

THE ECHO

November Issue



The Echo
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*The Official Newsletter of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution
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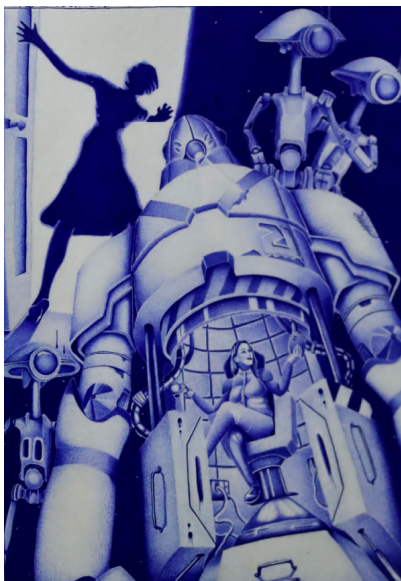


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A flower in Spring
photograph by Phillip Luna



TALK OF THE TOWN

Slow Month for Articles

A Note From the Editor

Written by Phillip Luna

There were no events, graduations or activities to report during October. While this was a slow month, it allowed for some important articles to be re-run. Additionally, this time of year there is plenty of opportunity for article submissions by AICs.

At the start of this newsletter there are two short features: one about Food Services offering appreciation meals and another about education at EOCI. Later in the newsletter, you'll find an artist highlight with Turner Bowman from unit A2, and a re-run of *The Oregon Way* article from earlier in the year - which includes excerpts from an interview with Superintendent Pedro. For those who have not heard of *The Oregon Way* initiative, page eight is a good place to start.

On page 12 there is a short story written by EOCI's own Ricky Fay. Fay is an avid writer and a participant in the PonyXpress Writer's Workshop. In his short story, he shares a memory that may evoke a little bit of nostalgia for the upcoming holiday season.

We are pursuing several human interest pieces to fill out the remainder of the year. Additionally, as the holiday season marks a downward trend in classes, programs, and activities for the year (night yard ends and many classes and programs are seasonal). This is the perfect opportunity for creative writers to submit their work! If you are an artist who would like to be featured in an *Artist Spotlight*, a writer with a story to share, or if you just have a good idea for an article we would like to hear from you. Send an AIC communication form to IWP if you are interested.



TALK OF THE TOWN

Free Enhanced Meals Every Two Weeks

Encouraging AICs to Work in the Kitchen

Written by Phillip Luna

On Friday, October 20, 2023 kitchen workers were treated to a mountain of ice cream atop a boat of cookie. Vanilla, chocolate, and salted caramel with cups of chocolate, caramel, and strawberry topping on the side. An appreciation meal, one of many and free of charge to the Food Service workers.

An important note, workers must complete 30 days in their assignment in order to be eligible for the complimentary enhanced meals. A daily fail will result in ineligibility.

Currently there is no end date set to the appreciation meals.





TALK OF THE TOWN

Education at EOIC

Here's What We Do Know

Written by Phillip Luna

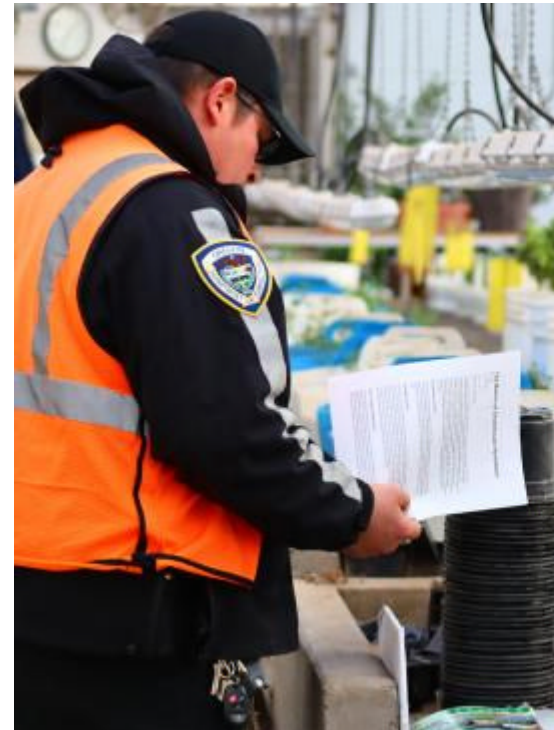
A

contract was signed with Treasure Valley Community College to provide education at EOIC. More information will be made available when it is received.

Hopefully the new contract with Treasure Valley Community College coupled with the new Second Chance Pell Grants will create some much needed educational opportunities for the AIC population.

Education is incredibly important in the incarcerated setting as the path to prison is often paved by illiteracy. Reading and writing are crucial tools in navigating everyday tasks, such as finding and keeping a job, learning, and being understood. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, those who complete education programs while in prison are less likely to return and are less likely to engage in violence during incarceration. Studies also show the positive impact these programs have when formerly incarcerated individuals return to society, including a higher chance of being gainfully employed.

Level of Education	Likelihood of Unemployment	Avg. Hourly Pay
Four-Year Degree or Higher	2.3%	\$31.99
Two-Year Degree	3.4%	\$20.90
Some College, no Degree	4.0%	\$19.35
High School Diploma	4.6%	\$17.80
No High School Diploma	6.5%	\$13.00



TALK OF THE TOWN

The Oregon Way

Originally Published May, 2023

Written by Phillip Luna

As part of *The Oregon Way Initiative*, AICs may wear shorts to and from the dining room,” in a memo posted on housing unit bulletin boards Captain Rabb used the term *The Oregon Way*, which for most AICs is the first time they have seen the phrase. But what is *The Oregon Way* and why does it allow an AIC to wear shorts to the dining room?

The Oregon.gov website defines *The Oregon Way* as, “...prioritizing employee health and well-being by normalizing the correctional environment and, in turn, improving the outcomes for incarcerated people.” To find more information we asked EOCI’s Interim Superintendent, Mr. Pedro for some background information.

“Many of the changes that have occurred at EOCI have had little fanfare but were done with the intention of normalizing the correctional environment,” stated Mr. Pedro. “Statewide, we changed how we

identify the population, transitioning from inmate to adult in custody. How did that change make you feel? Hopefully more like a person that made a mistake rather than continuing to be judged or labeled.”

