadership. We are currently discussing the possibility of increasing our meeting frequency with the DOC to twice per year rather than just once. Ideally we'd like to keep the momentum going. In reviewing this year's meeting's action items, we are satisfied with our mission successes, but there is much more work to be done.

Oregon CURE 2013 Year-at-a-Glance

The Oregon Chapter of CURE is non-profit and is supported 100% by donations from members and 100% of our work is accomplished by volunteers. We are proud of our 2013 accomplishments to date:

Six Support Groups across the state of Oregon meet in Beaverton, Salem, Eugene, Medford, S.E. Portland and our Spanish speakers meet in Hillsboro.

- **Intake Orientations** are held once a quarter in Salem and Beaverton with Oregon DOC representatives and Oregon CURE volunteers. You will find out how you can maintain your relationship with your loved one and will learn more about the Oregon DOC's correction plan and accountability model.

- **Transition Release Orientations** meet quarterly with 3 Portland Metro counties and Marion County Community Corrections. Probation officers and a CURE volunteer explain the process of post-prison supervision, and how the family can help their loved one successfully reenter our communities.

Newsletters and Publications contain collected articles and pertinent information regarding Oregon's prison system and advocating for criminal justice reform with our legislative assembly. Although we are unable to give legal advice, we will research and publish responses to concerns shared by our incarcerated loved ones.

Liaison with Oregon Department of Corrections throughout the year. We have been fortunate to have key DOC personnel speak at the Beaverton support group: Randy Geer, Chief of Inmate Services; Hank Harris and Cindy Booth, Transitional Services Division; Dawnell Myers, Education, Programs and Treatment; and Larry Bennett, Intake Operations Manager who has facilitated the Intake Orientations with Oregon CURE for over 12 years. The Salem group has also invited in guest speakers from DOC to discuss food services. An Oregon CURE volunteer participated in a DOC visiting workgroup and was invited back to take part in a Future States workgroup.

Activity with International CURE Board members attended the International CURE Board meeting held in Washington DC in September of 2012. We had the opportunity to attend several workshops: Reforms Advocated by the United Nations; Hiring People with a Criminal Conviction; the Webb Bill; the Second Chance Act; Air Conditioning in Prisons and Jails; Costs of Phone Calls in Prisons and Jails, Abolishing Juvenile LWOP sentences and many others. We wrapped up the weekend by meeting with our lawmakers on the hill. The Oregon CURE chair, Gretchen Vala is the vice-chair of International CURE and is a member of the Executive Committee and has represented Oregon CURE at the last several board meetings.

Ongoing Relationships with Other Organizations has an ongoing alignment with Partnership for Safety and Justice with board members and volunteer involvement in local action team meetings. We participate in PSJ's Annual Gatherings and Lobby Day when the legislature is in session.

Legislative Testimony Oregon CURE board members and volunteers testified in support of HB 3194 this year. Although the final bill left out key components that would have amended M11 sentences, we represented CURE members with a strong statement of support for the recommendations by the Governor's commission.

Check out our website for additional information: www.oregoncure.org

Holiday Pricing for VIP Calls, Messages, Photos, Wall Posts

Take Note!!!! A memo from Michael Gower, Department of Corrections Assistant Director for Operations was circulated regarding **Holiday Pricing for VIP calls, Telmate Messages, Photo Exchanges and Wall Posts.**

Telmate and DOC will be lowering the cost of communications from November through December 31, 2013. Video Interactive Phone (VIP) calls will be 30 cents per minute for a total charge of \$9.00 for 30 minutes. Telmate messages, photo exchange, and wall posts will be 25 cents for each exchange.

If you haven't yet tried this, this might just be the time. If you have questions, dial 211# from any Telmate phone. Friends and family may contact Telmate customer service at 1-866-516-0115.

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.

If better is possible, good is not enough.
(Unknown)

Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek. Mario Andretti, Race Car Driver

Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence.
(Unknown)

I am a big believer in the "mirror test." All that matters is if you can look in the mirror and honestly tell the person you see there that you've done your best. John McKay, NFL Coach

The Rocky Road by Becky Smith

After ten long years of separation, there I was, at the crack of dawn, standing outside the prison gate anxiously waiting for my husband to walk straight into my arms and back into my world. I knew that his transition would be a rocky road for him, but little did I know that there would be some bumps in the road for me as well. Unexpectedly, I found myself facing moments of frustration, anxiousness, stress, impatience, or annoyance, which conflicted, with the incredible joy of having him home.

At first, though married for years, we were not unlike newlyweds learning how to live together again, and, like honeymooners; it was great to be back together again. But it soon became evident that the similarities would be short-lived. Our honeymoon had the added burden of post-prison supervision (PPS) restrictions. I was astonished to discover his “can do” and “cannot do” lists frequently became my list of restrictions too. I became anxious worrying about making a mistake and inadvertently creating problems with his supervisor. I didn’t have a clue how little I was prepared for the impact that PPS would have on me. But I did what I had to do to make things work. If I wanted him home with me then I, too, had to accept the conditions imposed.

