



VOICES FROM INSIDE...

MARCH 2008

*hope / change / redemption*



*"Impact of Crime" Continued...*

I spoke to some of the people in my group, and they said yes, so we made our first trip into the Missouri prison system to speak to men who had committed crimes like the ones that had been committed against our loved ones. Our first trip was only two hours long, and we realized we had to go back because we had so many questions. We had to know more about this program.

We have been doing this program for eight years, and it is the best program in the prison system. It gives inmates a chance to change their lives and take responsibility for their actions. We have met the worst of the worst, men on death row and lifers. We have seen hardened men change their attitude and take responsibility for what they have done. The state of Missouri offers this program in each one of its prisons, and they have seen a dramatic change in the attitude of the men who have taken the program. The program is called the IMPACT of CRIME on VICTIMS classes. We are now going to eight prisons in Missouri, and we have been in the federal prison in Greenville, Illinois.

As a victim/survivor, I have been able through the years to tell men who (may have committed murder) just how I felt, how much pain I have gone through, how I feel about what crimes they have committed and how they owe us as victims. I can't talk about others in my group, but I have seen a change in them also. I will work forever to keep this program in the prison system in Missouri and work toward getting it into other states such as Illinois. I am still a victim but I am also a survivor.

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# *Essays, Letters and Insight*

PROPOSALS AND PERSUASIVE EDITORIALS



The National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression – Chicago is gathering evidence about medical care in Illinois prisons. The denial of medical care to prisoners who are sick or injured is a denial of the Constitutional right of all prisoners under the Eighth Amendment to be free from cruel and unusual punishment. We are interested in all prisoners

*“HJR80 update” Cont.*

**Further Update on HJR80**

Sharon Beeler

The Programs Subcommittee is looking at three areas to recommend to the HJR Committee: Restorative Justice Program; Educational/Vocational Training; and Faith-Based Initiative

**Restorative Justice Program**

The Restorative Justice Program under review is the Impact of Crime on Victims Class (ICVC) used in Missouri Department of Corrections. ICVC has had tremendous success in not only reducing violence within prisons, but has helped inmates change their attitude and behavior by understanding how others have suffered as a result of crimes against them or family members.


The programs subcommittee will recommend using ICVC (or similar program) as a pilot project in one Women's Correctional Facility and one men's correctional facility. Participation in the program will not reduce sentences of inmates.

**Educational/Vocational Training**

The programs subcommittee acknowledges the critical importance of educational / vocational training in regard to preparing inmates to reintegrate into society and to reduce recidivism rates. The subcommittee

50291 Recidivism of Corrections by e c i d r o g r a m





It will be necessary to develop an active, well prepared, community-based cadre of people and organizations if we are to persuade our legislators and Governor to support needed progressive legislation. A good example is HB 4154, the Elderly Sentence Adjustment Act that is discussed in this issue. This is a very modest approach, involving about 200 men and women in a pilot program the first year and about half that number in future years. This legislation does not mean every elderly prisoner who has served at least 25 years will be released. A judge will determine if a

# A Message from Superintendent

Dave Dormire

Here at the Jefferson City Correctional Center we emphasize programming to compliment our security. We are a 2000-bed maximum security institution. In years past, this institution was one of the most dangerous in the nation for staff and inmates. Several factors have contributed to our current status as one of the safest. Certainly moving out of an old dilapidated institution three years ago, as well as better training and equipment for our staff are major factors but clearly in my mind the atmosphere inside the prison started changing about 10 years ago when we started some specific programs to address the attitudes and behavior of criminals.

In 1995 we instituted a therapeutic community to address drug and alcohol problems as well as criminal behavior.

In 2001 we started our Impact on Victims classes and followed these with related programming. These programs have helped change our institutional climate. We have fewer conduct violations and significantly lower levels of violence. We went from almost daily fights and incidents to a point where we average only one fight a month in our general populations, and we went all of last year without any serious assaults.

