

INSIDE Out

Parent Info Link

Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall

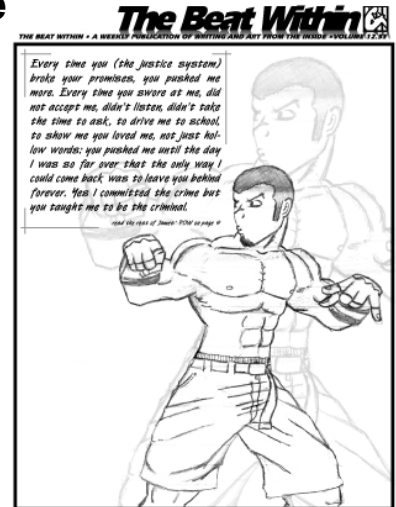
Oct. 2007

The Beat Within Gives Our Youth A Voice

There are few places lonelier than juvenile hall. Youth are disconnected from family, friends, and the greater community, not to mention the media. Words from juvenile hall resonate with a power unparalleled in other forms of youth writing. At *Beat Within* workshops, incarcerated youth are invited to offer their perspectives on personal, civic and ethical issues. The weekly publication, containing more than 80 pages of original material, is distributed to the workshop participants as well as corrections staff, adult prisoners, policymakers and community organizations. By contributing

to *The Beat Within*, incarcerated writers and artists are in a unique position to ameliorate their social isolation by expressing themselves and realizing that they are no longer alone; rather, they are a part of a larger community of people who share their pain, alienation, frustration, hopes and their dreams. They challenge the young writers to think as teachers as they reflect on their pasts and look ahead.

The History of The Beat Within
The Beat Within is a writing and conversation workshop inside juvenile halls, and a weekly publication that provides something few incarcerated youth



have ever known: a view of themselves having something worthwhile to say. The Beat was

Continued on page 6



89% Success Rate. Each year, over 13,000 youth are cited for a juvenile offense in Santa Clara County alone.

And one year of incarceration costs nearly \$71,000! Fresh Lifelines for Youth's or FLY's program educates, mentors and trains youth for less than \$7,000 per year – with a 89% success rate in keeping kids out of trouble. FLY's goal is to help our youth gain the life skills and the character needed to avoid the criminal justice system and become positive community leaders. Fresh Lifelines also works to reduce juvenile crime and incarceration through legal education, mentoring, and leadership training.

Continued on page 2

In this Issue

The Beat Within	1
Fresh Lifelines for Youth	1
Friends Outside	2
Chalk Art Competition	3
JH Garden New	3
Spotlight on Eric Polk	4
Healing Power of Pets	5
Designing Women	5
Volunteer Programs	7
Mission Statement	8



Friends Outside in Santa Clara County serves families, youth, prisoners and ex-prisoners through four key departments: Steps Ahead, Family Services, Jail Services & Youth Services.

Steps Ahead works with 0 through 5 year olds and their caregivers who have been impacted by incarceration. Home Visitors visit families in their homes once per week, or as needed, providing caregivers the tools and encouragement to be aware of their children’s developmental needs, promote early literacy skills and school readiness and set goals towards self-sufficiency.

Friends Outside Serves Youth/Families

Family Services provides emergency crisis intervention for families recently impacted by incarceration such as information and help in navigating the criminal justice system. Through Family Services the “Grandmother & Caregivers’ Support Group” is also offered to those taken care of their grandchildren or children of an adult inmate.

Jail Services provides services inside the Santa Clara County jails to help maintain links between prisoners and the outside world. Through Friends Outside, family members can send paperback books and (plastic framed) glasses, as well as perform notaries for family members on the outside. Other services are:

Services Provided:

- Cashing payroll checks
- Arranging court ordered releases in family emergencies

- Arranging the payment of bills (if the inmate has funds)
- Checking on court dates
- Delivery of Books
- Locating property
- Contacting probation officers
- Notary
- Giving info on marriages/divorces
- Filing papers in court
- Photocopying of legal papers
- Providing paperback books
- Providing clothing for jury trials

Finally, the Youth Program provides mentoring, after-school programs and school advocacy for youth ages 7 through 15 who have or have had a parent in custody.

