

OREGON CURE

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

International CURE goes to Capitol Hill to Advocate for Criminal Justice Reform!

October 2015 International CURE Board Meeting

The 2015 International CURE Board meeting was held in Washington DC, October 2-4, and was attended by more than half of the state and issue chapters. Chapter check-in opened the meeting with each chapter describing the work being done in their states to end mass incarceration. It is always encouraging to hear of the efforts that are being made and it gives the chapter leaders an opportunity to learn of effective strategies that we can then bring back to our local and state lawmakers. Several states are looking at reducing the prison population from a number of directions which included:

- * Increase diversion programs to keep people out of prison
- * Eliminate mandatory minimum sentencing to decrease prison sentences
- * Increase prison programs to rehabilitate people serving prison sentences
- * Increase reentry programs and resources to keep people from recidivating and returning to prison.

Several chapters discussed parole and how the boards are staffed (Oregon's parole board is comprised of former prosecutors). Alabama and Oregon are two states with parole boards in place that are either not approving release or are approving only a small number of people who appear before the board. Maryland has released over 120 "lifers" after concluding that this population (as well as people who have been convicted of a sex offence) are least likely to commit a new crime upon release. Indeterminate sentences, were not in-

tended to keep people in prison forever. Although the onus of proving rehabilitation falls on the person, there is a shared responsibility between the state legislature and DOC to ensure funds are available to people serving indeterminate life sentences so they can take part in appropriate rehabilitation programs. There is work being done in Michigan to make parole presumptive, which would shift the focus from "if" a person will be released by the board of parole to "when" a person will be released.

The next segment of the meeting included reviewing and approving the budget for the 2016 calendar year. The greatest expense for National CURE goes towards printing and mailing costs. We then moved on to review and approve changes to our corporate by-laws, and wrapped up the board meeting with an outline of key elements of CURE that we need to ensure will stay with us as we near our 50th year of advocating for people in prison.

One of our guest speakers, Tom Chleboski, discussed The Center for Prosecutorial Integrity (CPI), created in 2013, which is the impetus for establishing Prosecutorial Integrity Units in a number of states. There is a registry of prosecutors who have been found guilty of misconduct. In addition to identifying misconducts, the organization is also urging reforms in prosecutorial practices to avoid problems before they occur. More information (including the registry) is available at CPI's website: www.prosecutorintegrity.org. Tom also

reminded us of the work being done by the Marshall Project, which produces a daily collection of news related to criminal justice issues. Any one can sign up to receive the news briefs at the website www.themarshallproject.org.

Two Oregon CURE board members attended the International CURE meeting and also took part in the Unite to Face Addiction Rally on the mall in Washington DC which took place on October 4, 2015. We set up a small jail cell and read letters from CURE members throughout the United States sharing their personal stories of addiction. Oregon members sent in several letters, which we shared with Oregon's senators during our legislative visits on Monday, October 5.

Our message was clear: **WE NEED TO STOP INCARCERATING PEOPLE WITH ADDICTION!**

National CURE Board

(Founders Charlie and Pauline) Oregon Chapter Chair



Gretchen Vala

Reform Measure 11 Rally at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem, OR

Time Does Not Fit The Crime sponsored a rally at the Oregon State Capitol on Monday, November 16, 2015. This was the first day of Legislative Days for the Oregon Legislature, a three day session legislators use for holding special meetings and gathering information in preparation for the regular session that starts February 1, 2016. The rally was held to coincide with the unveiling of a proposed bill by Time Does Not Fit The Crime (TDNFTC) aimed at the reform of Measure 11 as it applies to first time offenders.

From 11am to 1pm, there were people, signs and banners on the capitol steps at the front door calling for reform of Measure 11. Almost 250 people stood in the rain on the steps listening to people sharing the impact of Measure 11 on their lives and in their families. They heard from speakers urging people to be involved in delivering information about Measure 11 to their legislators and spreading it to people who don't know about or understand Measure 11-yet. They applauded. They cheered. They shouted "Reform Measure 11." Rep. Lew Frederick called on the crowd to start the steps needed to make such a cultural change. He answered challenges from the crowd about what to do and how to do it by saying that the best thing to do was contact our legislators: attend their town halls, call, email, write. Let them know we're here.