Certainly instituting programs comes with some resistance from hard core staff but they have proven to be successful in transforming this institution into a model for a correctional center. I describe these treatment programs as security programs because they have had such an impact on our overall security. They are changing the behavior and attitudes of individuals who have previously been only in a criminal lifestyle. We believe these programs serve us in Missouri in our ultimate goal of the highest public safety possible because when these

inmates are released they are less of a threat to the community. However, we are also reaping the benefits of these programs while these guys are still incarcerated because of how these programs make our staff and all inmates safer.

I welcome anyone to come to the institution and observe what we have going on. I believe you will see that good programs compiled with good security practices compliment each other and make not only correctional institution safer but our communities as well.!

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### *Letters from Participants Cont.*

but we are nevertheless responsible for them. Through my criminal actions, I have effected countless people in negative ways, and I now hold myself fully accountable for the damage that I have caused to them. I can never completely undo the harm I have caused, but it is my hope that by turning my life around and committing myself to healing the wounds that I have inflicted upon society, I can finally try to make things as right as possible. This is my duty. This is my privilege. This is my life. I owe my victims nothing less.

Sincerely  
Christopher Santillan!

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### *Elderly Pilot Program Cont.*

representatives of the general public, judiciary, law enforcement, and defense and prosecution bar. (4) The Department of Corrections may staff programs created under this subsection with employees of the Department or may contract with other public or private agencies for delivery of services as otherwise provided by law; (5) The pilot program shall include wrap-around

# Growing Burden for Aging Population

Sarah Etter

*Originally Published in Corrections.com 07/06/2007. Reprinted with permission.*

Corrections is facing an influx of elderly offenders in an age where overcrowding prisons is already a concern. In addition, health care budgets are rising exponentially as a result of the medical needs of this particular population.

According to Dr. Ronald Aday, author of *Aging Prisoners*, the future doesn't look much better for these offenders or the facilities that house them as their population rises. "Based on 2005 statistics from the ACA and my research with a number of states, it's become clear that this population hasn't really even started growing the way it will in the next 10 or 20 years, especially when it comes to the baby boomer population," Aday says. "We will see a tremendous increase. Right now, most DOCs classify 10 percent of their population as geriatric. We can expect to see that rise."

Aday, who specializes in aging studies and sociology at Middle Tennessee State University, says many factors are contributing to the rising numbers. "If you look at California, they have one out of six inmates serving life sentences. By 2020, sixteen percent of their inmates will be classified as geriatric," explains Aday. "It's just staggering."

Medical costs for a typical inmate might run an agency around \$33 per day, while costs for an aging inmate could run upwards of \$100. Most DOCs report spending more than 10 percent of the annual budget on elderly care. According to Massachusetts DOC Health Services Director, Dr. Terre Marshall, these costs stem from the types of chronic health problems many aging offenders face.

*Continued on page 11.*

# Creative Corner

WHEN INSPIRATION HITS...POEMS WRITINGS CONNOTATIONS...



*"No More War" has won the Best Essay Award in the Prisoners Against the War Essay Contest. Congratulations, Mr. Askew! Each of the writers who submitted to the contest were provided a copy of Homefront, published by Mainstay press and written by Tony Christini.*

## No More War!

Christopher Askew

9/11 has been the basis for this present administration to launch wars in two sovereign nations. Presently American troops are engaged in armed battles in Afghanistan and Iraq, with the latter being the most severe. Undoubtedly, 9/11 had a profound effect upon the psyche of this nation. However, misguided and prolonged military operations are unjustified. Personal vendettas and conjured falsifications, i.e., weapons of mass destruction, have clouded the judgments of the decision makers and placed hundreds of thousands of young Blacks, Whites, Latinos, etc., in harm's way. Propagandized ads and campaigns to increase recruitment continue. Now, everyone is baffled on what course of action to take. Both Republicans and Democrats alike

seem to agree that immediate withdrawal is not an option. While both parties remain uncertain on just what to do, the death toll continues to rise on both sides. Since President Bush's two daughters are not in Afghanistan or Iraq and very few if any members of the U.S. Senate or Congress have any of their children fighting in these wars, expediency is nonexistent. Since the political figures have been and continue to be negligent in their duties, it is going to take the citizens of this nation to rise up against the war and voice their dissatisfactions. If this is not done, the death toll will continue to rise and the financial strain that this war is causing to this country will continue as well. So, let us give the rally cry of NO MORE WAR.!