Mr. Pedro is referring to the bill passed through the Oregon State Legislature in 2019, officially changing all statutory references from the word “inmate” to then words “adult in custody.” At the time of the change the DOC Director Colette Peters stated, “Words are powerful and they matter. It is neither normal nor human to label people, and by calling people ‘inmates’ it is labeling. ...It sets up a dynamic in prison that follows them into the community and impacts their re-entry into society.”

Mr. Pedro explained many of the other changes that have occurred at EOCI, “Lanyards instead of the old clips, no longer stenciling clothing with the DOC logo, larger televisions in the dayroom or TV rooms and other changes have occurred.” He further stated, “Installing tables in the Westside dayrooms



Words are powerful and they matter. It is neither normal nor human to label people, and by calling people ‘inmates’ it is labeling. ...It sets up a dynamic in prison that follows them into the community and impacts their re-entry into society.

were done with little explanation. In reality, adding the tables and an FM transmitter was encouraging pro-social interactions between people. This change reversed a stance EOCI had for 35 years in not allowing people to talk during a television program. There was a valid reason for the earlier standard, but this change was needed and we believe it's been significant.”

Mr. Pedro also highlights the dramatic changes that have taken place in the Disciplinary Segregation Unit (DSU):

“As anybody who has been in DSU in the last few years will share, there have been significant changes environmentally and philosophically. We continue to work to bring different colors into the unit to transform it from a sterile environment to a more calming one. We now have a Blue Room. Out-of-cell time has increased, both in the recreation yard and programming room. Speaking of

*programming, a person can continue to work and test for their GED, or participate in Mr. Zhu's classes, GOGI, Mindfulness and others. The programming room is also used to show movies and TED talks. Last Christmas, AICs were invited to make ornaments for a Christmas tree on the unit, and then staff members voted on the winners. AICs were given popcorn, a pop and watched *Maverick* (the latest Tom Cruise offering). What most don't know is that all of these ideas were put forward by staff members!*

The bottom line is that improvements to staff morale and AIC morale are intertwined – what affects one affects the other.”

While many of the changes made as a result of *The Oregon Way* initiative may seem disconnected, the underlying core is a focus on empathy, communication, and restorative justice. The changes are incremental, but the intention is clearly to move away

Continued on next page...



from what many consider antiquated philosophies of incarceration. When asked what changes AICs might expect in the future, Mr. Pedro stated, *“Most have already heard that the weight equipment we’ve had for over 30 years is being updated with new, modern equipment in the next month or so. Several other ideas are being considered and I don’t want to jinx them by speaking about them until we’re ready to move them forward.”* [The weight piles have been renovated since this article was originally published]

Mr. Pedro also expressed excitement regarding a new development. The DOC signed a contract with the Amend Program to provide Contact Officer Training to staff at EOCI. Pedro said, *“In very basic terms, those that choose to participate will be points of contact for AICs new to the DOC or people we’re focusing on providing assistance.”* The Amend Program was developed at the University of California-San Francisco and supports states in improving policies and procedures in the criminal justice systems.



The Oregon Way is actually inspired by the Norwegian Correctional System. In September of 2017, an Oregon delegation, traveled to Norway as part of the US-European Criminal Justice Innovation Program. The delegation visited six Norwegian prisons during their trip. The following year, a second group consisting of ten ODOC staff and four corrections administrators visited the Norway prison systems, allowing frontline staff to job shadow with their Norwegian counterparts.



“
**Norway has the lowest
recidivism rate in the
world with just 20%...
In the 1990’s, Norway had
a 70% recidivism rate.**
”

But why Norway? According to the ODOC website, Norway has the lowest recidivism rate in the world with just 20% returning to prison within two years of release and the lowest crime rate per capita. But it wasn't always this way. In the 1990's, Norway had a 70% recidivism rate which is near equal what the United States has today. At that time the Norway prison system was structured similar to the U.S., with an emphasis on punishment instead of rehabilitation. Sentences were lengthy, conditions were harsh, and the intention was punishment as a deterrent to others. Crime rates were high and prisons were plagued with violence.

Norway's government completed an overhaul of their justice system. Today, Norway has community-based correctional facilities that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The Norwegian government places incarcerated individuals in facilities close to their homes with an emphasis on maintaining relationships and having a strong support system after release. Their prisons are brightly colored with many amenities. The incarcerated have opportunities for education, to learn new skills, are offered antiviolence and drug counseling, and various pro-social activities.

In Norway, the incarcerated can vote, have conjugal visits with their spouse, and in some locations live in houses, buy their own groceries, and cook their own food. And the staff and the incarcerated call each other by their first names.

Life sentences were eliminated in Norway and replaced with a 21-year maximum sentence regardless of the crime(s) committed – no matter how violent the crime (Norway recently amended their code to allow for 30-year maximum sentences for genocide, crimes against humanity, and other war crimes).

The maximum sentence is rarely used however – almost 90% of all sentences are less than a year.

The result – not only does Norway have the lowest crime rate and the lowest recidivism rate in the world, but their rehabilitative approach boosts the country's economy. Fewer people in prison means more capable adults available for employment - and less of an impact financially for the country. Also, in Norway those who were unemployed before prison experienced a 40% increase in employment rate after release as a result of the skills they developed during their incarceration.

“

**It's about making
incarceration a
loss of liberty,
not a loss
of humanity.**

”

Change is difficult for all people, staff and AICs alike. Refocusing on rehabilitation and restorative justice will take time. It took Norway 30 years to become the model for other prisons throughout the world. Additionally, each incarcerated person in Norway costs the country around \$90,000 a year, whereas the State of Oregon incurs approximately \$30,000 annually per AIC. Not all of the changes Norway has made may be obtainable in the U.S. or in western cultures; however, many of the concepts and philosophies can be, and have been applied, here at EOCL.

So what does all this have to do with wearing shorts to the dining room? It's about having a choice, because people have choices. It's the Department of Corrections evaluating a rule that's more restrictive than it needs to be and determining that it no longer serves a purpose. It's an incremental gain. A small step. One of many small steps, but each in the direction of normalization - an emphasis on actual people instead of SID numbers or job titles.

To define *The Oregon Way* in one sentence: It's about making incarceration a loss of liberty, not a loss of humanity.