Continued from page 1

What Parents Say About FLY.

“FLY’s benefit to the community is a safer environment. The benefit to the parents is having a resource to inform our children about being good citizens. The benefit to our youth is becoming a better judge of their own behavior choices and making better life decisions. This valuable and unique program has gained the community and corporate support it so clearly deserves.”



Participants in Our First Chalk Art Competition! Story on page. 3

All Units Win in October’s Chalk Art Competition!



The weather couldn’t have been better as 10 visual artists from the artisan collective Heart of Chaos joined 22 youth from 11 different units in Juvenile Hall’s first chalk art competition. Working in designated spaces

around the perimeter of the basketball court, the mood was relaxed and cheerful as the young artists began working with the vibrant pastel chalk provided—a first time experience for most of them. The motifs varied from indigenous symbols and figures to animals to whimsical and fanciful creatures. The event, sponsored by the MACC program and Catalyst for Youth, was accompanied by food and music and lasted for four hours. See www.heartofchaos.net

Catalyst for Youth Juvenile Hall Garden’s Harvest

In an enclosed area near the gym and basketball court, several housing units participate in a plant-based program that centers around growing flowers and vegetables. The designated land which was cleared of crabgrass in April and May and planted in June has rewarded the young men who have worked hard and long to prepare the soil and tend the plants. Peppers galore were one of the most popular vegetables and the boys got to pick them and take them into their room to eat later, adding spice to their regular meals. The staff enjoyed them too and frequently visited the garden to partake of the numerous varieties. Radishes, tomatoes, spaghetti squash, zucchini and eggplant were also harvested over a two month period. With the advent of fall, the boys have sorted through seeds perfect for cooler weather and started the winter garden planting carrots in the shape of a cross! See www.catalystforyouth.org for more pictures.



Catalyst for Youth volunteer Russell Waite teaches the young men how to put in an irrigation system.

Spotlight on Group Counselor Erik Polk



Eric Polk has been inspiring and teaching young people in Juvenile Hall (JH) for over ten years. Polk's colleagues consider him down to earth, honest, loyal, a team player, humble, and committed to making changes in the lives of the young men he counsels.

"He has evolved since I met him ten years ago," says Supervising Group Counselor Omar Ventura. "The experience and knowledge he has gained working in JH has transformed him into an inspired teacher and mentor."

Polk didn't plan on teaching in JH although he knew early on that he was going to be a teacher. He was 22 years old and in his last semester as a student at San Jose State, majoring in Social Science with a minor in Math, when he joined the JH staff. He had already enjoyed being a "Big Brother," coaching

basketball and tutoring young people, so working with the minors in the facility was a natural fit. But he admits that he had a lot to learn and is in fact still learning from others around him.

"I started in B2," recalls Polk, "and Terrance Ugalde who is a supervisor now asked me, 'What are you going to learn here?' That question grounded me. I was full of my own experiences and assumptions and hadn't considered that I was not just a teacher, I was also a learner. Ugalde was my first but not my last guide. Today I pay attention and follow the ones who have come before me."

I first met Eric in the hallways. With a white towel around his neck, calm demeanor and ready smile, I assumed he was a coach of some kind. And he is a football coach for his unit, but he is also a dynamic Group Counselor who recently took on the challenge of being an Aggressive Replacement Training (ART) instructor.

"He always takes the initiative," said Ventura. "He wants to make a difference in the lives of the minors whom he works with so he goes the extra mile."

"I try to give them the tools and knowledge for them to succeed," said Polk in his characteristic low voice. I'm preparing them for a job or college and life in general.

Polk understands that when they come into the facility, very few have basic life skills. He teaches them how to iron their clothes, tie a tie, write a check and balance a checkbook. He appeals to their logic and reason and he is, if anything, a truthful speaker. He speaks plainly so every youth can understand him and he tells it like it is without soft coating the message—and the boys thrive under his tutelage.