Along with coping with PPS (which is, by the way, easier than PMS!! lol) surrendering my role as “chief cook and bottle washer” was more difficult than I had imagined. For years I was the organizer, money handler, appointment maker and problem solver. Prior to his release, if anything had to be done I was the only one who could do it. Now, there are two of us working on daily life decisions. As he attempted to reorganize our life to his liking it felt that he was being critical of the way I had been doing things for so long. I learned not to take it so personally and became willing to make concessions and compromises.

As time went on I was surprised at some of the things he did that challenged my patience and sense of humor. For example, frequently I would find the water in the bathroom running and lights left on in an empty room. But as funny as it seemed, it eventually became very frustrating. It took some time before I realized that these were things he didn’t have to do in all the years he was in. As I kept this in mind little by little the irritation became tolerable and my sense of humor returned.

As I did all the driving, for the first few weeks, he was better able to take in the sights of his old haunts, and familiarize himself with all the changes 10 years brought. But it wasn’t until he got his license back that I had one of the most unexpected adjustments to make. I had to get used to being a passenger again and leave the overbearing back-seat driver at home. That’s easier said than done, believe me. Heavy traffic is a lot scarier when you are a passenger, who’s used to city driving, sitting next to a driver who hasn’t been behind the wheel in years. I learned to keep my mouth shut and just hold on tight.

As we are all aware technology has changed at warp speed. Despite his exposure to the outside world through television and movies, there were still many stumbling blocks for him to overcome. Even though he had a cell phone before he fell, his new cell phone (not even a “smart” one mind you) completely confounded him the first few weeks he had to use it. I became increasingly impatient with the countless times I had to show him how use all the different features, and constantly reminding him to carry his phone with him, along with his wallet and keys. In my attempt to bring him up to date with technology there were times I gave him more information than he could handle. This would cause him to short circuit a little and shut down. He would toss his hands up in the air and abruptly say he had enough. Eventually I figured it was best to just back off, constantly reminding myself again to be patient, that this was all part of the assimilation process.

These are just a few things that I have encountered so far in the transition process. As time went on I found myself becoming supportive in a whole new way. Our wants, needs, and comfort zone had drastically changed and we both needed to learn what our brand new roles in our lives would be. Just as it was hard for me learn to relinquish control, it was just as hard for him adapt to the new duties in his life. It’s the dance of life knowing just when to be helpful and when to let them “sink or swim”. This will always be a challenge for all of us. Transition is a two-way street, give and take journey. It’s not always a honeymoon and there will be bumps in the road along the way. Above all, I learned that it takes patience, time, and space for both of us to make **our** transition successful.

Despair: Continued from Page 3:

Later in the day he came out from behind his locked door and went out the front door and disappeared for a few hours. Upon his return he had the same listless look on his face as he had earlier. After a couple minutes he uneventfully wandered back to behind his locked door. There he stayed. I walked by a couple times just getting the nerve up to knock on his door, but I chickened out and left him be. He was lazily reading a book. Later, at bedtime, I got the courage to slip a piece of candy under his door and knocked. He looked over and I gave him thumbs up sign, and then pointed down. He looked down, smiled a teeny-tiny little itsy-bitsy bit and went back to reading his book. It was then I knew he knew who I was. I thought that was a good sign and thought he might come out the next day to find me. Unfortunately that was not the case. The next day, after being behind my locked door for about an hour, I got an unexpected visitor wanting to know how I knew the person I had previously given the candy too. I explained he was my brother-in-law, I hadn’t seen him in about a decade and I just wanted to say hi to him to let him know he wasn’t alone in this bad place.

I thought this might be a good thing, something to give us both some hope. I thought wrong. I was promptly informed that although it was a nice thing I tried to do, it was futile. I was feeling bad that I might have just gotten my brother-in-law in a lot of trouble. I was told he would be in trouble. The reason why he didn’t talk to me was because he was not allowed to. It had been written a while ago he wasn’t allowed to talk to anyone sharing my last name or anyone that used to have my last name, in other words my family. My brother-in-law isn’t allowed to have contact with me. That’s something I didn’t know or understand. About 30 minutes later, he was gone. I did not get to talk with him. Despair, so close but yet so far away. I have the feelings and my brother-in-law has the looks. Try imagining both. Hell, just try one or the other. Despair... I’ve got it.

Oregon's death penalty is unjust, this former chief justice says:

In 1978 and 1984, along with most Oregon voters, I voted for and supported the death penalty initiative that reinstated the death penalty in Oregon. Today I don't. Oregon's death penalty system is dysfunctional, expensive, unworkable and unfair. Even supporters of the death penalty - I was one - should vote to end the Dickensian system we have in Oregon.