Alice in Wonderland

By Turner Bowman

INTERVIEWS

Artist Highlight - Turner Bowman

Down the Rabbit Hole

Written by Phillip Luna

For many, art is a rabbit hole; a proverbial never-ending tunnel with never-ending offshoots and countless detours that once started upon can lead a great distance away from where it began. Each divergent route promises a sparkly prize, enticing the traveler until they find themselves in a place unique and all their own. For Turner Bowman, art began as a general interest and welcome pastime during his incarceration. Now, two years down the rabbit hole, it has developed into something of a small business, generating an income and requiring Bowman to obtain a Business Authorization through the Department of Corrections.

Bowman works primarily in ink, using blue Bic pens. He started practicing art seriously in 2021 because at the time he had a cellmate who was an artist, which served as inspiration. *“I didn’t do much artwork before. I doodled in high school, but I didn’t start paying attention to fundamentals until two years ago.”* Like many artists, his work reflects his interest. For Bowman this is mostly abstract, with characters from horror movies or comic books. He stated that he draws his inspiration from, *“...horror movies and deep comic books. I’m a nerd for horror movies, thrasher films and metal music.”* Bowman also described his art as, *“Dark fantasy and old school, vintage comic style.”* Some of his artwork consists of macabre scenes adjacent to famous characters from video games and comic books, creating a juxtaposition of subject matter.

Each of Bowman’s pieces is intricate, with thousands of tiny dots clustered together in



various amounts producing lighter and darker areas. There are no “hard lines” in his work. Simply edges of shading and highlights or gradient sections. *“Realism doesn’t have hard lines or outlines,”* he said. *“Don’t hard line your artwork. When you lay a pattern, don’t put lines all over your work. That is the best tip I give everybody. That’s the best thing that anybody told me.”* Creating elaborate artwork by dot mark is a process that takes Bowman between one and four months, depending on the size and complexity of the piece. He spends eight hours or more each day working on a single project. Bowman said, *“I don’t know what I am putting on the paper ahead of time. I’m just puzzling pieces together.”* When asked about what techniques he uses, Bowman stated, *“Literally I take a blue pen, one that bleeds a little more and one that is a little scratchy - I don’t hard line anything - then I get a pencil framework on there and I negative shade off the lines. Tap dots, no circles, no lines, no shade sticks.”*

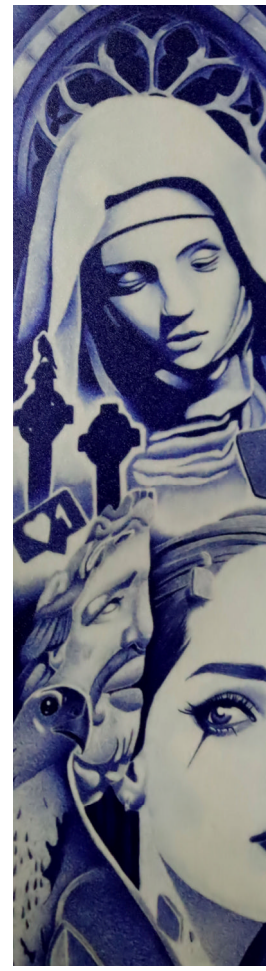
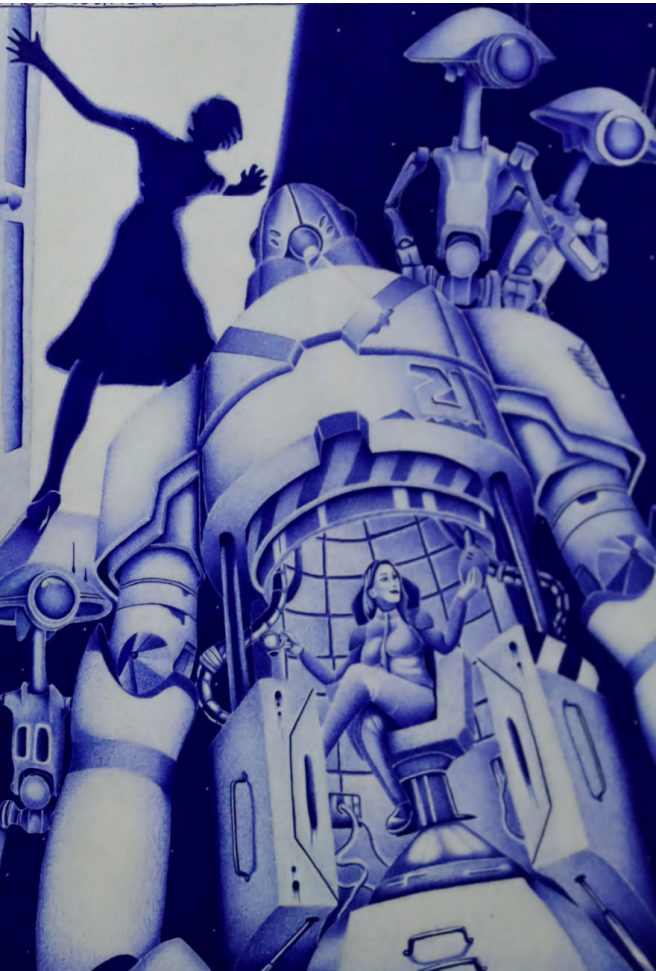
**“Don’t hard line
your artwork.”**

His efforts and consistency are evident in his work – in just a few short years he has transitioned from doodling to creating artwork that is featured in *Ink from the Pen* magazine or sold on Etsy as part of his business. Bowman’s work was featured in issue 39 of *Ink from the Pen* magazine. Additionally, his family

helps sell his artwork on Etsy – in which he has been successful enough that he had to obtain a Business Authorization. *“Basically Officer Kammerzell was the one that tapped me in and let me know how to do it,”* Bowman said. *“So I wrote a kyte to the supervisor of the prison, got a Business Authorization form, filled it out. They want to know what you are selling, how you are selling it, and who is do-*

ing it for you on the streets. He told me if I make over a certain amount I can get a DR for it. So this is the way to do it properly. You can sell your artwork. You can make hundreds of dollars here. My family takes my work to the mall and has it duplicated for \$12 bucks. Then they can sell it on Etsy.”

(Continued on next page...)



Any AIC who generates an income by selling artwork outside of EOCI should obtain Business Authorization from the Department of Corrections. Forms can be obtained by sending an AIC Communication Form (kyte) to Assistant Superintendent of Correctional Rehabilitation.