Senator Chip Shields also spoke briefly, reiterating the importance of continuing to work for change and slowing prison growth. He specifically noted that Oregon is one of the states that spends more on its prisons than it does on higher education.

As part of their work to increase awareness and encourage support for change, in October, TDNFTC started a petition at moveon.org. It had almost 700 signatures on the day before the rally. They hope the signatures will help in convincing legislators to support reform, and their bill. The petition is at http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/time-does-not-fit-the?source=c.em.cp&r_by=14376278.

After the rally, TDNFTC met with senators and representative that afternoon and all day Tuesday. They passed out the petition and hoped to show the legislators their bill and encourage their support for it. Basically, the bill they carried in states:

1) Cases of first time offenders with no criminal background will be heard by and decided by the judge, not the DA. The judge will review everything to do with the case and make his/her decision.

2) First time offenders with no criminal background will be eligible for a second look halfway through their sentence to see if they can be paroled, etc. It would disallow new charges

being made and additional time being added at the time of the review.

TDNFTC was founded by two women who met through family members who are incarcerated together and are first time offenders. As they talked, they decided that what happened to them because of Measure 11 was not fair and should not be happening to anyone who had never been in trouble with the law before.

They were horrified to find out that there are 4314 first time offenders, with no previous criminal background, in the Oregon prison system. Their statistics show there are 6164 people in prison under Measure 11, almost half the prison population of 14,701. At a cost of \$87.06 per day per prisoner, it costs the State of Oregon over \$200 million per year for the Measure 11 population and approximately \$125 million of that is for first time offenders.

In 2014, the two of them had a few meetings. They talked to people. From February through April this year, they went to Salem every two weeks to meet with senators and representatives to find out how they felt about Measure 11 and where they stood.

They held their first public meeting in Salem. It was followed by meetings in Pendleton and Wilsonville. After the Wilsonville meeting, a person knowledgeable with the legal aspects of Measures 10 and 11 offered to help write the bill they took to Salem on the 16th. They feel it may have a chance at passing, especially now that Governor Brown has asked the counties, legislators and state agencies to find a way to cut the prison population to avoid the cost of opening the Deer Ridge medium facility.

TDNFTC's action continues. Barb and Patty email the senators and representatives every week. Meetings will be scheduled again with those representatives and senators for three days in January. Their plan is to submit the bill to begin the legislative process when the 2016 Legislative session begins February 1st. Before then, they plan to have another public meeting and would appreciate any ideas where to hold it this time.

You can contact Barb at barbspigpen@charter.net or Patty at patty070@gmail.com if you have ideas to share or would like to be added to their emails. Their facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/ReformMeasure11TimeDoesNotFitTheCrime>.

They remind all of us that they cannot do this alone. The only way this will be done is by involving everyone!





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Portland's "Ban the Box" Ordinance passed unanimously!

November 25, 2015

Mayor Charlie Hales states: "Thanks to my colleagues on Council who share my desire to change the way we think about those coming out of prison. They're not "ex-cons," they're people who need hope and opportunity to lead successful lives. That starts with employment."

With this vote, employers must wait until the conditional offer phase of the application process to conduct a background check. This creates the BEST CHANCE for applicants to be considered for their skills and abilities, rather than just their past."

From Patty Katz: (Oregon CURE)

Dear Fair Chance for All Supporters,

Today, Portland City Council voted overwhelmingly in a 5-0 vote to support the Fair Chance for All Campaign, and ultimately passed a strong ordinance that will ensure workers with past arrest and convictions histories have the opportunity to find work.

As Mayor Hales took his aye vote, he thanked the several of the impacted community members he's been able to develop a relationship with, and the Fair Chance for All Coalition for moving this issue forward for over a year and a half.

Without his steadfast commitment to this issue it's unlikely that we would have made it here today.

The change to city code will be implemented in the summer of 2016, and we'll need you to stay engaged throughout the rule making process.

This is a huge win for workers in the city and would not have been possible without your support! Thank you for all you've done to ensure we could get here today! (check our website to see how you can help)

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside all of people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied,

"The one you feed."

International CURE

Expectations of Justice—Because we believe that... No one deserves to be measured only by the worst thing she or he has ever done.

- Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and have his or her 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 policies that are counterproductive.
- Detention must be justified by a legitimate public safety concern.
- Those 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 the juvenile system that is geared toward rehabilitation and education rather than incarceration.

Adjudication Anyone accused of a crime shall be represented by an attorney who has the qualifications, resources, and time to thoroughly explore the circumstances surrounding the crime and advocate for the defendant. This is true whether the crime is considered violent or nonviolent and whether it is resolved by trial or plea agreement.

The justice system shall understand and consider the individual's background and accomplishments, as well as the mitigating circumstances of the crime as thoroughly as they understand and consider the aggravating circumstances.

No plea agreement shall occur without negotiations that are done with an engaged and competent attorney, in a manner that does not result in harm to any other defendant, and includes the judge. Anyone who refuses to negotiate a plea agreement and is subsequently tried and convicted shall not be sentenced to a longer term than was offered in negotiations.

The defendant shall not appear in court in shackles, restraints, or jail "uniform." Any action that results in the deprivation of an individual's liberty shall be decided based only upon the beyond a reasonable doubt standard.

There shall be no loss of voting rights as a result of a criminal conviction.

The criminal prosecution system shall consider evidence of someone's innocence, regardless of when that evidence becomes available and whether or not the court process or representation was flawed.

Oregon CURE Annual Meeting

October 19, 2015

HOPE: Help Overcoming the Prison Experience

6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Beaverton City Library – Meeting Room A / B

Welcome:

Gretchen Vala	Oregon CURE
Paul Erickson	Oregon CURE

Moderator:

Patty Katz	Oregon CURE
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Department of Corrections:

Cindy Booth	Transition and Reentry Administrator
Stephanie Gaidosh	Lead Transition Coordinator

Video:

Members of the OSP Lifer's Club will deliver their message of hope and share their thoughts on how people in prison create community. There is life to be lived in prison. There is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Guest Speaker:

John Castro

Reentry Service Providers and Guests:

Constructing Hope	Pat Daniels	Reentry Transition Center	Alverda McCoy
Guest: Justin Callendar		Guest: Jaqualine Whitt	
Bridges to Change	Monta Knutson	Iron Tribe	Shawn Bower
Guest: Dixie Yagle		Guest: Erik Rise	

The feedback from our meeting was very positive. We were so honored for the participation of our community, including a video from some of the guys in the Lifer's Club at Oregon State Prison.

Each of our presenters were amazing. I always judge an event if we can make people laugh and cry! We did that this year at our annual meeting! Please see some of the work our re-entry presenters do every day in the free community.

Road to Success (RTOS)

is a voluntary transition program offered to people at CCCF/M, CRCI, DRCM, OSCI, OSP, PRCF, SCI, SRCI/M. It encompasses the following five classes: Employment, Tenant Education, Working Effectively with Your PO, Money Management, and Your Family, Your Community, and Your Release. All five classes provide approximately 40 hours of instruction and homework time. The RTOS curriculum allows the person to voluntarily take the components they deem as necessary. These curricula work in conjunction with the person's current programs, jobs, and additional courses in which they may already be enrolled. The person will automatically be identified at six months from release and will attend an RTOS assessment where they have the option to sign up for the classes they want and find out about the individual services they can access. In addition to the core curriculum, the Transition Coordinator also schedules guest speakers from the community to provide information on transition programs outside of the facilities.

Information provided by Stephanie Gaidosh

Constructing Hope



Constructing Hope
Pre-Apprenticeship Program

PUTTING PEOPLE TO WORK in the
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

FREE Ten weeks of construction training for those with legal history, minorities and low income, ages 18 years and older.

INCLUDES: Hands-on building construction experience, classroom instruction, certifications, and site visits to apprenticeship training centers. Class is held three times a year in January, April and September: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 6:30am to 4:00pm



Construction Training:

No-cost, nine-week, construction skills and life skills pre-apprenticeship construction training program for disadvantaged men and women.

Students learn: Construction Skills, Blueprints, Applied Math, Safety, Career Awareness, Financial Management,

Workplace Expectations, Construction Culture, Professional Communications, Certifications, Plan for Life Success.

Constructing Hope—405 NE Church Street—Portland, Oregon 97211—Phone: 503-281-1234—Fax: 503-719-7685



Iron Tribe
Non-Profit Organization

Iron Tribe currently operates seven properties for ex-cons and persons in recovery to provide support for the men and women releasing from county or state facilities and residential treatment programs.