Polk is adamant that when he walks through those doors into the unit, he leaves his personal life at home. Being present to what is going on in the unit is critical as is being able to switch roles on a dime. Being one dimensional doesn't cut it.

"You never know what you are going to get when you walk in," says Polk. "I try to keep an open mind and a peaceful heart so I can give the boys my full attention. You can't meet their needs if you are pre-occupied or talking on your cell phone. I talk to them three hours at a time. They know that I have time for them. I will never have a kid come up and say, 'Mr. Polk doesn't care.'"

As a father of twins and a stepson and daughter, Polk admits that the role has softened his heart and made him a better person. His teaching style he attributes to his father who was a good mentor, strict, attentive and fair. He is following in his footsteps and many young men will thrive because of his effort.

Furry Friends Brings Laughter and Love to the Hall's Youth



Few can resist a dog in a Halloween costume. The only one missing is the black Dachshund dressed up as a roving skunk!

Ever see a large dog wearing a pink tutu or red devil horns? How about a Pekingese dressed up as a vampire or a black Dachshund who looks suspiciously like a skunk!? Well on Saturday October 27th the field inside JH was filled with such sights. It was visiting day for these furry friends and their human companions. Laughter and play is the order of the morning when this group visits the facility. Several groups of minors come out to play with the dogs, throwing balls to those canines devoted to retrieving them and racing around sharing the exuberance of these friendly creatures. Furry Friends has been visiting Juvenile Hall for over ten years, bringing dogs who can give our young people a dose of pure positive energy and

their specialty—unconditional love. The group also takes their lively companions to nursing homes and other facilities to spread the joy. Many studies have validated the therapeutic benefits of interacting with animals. Its hard to measure the impact of hugging a dog or getting licked in the face enthusiastically by these good natured beings. Thanks Furry Friends! For more information about Furry Friends, please visit www.furryfriendsrescue.org.



Designing Young Women

In October, a new program implemented by Catalyst for Youth started in G2, one of two housing units for young women. Seasoned fashion design instructor Terri Travis began the first class by showing the girls how to design and sew a purse. The girls quickly learned how to operate the five donated sewing machines and in two sessions created bags in rectangles, circles and heart shapes.



Wish List

- Sewing machines
- Thread/Fabric - All kinds
- Fabric - all kinds
- Decorative braid and rope
- Buttons/Velcro
- Patterns, Lace

The Beat Within continued from page 1



1996 when David Inocencio, a social worker inside San Francisco's B9s Youth Guidance Center, realized that there was no vehicle for the anguished voices of the incarcerated youth he heard. He teamed up with Pacific News Service, and *The Beat Within* was born. From that single workshop and a 4-page compilation of writings about the death of rapper Tupac Shakur, *The Beat* has grown to 100 pages per week of writing from the 40-plus Bay Area juvenile hall units that they visit weekly. Thanks to Liz Alameda, who they first met back in 1997 when she was in charge of programs, *The Beat* has been coming into Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall every Thursday evening for over ten plus years now. For the many youth who look at them askance the first time they attend a Beat workshop, after several weeks of our consistent presence on the unit, returning with a new publication and new discussion topics in hand weekly, we are able to build the trust that invites the young detainees to write about their darkest secrets and brightest hopes.

MY DISTINGUISHING MARKS

My distinguishing marks come from thugs that come out in the dark got one from a 15-year-old boy when i was 7 years old being hard i'm 16 years old and still remember the day i got hit sticking up for my 12-year-old sister, got me hit with a brick a scar on my back from a broken broomstick got scars from barbed-wire on my wrist had to run after pulling a lick was running from the police and cut it going over a fence got cut over my left eye at a party fighting bent not all my scars come from wars though not all my scars come from doing something illegal, some scars came from being a kid getting beat with a belt for being suspended or getting stole on for something bad i did and one of my scars i was actually born with got one on my chest from a knife i got sliced with my dad did it to me, pops was straight wicked my most distinguishing mark you can only see at certain times when i feel pain, anger, when someone tells me a lie or plays with my mind this distinguishing mark is seen in my eyes when you see it, it's a signal or giveaway of all the rage i have built up inside, from all the nights when i was a kid and because i was hungry i laid in bed and cried from being taken from my mother by a social worker that lied from seeing my cousin's chest wide open from a twelve-gauge blast in a drive-by from going to so many funerals when i now go, i don't cry from living life in pain, away from light, in a place that's dark it's where, when, and how i received my distinguishing marks.