For Bowman, art is more than just a pastime or a way to generate an income. He plans on obtaining his tattoo license and potentially illustrating comic books when he is released in just four short years. *"I get Tattoo Society magazine and Skin and Ink magazine. I study the artists, look them up and follow their whole lives and what art colleges they went to. Some people have been doing it 12 years self taught and others 20 years, went to a college of fine arts and learned to paint first before they even picked up a tattoo gun. Yeah this isn't a two year or one year thing. If you want to be a really good artist, you are going to get down every day for years."* He further describes an interest in learning other mediums and styles to expand his range of skills, but pen

serves the closest medium to tattoo art in its permanence. *"I think that is why I like pen. You can't make mistakes. It makes you pay attention the first time; whatever you are doing is going to come out icy right off the rip."*

For short term goals, his immediate plan is to obtain his incentive level 2 which may create more opportunities for him. *"Art keeps me doing something constructive and out of trouble,"* he acknowledged. *"I have learned to stay away from bad days that could ruin my level... I'm not getting in fights or dirty UAs."* Once Bowman obtains his incentive level 2 he hopes to create an art program at EOCI. *"I'm trying to get my level two right now. If I get my level, maybe I can start a program or teach people how to draw or paint. I see other youngsters that are sitting around in the dayroom and I'm like, damn dude you should draw. When I see people on the yard, I wanna be like hey, come learn to paint or learn to draw with me. Come connect with me. It's an outlet for people; I want to get my level 2 so I can do some-*



thing good while I am here.” Creating an art class as an AIC is not unprecedented, as EOCI’s only recent art class, *Art Inside Out*, was created by a formerly incarcerated person. Additionally, the majority of classes offered at EOCI were either created by an incarcerated person or are facilitated by one.

One of the major challenges for Bowman will be building trust and rapport with the staff needed to create an art program. As an individual with several tattoos on his face, neck, and hands there may be those who have a preconceived idea of who he is. When asked what he thought about this, Bowman stated, *“People can be judgmental. My job is to prove them wrong or show them that I’m chill. I don’t know if I’ll get anymore, but I don’t regret the ones I have [tattoos]. If I did I’d be miserable. I’m not going to look in the mirror every day and be mad at myself. It is what it is.”*

One thing is certain, it will be interesting to see how far the rabbit hole goes for Bowman. As the King told the White Rabbit in Lewis Carol’s famous story, *“Start at the beginning... go to the end, and then stop.”*

“ People can be judgmental. My job is to prove them wrong, to show them that I’m chill. I don’t know if I’ll get any more, but I don’t regret the ones I have [tattoos]. If I did I’d be miserable. I’m not going to look in the mirror every day and be mad at myself. It is what it is. ”



GENERAL INTEREST

The Antiquities of EOCI

From 1910 to 2023 - A Fascinating Look at a Century Old Structure

Written by Phillip Luna

The EOCI buildings, pictured above, were constructed in 1910 and served for many years as the Eastern Oregon State Hospital and Training Center - Oregon's primary mental-health hospital. When the hospital closed in 1984,

the building was repurposed as a medium-security state prison which was the first such facility outside the Willamette Valley. Senate Bill 780 appropriated \$9.6 million for the conversion.

Construction at EOCI began in April of 1984 as the Eastern Oregon Hospital and Training Center Patients moved out. In June of 1985, Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution opened, housing residents in temporary quarters. In August of 1986, the East-side dormitories were completed and residents began moving to permanent quarters.

In 1987, during five months of demolition, more

than 14 million pounds of debris was removed from the Westside of the facility alone. Later, A and B unit buildings began construction. In March of 1989, EOCI celled units were completed on the Westside of the facility. Finally, in July of 1989, EOCI became fully operational with 1381 beds.

In September of 1990, an additional general population unit (H) with 180 beds was opened and the OCE and industries area came on-line and began hiring workers. Also during this time the current segregation unit was created. Units A1 and G2, which were previously used for disciplinary segregation, were converted to regular units.

Also in 1990, construction began on remodel of C2, C3, and C4 converting them into an expanded visiting room, library, and education department.

For a period of time, H-unit was a female AIC housing unit, with the current JLAD yard serving as a

regular recreation yard for female AICs. The first female AICs arrived in 1998. Female and male AICs were housed at EOCI together for approximately three years.

Today, EOCI houses about 1,250 residents and is divided into two sides. The Westside has nine celled housing units, and the Eastside has eight dorms and three celled housing units. At its peak population, EOCI was the residence of 1765 AICs.

EOCI has had many renovations and updates recently, most notably the weight pile renovations for the East and West yards and the current renovation of the Westgate, which was completed in October. Despite the many updates over the last century, remnants of the original structures remain as relics of a different time. One such example is the smokestack that looms over the facility. This 175-foot tall structure once sent out black smoke that signaled the operation of the coal-fired boilers, as well as the hospital crematoria for patients who had passed away. Today, the smokestack emits only small amounts of harmless gas.

Another antiquity which many may not know about, is the original sign “*Power Hovse*” seen on the front of the powerhouse. This was added back in 1911, when it was first constructed. It was built using many historical elements of arts and crafts architecture – including exposed brackets under the eaves and the use of the Classic Roman “V” in place of a “U” (which was not added to the western alphabet until the Middle Ages). The “V” was intentional.

One more example of an evolving structure is the EOCI greenhouse. The metal framing for the greenhouse was installed in the early-1930s, when the facility was still the Eastern Oregon State Hospital. The greenhouse received a new PVC shell in 1997 and a new roof in the spring of 2012. Today the 4,700 square-foot structure results in more than 30,000 pounds of produce each year.

The changes at EOCI did not happen swiftly. EOCI was a state hospital for 75 years before being converted to a correctional facility. With nearly 40 years as a correctional facility and dozens of renovations, updates, and several new structures, the site today barely resembles the cattle-plastered and faded photograph from 1920.





ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Taking the Subway Home on Christmas Eve

A Story Written by Ricky Fay

Dinner at the Fay house was generally an all-together affair. Whether we gathered for casseroles, takeout, or holiday feasts, whether we were fighting, celebrating, or giving someone across the table the silent treatment, for twenty minutes a day we broke bread and enjoyed or endured each other's company. From time to time neighbors or friends dropped by, contributing their own unique flavor. There were thousands of meals shared over the decades, but some traditions stood out...