Peer support 'is people that have been through it connecting with people that are going through it.' Iron Tribe accepts referrals from partner agencies for those seeking supports to deal with the challenges that arise from histories of mental illness, criminality and addiction.

Peer Directed means Iron Tribe provides housing and support from the day of release. Each new individual is paired with an ex-con in recovery. This transition navigator is someone who has faced similar challenges and is prepared to walk new members through the process based on the human-being and their successful transition into the community, Iron Tribe works with those in recovery to establish individual recovery action plans that address health, economic and spiritual wellness needs.

16641 SE 82nd Dr, # 202 Clackamas, Oregon



Reentry Transition Center

1818 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

Portland, OR 97212

(971) 255-0547 x206

Support for the Formerly Incarcerated

The RTC is here to help you, your family member or client successfully transition back into the community.

How it Works

Our Navigation Support will help you access:

Immediate needs and long term goals

Eligibility: Currently on Probation, Parole, Bench Probation, Post-Prison Supervision, or Close Street Supervision
Been incarcerated in the past 2 years in county jail or state/federal prison



Our mission is to strengthen
individuals and families affected by
addiction, poverty and homelessness.
Bridges to Change is committed to stopping
the revolving door of recidivism through

Housing

Mentoring

Employment Services.

www.bridgestochange.com

Counties Served
Clackamas, Washington, Multnomah and Marion

contact@bridgestochange.com

503.899.9517

Patty's Story- When I released for the last time in 2000, for my 27th parole violation, I didn't know what to do. I knew that I would *never* be able to have a driver's license in my name, build my credit enough to *ever* have a credit card or buy a car, and if I did get a car, it could *never* be in my name. With my criminal history, I knew I *would never* be able to rent a place of my own. I knew I *could never* have a job in my name- my résumé too spotty to say the least. In addition, I knew that my fines, fees and restitution would gobble up any of my paycheck - if I could ever get one.

I 'knew' a lot for being clueless!

I was 52 years old, been to prison five times, had 14 felony convictions and 27 parole violations. I was a heroin addict, my arms were so damaged, I couldn't ever wear short sleeves and they were so weak, I couldn't go back into the restaurant business. I needed dental work, a safe place to sleep and a way to support myself- a legal way to support myself.

I was so new to recovery and I didn't know how to 'act' in the normal world, I didn't know how to just 'be' in the world. I needed everything at once.

A safe place to live, I needed a job (hadn't had a job for more than 15 years.) I needed bus money and/or a way to get from point 'A' to point 'B'- I had nothing to wear (I came out of jail with a pair of jeans that didn't fit, a pajama top, dirty socks and nasty tennis shoes)

If I applied for employment, what phone number would I use? Who would be my reference? What kind of work could I do?

A series of things happened very rapidly.

I attended a 12-step meeting after I got off the bus from jail, I met a few people and they took me home to eat while I waited for my most normal friend to get home. I thought I could stay with her, she only smoked crack on the weekend and I knew she wouldn't share. I kept calling and finally her husband answered. She was out of town, but I was welcome to stay...as long as I stayed clean from drugs and alcohol.

WOW! I had a place to sleep-

My 'meeting' friend said, "Just get busy!" I attended two 12-step meetings each day and began to volunteer at a homeless shelter 4 hours each day helping to prepare lunch and dinner. (and I got to eat two meals each day)

Some people gave me some clothes, not much, but now I had three changes of clothing, some makeup, a safe place to sleep and shower and something to do each day that made me feel good about myself.

I signed up for food stamps and got a bus pass. It was a little difficult being around weekend crack smoking, so I stayed out of the house as much as I could. I found out about a clean and sober house and there was an opening. My sister said there was some money left over from my mother's end of life expenses and she would use it to pay my rent and help me. She would NOT give me cash.

So, where I am I today? Well, I still go to prison. However, I get out on the same day I go in. I try to attend a function or a group inside the walls a few times per month. I've sat on many boards,

councils and advisory groups over the years. Currently I sit on a working group for the Governor's Re-Entry Council, the board of directors for Bridges to Change, Oregon CURE and Hands Across the Bridge.