Dysfunctional. I was appointed to the Supreme Court of Oregon in 1979. In that same year John Wayne Quinn was sentenced to death in an Oregon trial court. In 1981, on Quinn's appeal, the Oregon Supreme Court held that the 1978 law was unconstitutional. Quinn's conviction was reversed. On remand he was sentenced to life in prison.

The Quinn decision required an amendment to Oregon's death penalty law, which, as a citizen, I again voted for in 1984.

Since the restoration of the Oregon death penalty in 1978, 65 persons have been sentenced to death. Some of the convictions have been reversed. Since 1978, not one of those 65 persons has been involuntarily executed. (Two 'volunteers' gave up their appeals and were executed.) Today there are 37 persons on Death Row. Those on Death Row, on average, have been there for over 15 years. None of the appeal rights of the 37 persons on Death Row have been exhausted. *None! And it will be years before their appeals are exhausted.*

Unworkable. Procedurally, the Oregon death penalty system is unworkable. The rules are continually changing. Randy Guzek's case is one example. In 1988, Guzek was convicted of murdering a couple in Terrebonne, Oregon. He was sentenced to death. Since 1988, Guzek has had four appeals to the Supreme Court of Oregon, three reversals of his death penalty sentences, and four sentences to die. Today, 25 years from the date of his first conviction in 1988, Guzek's fourth appeal to the Oregon Supreme Court is pending. He has been on Death Row for 24 years. He is still on Step One of his nine possible appeals, nowhere close to the end of his possible appeals.

Expensive. Guzek's case alone had cost the taxpayers of Oregon \$2.2 million by 2009. It has been estimated that the appeal process takes from 25 to 50 years, at a total cost per case of \$10 million. Changes of the death penalty law by court decisions and legislative acts have led to more appeals.

Some might argue that our death penalty system is a fair employment bill for death penalty lawyers. The average cost of defending a death penalty case is \$438,651.

Under current law, an Oregon defendant sentenced to death has no fewer than nine separate appeals. The reversal rate is high. Not one of the 37 persons on Death Row has yet exhausted his appeal rights! There is little reason to believe that any defendant now on Oregon's Death Row will ever be executed. We taxpayers pay nearly all of the expenses of prosecuting and defending death-penalty cases. A New Jersey Death Penalty Study Commission concluded that the state would save \$1.3 million per prisoner in incarceration costs if the death penalty were abolished and a life-without-possibility-of-parole system implemented. Might not the money be better spent on better things?

Unfair. The same crime may be treated differently based on the county in which the crime takes place. One district attorney, heralded as being "tough on crime," may pursue a death penalty, while another believes that life in prison without parole provides adequate punishment and safety to the citizens. With death on the table, fairness must be achieved. Under our system, fairness is difficult to achieve.

Mistakes are made. The system sets up the possibility of a fatal mistake--killing an innocent person. Nationally, there have been 142 exonerations of people awaiting execution, persons found innocent of the crimes of which they were convicted. The majority of Oregon death penalty convictions have been reversed. Does this provide confidence in the system?

We have an inefficient, ineffective, dysfunctional system. There is widespread dissatisfaction with the system. Eighteen states have repealed their death penalty laws (Maryland most recently, in 2013).

Let's admit it. Our system has failed. Recognize it and repeal Oregon's death penalty.

Edwin J Peterson served on the Supreme Court of Oregon from 1979 to 1994, and was Chief Justice from 1983 to 1991.

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



CURE's Expectations for a Justice System

The following position was unanimously adopted on 9.3.12, during the board meeting of International CURE held in Washington DC.

- *No one deserves to be measured only by the worst thing s/he has ever done
- *Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and have their human rights preserved
- *Justice systems should be restorative rather than retributive
- *There is no way to create a perfectly safe world. Expecting that of our justice systems leads to counterproductive policies
- *Detention must be justified by a legitimate public safety concern
- *Those who are incarcerated should have all of the resources they need to turn their lives around
- *No one should be incarcerated for his or her immigration status
- *National and international human rights documents provide a sound basis for ensuring that justice systems meet these goals
- *The politics of fear should not be allowed to influence sentencing practices or parole policies
- *All efforts should be made to depoliticize justice system offices
- *Drug use should be decriminalized and treated as a public health issue
- *All juvenile cases should be handled in a juvenile system that is geared toward rehabilitation and education instead of incarceration

Please visit www.internationalcure.org for the Adjudication and Sentencing segments of our expectations.

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.

Renew your Membership to Oregon CURE Today!!

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

Type of Donation: Adult in Custody: \$3 Individual: \$15 Family: \$25 Sustaining: \$50 - \$100

Sponsor: \$100 - \$250 Benefactor: \$250 Plus