On the infrequent occasions when Dad would cook, the fare was always simple, memorable, and delicious. Barbecued burgers and hot dogs atop pillowy toasted buns. Cheddar, Swiss, and Velveeta cheeses draped across baked Saltines, accompanied by to-

mato soup from a can that warmed us like a hug. Sunny-side-up eggs and SPAM with diced potatoes, grilled beneath a blanket of cracked black pepper after mass on Sunday mornings.

With rare exception, Mom slaved away over a hot stove nightly, trying to ensure her family had something nutritious and filling in our bellies, but strangely it was Leftover Night we kids looked forward to the most, probably because of the theatricality and gamesmanship involved. Over the course of a month or more our freezer would fill with odd-shaped, tinfoil-covered meal remnants until our mother declared it was time for a purge. We'd gather with anticipation around the table as frozen moon rocks were placed in the center. We rolled dice or drew cards to determine the draft order¹, trying to activate our x-ray vision and penetrate the tinfoil

¹ Historian's note: this controversial detail remains in dispute to this day. Our father maintains that we paid him homage due the local patriarch every Leftover Night by ceding first overall pick to him. No one else involved recalls having ever agreed to this particular form of tribute, but it sounds nice in retrospect.

wrappers. Items shaped like pizza slices were selected in the first round, although we never forgot the time Mom demonstrated her capacity for evil genius, folding old brussel sprouts, asparagus stalks, and broccoli into shiny triangular origami. Those of us she'd tricked groaned with disappointment and grudging respect as she cackled wickedly. Lasagna, giant baked potatoes, tuna surprise, apple pie, Mom's legendary (or infamous) Magic Meatballs... somehow the mystical ambiance of Leftover Night helped the most mismatched à la carte entrees complement one another like a tasting menu devised and prepared at a five-star restaurant.

But even stranger to the uninitiated than Leftover Night was our annual family meal on Christmas Eve. It began one year when we kids were relatively young and all had roles to play in the grand Midnight Mass pageant (which inexplicably began at 9:30 pm), so we needed something quick and easy. Someone jokingly suggested Subway sandwiches. The room reacted with laughter but no one had a better idea, so Subway it was. And once we'd had fun doing something on a specific date in the Fay household, it became capital-T **Tradition**: unquestioned, unassailable, carved in stone. Every Christmas Eve became Subway night, with the honor of taking orders and fetching the subs sometime before dinner usually falling to me. The task was one I was happy to perform, painless and typically uneventful. But then came the year we awoke on December 24th to find the neighborhood under an unexpected, pristine, festive dusting of white.

People who didn't grow up in Portland during the 1980s and '90s might find this hard to believe, but for an urban area that forecast and received as much rain as we got each year, the Rose City was utterly unprepared for winter weather. Half an inch of snow was enough to immediately trigger school closures, divert city buses onto emergency routes, send local TV meteorologists scrambling to stake out prime broadcasting locations along Portland's Skyline Boulevard, and generally spark a shivering fear of a possible snow-mageddon spiraling across the entire populace. We'd learn a decade later that the

city's fleet of publicly-owned snowplows available for the whole metropolitan area numbered precisely four².

Okay, enough background. On with the story...

A new Subway location had opened only half a mile away, so I collected sandwich orders from family members, laced up snow boots, grabbed my backpack, and headed out into the winter wonderland. It was barely after noon. Snow was still falling gently, but not really accumulating. However, it wasn't melting either. I was surprised to find a poster-sized message scrawled in Sharpie on cardboard, taped to the store's locked glass door:

Dear Customers-

We're closed because of the blizzard.

Please come again soon.

Merry Christmas!

As I jogged back home, I surveyed the traffic patterns. Flurries swirled harmlessly across the still-visible asphalt. Drivers gripped their steering wheels with white-knuckled anxiety, clicking on their high beams with the sun still hovering near its zenith and slowing travel to an unnecessary crawl. Parking lots of local businesses were jammed with idling vehicles, their operators fumbling frantically to strap on chains.

This was the late 1990s, when few college students owned cell phones and I landed squarely in that majority. I notified my folks of the local Subway closure when I arrived home, before grabbing my car keys and heading out again. There was another Subway two miles in the opposite direction down a main arterial thoroughfare but, after braving tail and brake lights amidst the falling flakes for twenty minutes, I was dismayed to learn that this branch too had sent its employees home early. Undaunted, I continued

Continued on next page...

² This information came to light during the storm of 2008, when three feet of unprecedented, unpredicted snow appeared overnight a few days before Christmas and promptly froze, locking down roadways and shuttering Portland international Airport for a week.

my quest, eventually discovering that the next half-dozen franchise locations I came across had likewise closed their doors in the face of a potential Christmas whiteout. By now I was far from home but I refused to give up, *refused* to allow our Tradition to die on my watch.

Then, an epiphany! I recalled that a fraternity brother had worked at a Subway branch near his home during summer vacations and planned to pick up a few shifts over winter break. *Maybe he could let me in and throw together a few sandwiches?* He didn't live in Portland proper but in one of the countless outlying suburbs. I flipped on my blinker and made a course correction.

At this point, it was already late afternoon and the sunlight was beginning to wane. Over the river and through the woods, to Eddie's parents' house I crept. After posing as a lost (and terrible) Christmas caroler on their porch, I was welcomed inside. Eddie was thrilled to see me, but had devastating news to impart – today had been his last shift of break. He'd turned in his keys only a few hours earlier. He called his boss to inquire if the branch was still open. More crushing news: it was not.

Hugs were dispensed. Best wishes for sandwich success and a Merry Christmas. Then, back on the road again.

The snow was falling harder. Cars were beginning to slide on rapidly-forming ice. Continuing down the highway, I realized that the sun (behind its cloud cover) was threatening to set, but I was *determined* not to return empty-handed. Finally, I found myself in Newberg...

...which quickly became my favorite city in Oregon...

Because their Subway station was still open.