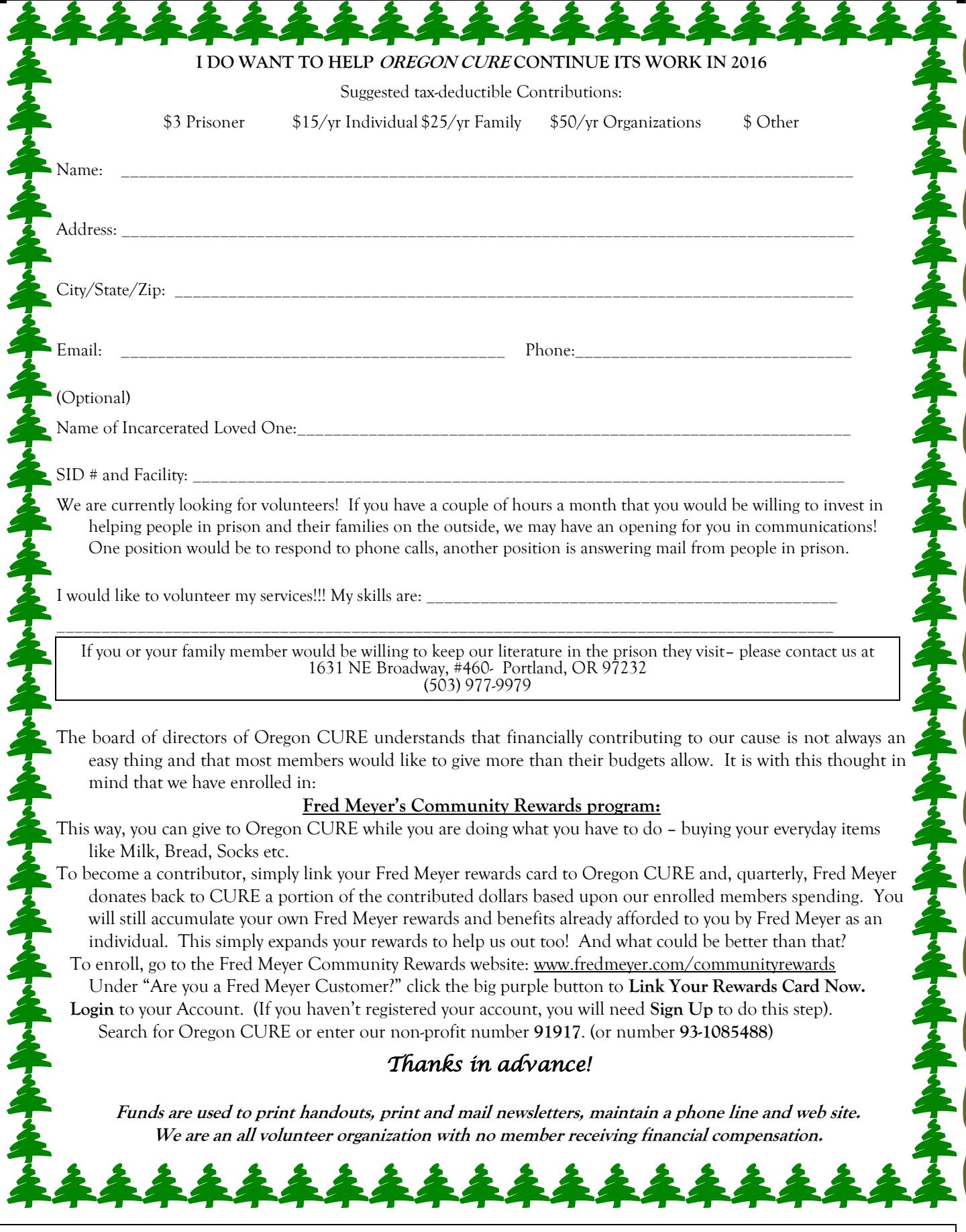
This year I worked very hard with others to pass a few bills; Ban the Box for the State of Oregon, a gold standard ordinance banning the box in the City of Portland. I worked in collaboration to pass a Racial Profiling bill making it illegal for the police to continue to pull over someone just because they look a certain way. Police officers will now have a 'report card' and we are keeping score! I worked with Senator Shields' office to reinstate a family program for the woman's prison.