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*The second place winner in the Prisoners Against the War Essay Contest. Congratulations, Mr. Velez!*

## I'm Against the War

(Why I support bringing the troops home)  
John Velez

After 9/11, our Secretary of State and former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin L. Powell, appeared before a Senate Committee to present the Administration's case for war, citing among other things a mobile chemical weapons program otherwise known as "WMD's" (weapons of mass

destruction) and an alleged connection between the Iraqi dictator, Saddam Hussein, and Al-Qaeda leader Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi in Iraq. Shortly after Congress authorized the use of force against the country of Iraq, stating the possibility that WMD's could fall into the hands of terrorists, which was the most compelling reason for authorizing this use of force. We now know that the Administration's "case for war" was based on faulty intelligence, or worse, a flat out lie. Not only were there no weapons of mass destruction, but the so-called link to the terrorist group, Al-Qaeda, was also a fabrication, most likely used to inflame the passions of the Congress and influence a vote that would send our troops to the wrong war in the wrong place. There are several reasons to be against this war but none more "compelling" (this being the word Congress used) than the 3,500 plus U.S. fatalities and countless casualties suffered as a result of a war based on lies. In conclusion, this war is an injustice for which there is only one remedy: bring our troops home now before their lives are cut short for the wrong reasons in a country not their own. !

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*"Growing Burden..." Cont.*

"Cardiovascular disease, cancer, long-term impact of diabetes, high cholesterol, and sedentary lifestyle are all at the top of the list. Cancer and seizure disorders are also a huge issue," adds Marshall. Marshall says the challenge in helping the elderly population is escalated by a shortage of medical employees. Meanwhile, Corrections in general has been impacted by what some consider to be the greatest nursing shortage in history.

"An area that we overlook is the mental health concerns," Aday says. "A recent study found that 40 percent of state prisoners and 52 two percent of jail prisoners have at least one mental health problem.

*Continued on back page...*

# Growing Burden for Aging Population

Sarah Etter

*Continued from page 10..*

Many also suffer from depression. That's another place health care costs increase. It's not just physical health, but also the drugs for mental problems. They are very expensive."

To address many of these issues, the MADOC created 13-bed unit specifically for offenders who require assisted living care. Some states also are looking at pardons, parole and medical furloughs for aging offenders as the population continues to grow.

"I would say that these pardons and paroles would increase if there are not other options for release like medical furlough. If those aspects are not utilized, I could see that we would have an increase of assistance on an

individual level legally," says Marshall says. Releasing elderly prisoners is not as simple as it seems.

"You have to have a place for people to go. Some of these offenders have outlived their family. Some nursing homes are apprehensive about accepting these offenders. That's certainly a concern. If you don't have family, what is your next option for housing and income? Many of these people have been incarcerated most of their adult lives and cannot fend for themselves," Aday says.

One solution involves releasing aging inmates to existing family or to a support system in the community. Aday offers another innovative idea.

"We have courts for juvenile offenders. Why not have geriatric court systems? We take it into account if one commits a crime in their youth, but we don't review sentences for elderly. That is one aspect worth pursuing."

He adds that research still lacks about this population. Most studies have focused on aspects of specific aging inmates, like sex offenders. Instead, Aday would like to see some statewide or national figures.

"We need an overall picture of this population," Aday adds. "We need to know what they are suffering from and what their needs are so we can begin figuring out the best way to deal with this issue. It's not going to go away."!