The local sandwich artists appeared understandably perplexed when their first customer in hours, tears in his eyes, fell to his knees on the carpet and actually kissed the ground. I felt like Charlie Brown, George Bailey, and Clark Griswold all rolled together as their momentous Christmastime trials resolved. I was Meriwether Lewis first glimpsing the Pacific, except he didn't encounter anyone offering

to make him footlong sandwiches. So overcome with relief and gratitude was I that words failed me. It was all I could do to pass one employee my handwritten order and nod mutely as they walked me through the construction of our family feast. I left a big, emotional tip.

By now, the sun had disappeared completely but, as I had no cell phone, calling home to report the happy outcome wasn't remotely an option that occurred to me. I navigated the roads cautiously, bursting with accomplishment and holiday cheer, singing along joyfully to whatever carol came across the radio waves. It took ninety minutes to complete the return voyage.

As I bounded up the outside steps of my childhood home, I couldn't contain my robust exuberance. Flinging the door open wide, I stepped across the threshold, inhaling the welcoming fragrance of the illuminated, decorated Douglas Fir in our living room. Snow falling from his shoulders, the conquering hero thrust two fists full of sandwiches high in the air and bellowed: "The night Ricky saved Christmas!" For lo, this I had done.

Mom dropped the phone and rushed toward me, tears streaming down her face. She'd been calling emergency rooms. I'd been gone and out of contact for more than six hours. Stifling a sob, she informed me she'd long ago arrived at the inescapable certainty I was in a ditch somewhere³. She hugged me, slapped me fiercely while invoking a profane epithet which called into question my paternal lineage, then embraced me a second time, excoriating me to never scare her thusly again.

Once more, we gathered around the table. Hot and sour soup had been procured from a nearby Chinese place by Dad: a worthy Plan B if I'd failed in my mission, and a new sacrosanct Christmas Eve Tradition going forward.

We held hands, bowed our heads, and said grace, recognizing we had much to celebrate. Then we dug in, joking and laughing and reminiscing as snow continued to drift down outside. Christmas – in the form of sub sandwiches and piping, savory soup – had never tasted so good.

³ Why do mothers think their grown children are in ditches? Just ofr my own edification, I've explored a few. Never understood the appeal.



ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

An Acknowledgment of Passing

An Article Submission by Wayne Cummins

Officer McConnell recently passed away at the age of 59 as a result of a heart attack. AIC Wayne Cummins from unit G3 submitted the following words:

The Good Die Young

Usually there is no love lost between staff and AICs when one or the other leave this world prematurely. More often than not the circumstances of that death detract from the fact that a human life was lost.

Sure, there is no shortage of individuals on either side of the fence with more people praying for their demise than longevity. Officer McConnell was not one of those people. In my book, he was one of the good ones; always respectful when respect was due, unbiased, and able to offer fair

counterpoints to open one's eyes to the other side of a story.

He would entertain your grievance sans judgment and provide an honest opinion with the intention of providing resolution. Officers like him are few and far in between. While I'm certain there are at least a few individuals who were not "fans," all should take into consideration the magnanimous task ahead of the next man up who has to fill his shoes.

McConnell was Oregon Way before there was an Oregon Way. He humanized AICs to the limits of institution policy, perhaps even beyond. Without him we are not only shorter staffed, but woefully deficient in role models. Only the good die young.

Notices You May Have Missed

From Your Housing Unit Bulletin Board and Brief Announcements

Provided by ODOC and Various Sources

From OISC - New Ethnicity Field

Pursuant to HB 1510 (2022), the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC), is required to collect and report data concerning:

- the number of persons on supervision;
- persons revoked from supervision and sentenced to incarceration; and
- persons sanctioned for violating conditions of supervision and serving a sanction in a local correctional facility.

CJC will review and separate this data by race, ethnicity, gender, and county and will make this data available to the public.

For this purpose, ODOC has added an ethnicity field which will show on the ODOC facesheets. The available options will be Hispanic (H), Non-Hispanic (N), or Unknown (U). This information will be collected by the appropriate county community corrections agency for persons beginning a supervision sentence, and upon admission to the ODOC Intake Center for those serving a prison sentence.

This new field will become effective on November 15, 2023. Current adults-in-custody may request to add their ethnicity to their ODOC's record after this date. To request this, please forward an AIC Communication Form (CD 214) to your institution's records office.

Gamer Challenge:

There is no gamer challenge for this month. Last month's winner is Nicholas Vega:

God Mode: Twin Fists' Aspect of Demeter Speedrun 10:50:08

Twin Fists' Aspect of Zagreus: High Heat - 45

Hell Mode: Adamant Rail's Aspect of Zagreus: High Heat - 32

Twin Fists' Aspect of Zagreus Speedrun 13:40:48

Early Dining - West and East:

On the Westside *early dining* is for those with callouts before 7 am, 1 pm, or 6 pm.

On the Eastside there is Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 and early dining.

Early dining occurs with the morning and the evening meal for those with callouts before 7 am or 6 pm.

During the lunch meal, the Eastside has phases.

Phase 1 is for those with a 12:30 pm call out.

Phase 2 is for those with a 12:45 pm call out.

Phase 3 is for those with a 1 pm call out.

Holiday Spending Period

The 2023 Holiday Period begins Monday, November 27, 2023, and goes through Friday, December 29, 2023. During this time, for AICs with DOC debt and external obligations, the following parameters:

DOC Debt and External Obligations

- DOC debt (*examples: disciplinary fines, copy, and postage debt*) will be collected through Wednesday, November 22, 2023, prior to the start of the Holiday Period.
- During the Holiday Period, Central Trust will not collect existing DOC debt.
- External obligations (non-DOC debt) such as court filing fees (County / U.S. Court), garnish-

ment orders, and Court-Ordered Financial Obligations (COFOs) will continue to be collected as DOC does not have the authority to suspend statutory collections.

- DOC debt collection will resume in the event an AIC receives a new disciplinary fine sanction during the 2023 Holiday Period.
- At the conclusion of the 2023 Holiday Period, on Friday, December 29, 2023, any funds remaining in the General Spending Trust Account of AICs with DOC debt will be collected in accordance with OAR 291 Div. 158-0065(d).

Spending Funds During the Holiday Period

- Commissary spending limits will be doubled.
- AICs who have DOC debt may spend funds during the 2023 Holiday period from their General Spending Trust Account for the following: postage, copies, institution club & DOC activities, DOC programs, phone transfers, and commissary items.
- AICs with DOC debt cannot make external purchases or disbursements from their General Spending Trust Account during the 2023 Holiday Period.
- AICs should plan accordingly when submitting financial requests, such as commissary orders and Request for Withdrawal of Funds forms (CD28).