How does someone like me climb out of a cell; go from a table bolted to the floor and end up at some of the decision-making tables in which I sit? Well, we do it one day at a time, one goal at a time and we create our own yardstick to measure our own worth. I used to feel so defeated because I measured my worth by someone else's measuring stick. 'I don't own my house, I didn't finish collage, my car isn't as good, my addiction, criminality and bad parenting skills hurt my family.' All of those things really kept me down. My path was different-

If I measure *my successes*, calculate *my win* for that day, I feel better when I lay my head down at night. Maybe the win was very small; as simple as I didn't blame someone, maybe I bought that jar of spices (that could have fit into my purse) maybe I put my shopping cart back where I found it. Some days my growth was not lying, or I said to someone in a store, "Thanks for all of your hard work!" Some days I add more than an inch at a time- but every day I keep adding on to my yardstick.

So today, I do have a driver's license in my name, I have a great credit score, since I earned my driver's license back, I have bought several cars, the last one is really fun to drive and they have all been in my name. When I left transitional housing after two years, I looked in the classifieds for someone who owned her own house to rent. I met with her and showed her a letter of discloser I had written, telling her who I am today and all that I have overcome. I had letters of reference; one from the transitional housing organization, stating I paid my rent on time each month for two years, a letter from my employer, letters from organizations I had volunteered with and yes, a letter from my parole officer. She took a chance and I got to live in my own place! My first job was doing laundry in a detox center where I had been a client six times. And next, to serve as a VISTA Volunteer with AmeriCorps. That was a great place for me to get closer to the decision making table. And just a few months ago, I finally paid off all of my fines, fees and restitution - and not once have I been a garnishee. I contacted Department of Revenue and we made a new payment plan each year. I have been paying someone between \$50 and \$150 dollars each month since the year 2000. I stopped resenting it when I realized they didn't want 'my' money- they wanted 'their' money.

And as the years pass by, I find I turned out to be who I was meant to be. I am a nice person, I have compassion for my fellows, and I am a good family member. I have learned I don't have to 'act' I just need to 'be' - and all of that is okay for me!



I DO WANT TO HELP OREGON CURE CONTINUE ITS WORK IN 2016

Suggested tax-deductible Contributions:

\$3 Prisoner \$15/yr Individual \$25/yr Family \$50/yr Organizations \$ Other

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

(Optional)

Name of Incarcerated Loved One: _____

SID # and Facility: _____

We are currently looking for volunteers! If you have a couple of hours a month that you would be willing to invest in helping people in prison and their families on the outside, we may have an opening for you in communications! One position would be to respond to phone calls, another position is answering mail from people in prison.

I would like to volunteer my services!!! My skills are: _____

If you or your family member would be willing to keep our literature in the prison they visit- please contact us at
1631 NE Broadway, #460- Portland, OR 97232
(503) 977-9979

The board of directors of Oregon CURE understands that financially contributing to our cause is not always an easy thing and that most members would like to give more than their budgets allow. It is with this thought in mind that we have enrolled in:

Fred Meyer's Community Rewards program:

This way, you can give to Oregon CURE while you are doing what you have to do - buying your everyday items like Milk, Bread, Socks etc.

To become a contributor, simply link your Fred Meyer rewards card to Oregon CURE and, quarterly, Fred Meyer donates back to CURE a portion of the contributed dollars based upon our enrolled members spending. You will still accumulate your own Fred Meyer rewards and benefits already afforded to you by Fred Meyer as an individual. This simply expands your rewards to help us out too! And what could be better than that?

To enroll, go to the Fred Meyer Community Rewards website: www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards
Under "Are you a Fred Meyer Customer?" click the big purple button to **Link Your Rewards Card Now.**

Login to your Account. (If you haven't registered your account, you will need **Sign Up** to do this step).

Search for Oregon CURE or enter our non-profit number **91917**. (or number **93-1085488**)

Thanks in advance!

*Funds are used to print handouts, print and mail newsletters, maintain a phone line and web site.
We are an all volunteer organization with no member receiving financial compensation.*

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



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.

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Member Contributions and Inquiries can be directed to: Oregon CURE

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.

Renew your Membership to Oregon CURE Today!!

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

Website: www.oregoncure.org

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