—Dwayne The Knowledge (Published in *The Beat Within*, Vol. 12.35) See www.thebeatwithin.org for more.



SCC Probation Department's Volunteer Programs in JH

Alcoholics Anonymous: Group meetings for minors with alcohol abuse problems

Alateen Alannon: Group meetings for minors who are related to people with alcohol abuse issues.

The Beat Within: A weekly publication of writings and artworks by minors in local JHs.

Catalyst for Youth Garden: A horticulture therapy program that revolves around planting and tending a garden within the compound of buildings that comprise the Juvenile Hall facility.

Fashion Design: A basic design and sewing class for female minors implemented by Catalyst for Youth volunteers.

Flower Programs: Easter, Mother's Day and Thanksgiving volunteers come into assist minors with making flower arrangements for family members.

Foster Grandparent Programs: Volunteers over the age of 60 who provide supportive care, training, companionship and social contact with minors.

Furry Friends: Pet assisted therapy services where volunteers will bring in various animals for minors to interact with.

Girl Scouts: Program that targets gang prevention for females.

Hair Care: Hair cut services are provided for all minors on a rotating schedule.

Health Realization (HR): A teaching model that is used in prevention, intervention, and treatment. HR teaches about how the human mind works, how the individuals' experience of life is created and how much each person uses or misuses his/her ability to think. HR is taught on a weekly basis to designed living units.

Heart of Chaos Expressive Arts Program: Teaches a variety of mediums to several housing units.

Junior Achievement: Teaches the minors the principles of free enterprise so that they can understand business and economics and are work-force ready and prepared to be successful, contributing citizens in our community.

Narcotics Anonymous: Group meetings for minors with drug abuse problems.

Planned Parenthood: Program that targets teens who are at risk for teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and violence. They provide a week long workshop that educates minors about family life and issues surrounding intercourse.

Religious Services: An assigned Chaplain oversees all religious services provided for minors.

Santa: On Christmas volunteer Mr. Wallau assisted by several elves pass out Christmas presents to all the minors in custody.

Zohar Dance Company: Internationally acclaimed dancer/teacher Ehud Krauss instructs minors on various forms of high-energy dance.

Contacts (all numbers are in the 408 area code)

Asian American Recovery Services 271-3900
 Asian American for Comm. Involvement 975-2730
 CYO: California Youth Outreach 280-0203
 Catalyst for Youth: 269-3356
 FLY: Fresh Lifelines for Youth 299-7789

Friends Outside 295-6033
 Gardner Family Care Corp. 287-6200
 MACSA 928-5820
 Juvenile Hall Visiting 278-5810
 Juvenile Hall Main 278-5820

Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall Mission Statement

The Mission of Juvenile Hall as a detention facility is to provide an environment where the safety and security of the minors is our highest priority. We ensure that our youth receive the nutritional, educational, medical and mental health services as mandated by the state. While upholding the orders of the Court, we thereby contribute to the common effort of protecting the community. Further, we are committed to a standard of excellence in humane treatment.

Goals and Aspirations—With Dedication We Pledge to Strive For:

Professionalism – We act with fairness, consistency and without bias, while facing the daily challenges of working with delinquent behavior.

Positive Role Modeling – We believe it is through our actions and guidance that we make the greatest impact.

Integrity – We strive to maintain honest, ethical and moral behavior within and outside of our profession. of working with delinquent behavior.

Individual Worth – We value the importance of the individual while respecting cultural diversity.

Professional Development – We recognize that continuous education and training create the most effective staff.

Enrichment in Programming – We extend our positive influence throughout the community and within our institution through the development of socially beneficial programs.

Community Involvement – We recognize the value of and utilize the community resources to side in our effort to effect positive change in our youth.



Juvenile Hall
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San Jose, CA 95110