Other Considerations

- All plans are subject to staffing, and AIC commissary worker / supply chain availability.
- Transitional Savings deductions will continue to take place in accordance with ORS 423.105
- The Holiday Period occurs at the discretion of the Assistant Director of Operations in accordance with OAR 291 Div. 158-0065(d). AICs with questions may submit an AIC communication to Business Services (*electronic option available on the tablet*).

Limits	Item Description	Size	Price
12	NERDS GUMMYCLUSTER 5OZ	5 oz	\$3.07
12	HOT TAMALES CANDY 5 OZ	5 oz	\$1.65
12	ZACKARY DBL DIPPED CHOC PEANUTS 5 OZ	5 oz	\$1.79
12	ZACKARY BRIDGE MIX 5 OZ	5 oz	\$1.79
12	JOLLY RANCHER CHEW 2.06 bx	2.06	\$1.57
12	BL LOCOCHAS SANDIA CON CHILE 18CT	18 ct	\$1.86
24	RICE CRISPY TREAT 1.3 oz	1.3	\$0.46
12	ML CRML POPCORN 3.53 oz	3.53	\$0.94
24	SNYDER PRETZ PIECES HONY/MUST 2.25oz	2.25 oz	\$0.72
16	CHECKMIX MUDDY BUDDY PB 4oz	4 oz	\$2.86
12	PHILLYCREM CHEESE W/JALP 2 OZ	2 oz	\$0.78
6	HL CHILI CONQUESO CHEESE TUB 8 OZ	8 oz	\$2.56
8	EL MEXICANA HORCHATA 12 OZ	12 oz	\$3.22
6	SKITTLES TROPIC SING 30CT 3.03 OZ	3.03 oz	\$5.36
8	LD CHRISTMAS TREE VANILLA		
8	LD CHRISTMAS TREE CHOCOLATE		
12	LIL DUTCH MAID HOLIDAY COOKIE 9oz	9 oz	\$1.43
6	CoffeeMate Pwdr Crml Mach 15oz	16 oz	\$5.44
6	CoffeeMatePwdrCrmChoc 15oz	15 oz	\$5.44
6	FRENCH VANILLA CAPPUCINO 8 oz	8 oz	\$2.00
None	BIGELOW CHAMOMILE TEA 20 ct	20 ct	\$4.56
24	HT MILD/SPIC CURRY RICE .86OZ	.86 oz	\$0.82
12	BC CHILLI W/BEANS 11.25oz	11.25 oz	\$2.22
24	BC PASTA SAUCE ITALIAN 4 OZ	4 oz	\$0.77
6	EVERYTHING BEGEL SEASONING 2.5 OZ	2.5 oz	\$1.46
24	YELLOWFIN TUNA SPIC/THAI STEAK 2.5 OZ	2.5 oz	\$2.97
24	MACERAL IN BRINE 3.5OZ	3.5oz	\$1.43
12	BC BEEF STEW 11.25oz	11.25oz	\$3.22
10	FRITOS HONEY BBQ TWIST 9.25oz	9.25oz	\$2.79
12	DOVE BAR SOAP 2.6oz	2.6oz	\$1.93
12	OLD SPICE SWAGGER BAR 3.17oz	3.17oz	\$2.00
6	Zest Ocean Breeze Body Wash	18 oz	\$6.72

Number of Points Earned	Monetary Award	Total After 5% Reduction
16 thru 45	\$12.50	\$11.88
46 thru 65	\$22.50	\$21.38
66 thru 85	\$32.50	\$30.88
86 thru 106	\$37.50	\$35.63
107 thru 127	\$42.50	\$40.38
128 thru 148	\$47.50	\$45.13
149 thru 169	\$52.50	\$49.88
170 thru 190	\$57.50	\$54.63
191 thru 211	\$62.50	\$59.38
212 thru 232	\$67.50	\$64.13
233 thru 253	\$72.50	\$68.88
254 thru 274	\$77.50	\$73.63
275 thru 295	\$82.50	\$78.38
296 thru 316	\$87.50	\$83.13
317 thru 337	\$92.50	\$87.88
338 thru 358	\$97.50	\$92.63
359 thru 379	\$102.50	\$97.38
380 thru 400	\$107.50	\$102.13
401 thru 9999	\$112.50	\$106.88

NEWS IN BRIEF

PRAS Awards

PRAS Increases - Started in January for the February Award

Status of PRAS revisions: In 2014, the Department of Corrections (DOC) received a petition from an AIC to amend the PRAS Rule (OAR 291-077) so monetary awards align with costs of living. While the petition was denied as it was too complex, DOC formed a PRAS Audit Workgroup to address the petition and other concerns. These included points assigned for work and programming, and improving the work and training history letter AICs receive at release.

The good news: The DOC Executive Team approved Workgroup recommendations to satisfy the petition as well as eliminate several discrepancies in the PRAS rule. These changes create PRAS consistency throughout the department.

The bad news: Change takes time. Making the improvements required new PRAS system technologies, databases, and tracking systems to replace outdated originals. Due to several high-priority challenges (COVID-19, staffing issues, etc.), the necessary changes were nearly impossible. In addition, the consumer price index (CPI) caught up with the routine increases of average PRAS points, and canteen prices increased due to supply chain issues.

The best news: The Workgroup has been steadily making progress. In 2019, DOC eliminated the 120-day wait period to earn PRAS. The Workgroup is now ready to implement more changes.

What does this mean to you? Over the next few months, you will see the following changes:

The PRAS matrix will be adjusted to create a more even point spread in the first three levels. Also, two more levels will be added to reduce the chance of “maxing out.” In addition, there will be an overall 25% increase in the dollar value of each level of the PRAS matrix to counteract the effects of the CPI and canteen increases. This will be accomplished through temporary rule adoption, effective 01/01/2023.

The number of PRAS points awarded per position will be consistent at all DOC institutions. AICs will earn the same number of PRAS points for the same work, regardless of location. This will not happen all at once, as there are over 15,000 assignment possibilities.

Start date: 12/01/2022. Estimated completion date: 06/30/2023.

Improvements to the Work and Training History document you receive upon release will be implemented when the position realignment is completed.

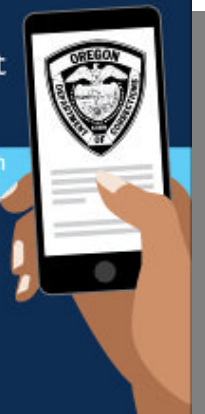
Estimated start date: 06/30/2023. Estimated completion date: 07/31/2023.

CONTRIBUTORS

Join our Friends & Family email list for the inside scoop!

Get emails about institution news and events

**TO SIGN UP:
TEXT CORRECTIONS
TO 22828 TODAY!**



Meet *The Echo* Team

Mr. Peters IWP Coordinator, *The Echo* Supervisor

Mr. Peters has worked in the Department of Corrections for 25 years. He has worked in Security, Inspections, and Correctional Rehabilitation. In 2016 he became the IWP Coordinator.



Phillip Luna
Writer
Editor
Photographer

Luna is the editor of *The Echo* and a contributing writer for the Coffee Creek Newsletter. He is also a Certified *Roots of Success* Facilitator, a Beekeeping Program Facilitator, the facilitator for the NCRC Prep Course, and the mentor for the Clerk Internship Program. In his spare time he is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree and is the current President of the Enrichment Club.



Juan Sanchez
Proofreader
Contributing Writer

A veteran of the US Marine Corps, Sanchez served as a tanker on M1A1 battle tanks. He is the proofreader for *The Echo*, manages the EOCI Institution Channel (channel 53), and runs the videogram program. He is a newly certified *Roots of Success* facilitator and occasionally writes articles for *The Echo*.

Ricky Fay
Contributing Writer

Fay is an avid writer and a participant in the PonyXpress Writer's Workshop. In his short story, he shares a memory that may evoke a little bit of nostalgia for the upcoming holiday season.

Your Name Here
Contributing Writer

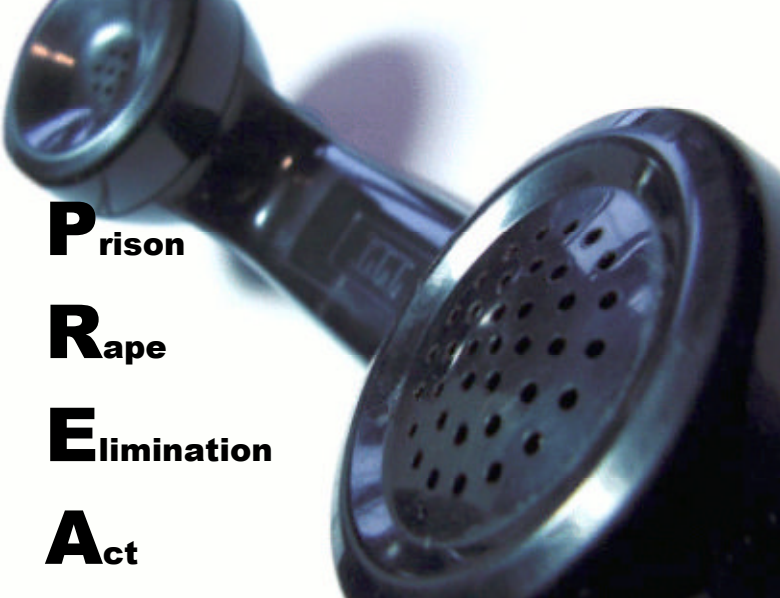
The Echo does accept submissions of creative writing pieces, artwork, or ideas for articles.

November 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
				Daylight Savings		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
					Thanks-giving	
26	27	28	29	30		
				Full Moon		

December 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				PRAS		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
					Winter begins	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				Christmas		
31						
	New Year's Eve					

A publication of Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Pendleton, Oregon.

Direct questions and comments to EOCI Institution Work Programs (IWP).



Prison
Rape
Elimination
Act

Sexual abuse and harassment are never okay. Tell Someone. GET HELP.

Call the Inspector General's Hotline:

1. Pick up a handset
2. Press *999 to leave a message

All PREA Calls are confidential.

Send a letter to the Governor:

Governor's Office, State Capitol, Room 160, 900 Court St., Salem, OR 97301

The Oregon Department of Corrections has a zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse and harassment. Your family can report on your behalf by contacting the Inspector General's public hotline at: (877) 678-4222.

El Abuso sexual y el acoso sexual nunca son aceptables. Avisele a alguien. CONSIGA AYUDA.

Llame al Inspector General:

1. Al numero de ayuda:
2. Levante el teléfono, marque *999.

Todas las llamadas a 'PREA' son gratis y confidenciales.

También puede reportar a la oficina del Gobernador por escrito.

Governor's Office, State Capitol, Room 160, 900 Court St., Salem, OR 97301

Sus amigos o familiares pueden hacer un reporte llamando a la línea del Inspector General al 877-678-4222.

PREA Advocate:

You may write the PREA advocate at:

ODOC PREA Advocate
2575 Center Street NE,
Salem, OR 97301

Submission Guidelines

Help Shape the Content of *The Echo!*

We accept hand written articles, creative writing, poetry and artwork.

Ideas for Articles and Artwork:

- Ways to keep yourself healthy physically, emotionally, or mentally while incarcerated.
- Experiences of life before or after imprisonment.
- Places in the world you've been, or hope to see when you get out.
- What you look forward to most upon release.
- Strategies for managing your time while incarcerated/things you wish you knew your first year in prison.
- Creative or reflective writing, short stories or poetry.
- Video game reviews or book reviews.

Length:

Articles should be no more than 1000 words (about three pages handwritten).

How to Submit:

For written pieces, attach your work to a communication form and send it to **IWP - The Echo Submissions**. If you do not want your name published along with the article please indicate so. Writing samples will be photocopied and returned.

For artwork, send a communication form to **IWP - The Echo Submissions** explaining your artwork and what you would like to share. You may then be placed on a call out to bring your artwork down to IWP. Please do not attach your artwork in a communication form.

Notes on Editing:

All pieces are edited for content, grammar, and punctuation. As a Department of Corrections publication, we do not print material that may be considered inappropriate, inflammatory, or disparaging to others. **Submitting an article or artwork does not guarantee your work will be published.** We will select content that provides value to *The Echo* and is of interest to others. We do not print material that perpetuates negativity.