

THE ECHO

Created by incarcerated people



NEWS
FROM
THE
INSIDE

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EASTERN OREGON CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

PENDLETON, OR 97801

THE ECHO CELEBRATES SIX YEARS IN CIRCULATION

Publication Reaches 72nd Edition and is Featured in Local Newspaper



On Oct. 16, The Echo and 1664 were featured in an article by the East Oregonian. The article was also featured in the quarterly magazine The Other Oregon.

ALMOST EVERY PRISON in the United States has a newsletter – usually a few copy paper pages stapled together like a church flyer. Very few have had the recognition and success of The Echo, EOCI's news publication, which celebrates its 72nd edition this month.

Part of that recognition came when the East Oregonian featured an article about the publication and EOCI's new quarterly magazine, 1664, which was first published in the summer of 2024. The article was also featured in The Other

Oregon - a publication distributed to 5,000 Oregonians every quarter. The recognition of EOCI's two publications represents a culmination of progress that began in 2018.

(Continued on page 14)



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PRISON BREWS TO OPEN DOORS

EOCI to Open Coffee Shop Early Next Year; AICs Trained as Baristas

Written by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer

CONSTRUCTION HAS begun on EOCI's coffee shop, Prison Brews, which will be available for staff purchases later this year.

The coffee shop is part of the Food Service department and, similar to staff dining, will employ AIC workers.

The lucky AICs who are hired as baristas will be trained by local coffee company, The Pendleton Buckin' Bean, which will also be the supplier for the coffee shop.

Food Service Manager Liza Emory said, "The Pendleton Buckin' Bean is the supplier. It's great because it is a local business. They will also be conducting training with the AICs we hire."

The Buckin' Bean has been a local

coffee bean-roasting company since 2012.

Emory said, "This is not open to the AIC population to purchase, but there may be some opportunities in the future. We are just trying to get established right now."

In addition to coffee, Prison Brews will also serve pastries which will be made in-house by the baristas.

The coffee shop will use some of the space in the D2 courtroom area. Currently, the coffee shop has been framed out and installation of plumbing and electric components is scheduled to start in November.

"There is lots of work to do," said Emory, "But everything has been purchased - the equipment and product."

The Food Service department is currently accepting applications for baristas from incentive level three AICs, preferably with some experience in the food service industry.

Emory said the program serves to train AICs in valuable skills. Restaurants or coffee shops are often felon-friendly employers.

PRAS award for AIC baristas start at 12 points and the skills learned can lead to gainful employment upon release. Baristas outside of prison can make anywhere from \$17,940 to \$31,960 per year.

"It's a win/win," said Emory. "The coffee shop will help support a local business and AICs have the opportunity to train in a field that may employ them after release." | ECHO

AROUND EOCI

Photographs by Phillip Luna



Danny Wilson, left, records incarcerated writer Jacob Harper on Oct. 20. Harper reads his piece on the theme of “connections,” which included great prose such as “I, a man alone, with a pen.”

LEAVING TRAILS EVERYWHERE

PonyXpress Records Incarcerated Writers for Radio Show

Co-written by Walter Thomas, staff writer and Phillip Luna, editor

PONYXPRESS CO-FOUNDERS

Tracy Schlapp and Danny Wilson have been conducting a monthly writing workshop at EOCI since April 2023. About 10 incarcerated people gather monthly to meet with volunteers Schlapp and Wilson, writing on a wide range of topics.

On Oct. 20, 2024, the group met in the EOCI visiting room for a new kind of workshop – the writers participated in a live reading of their work which will air on a Portland radio station and be available on the group’s website, PonyXpress.org.

Portland-based Schlapp and Wilson,

who were recognized as EOCI volunteers of the year in 2023, travel between six other correctional facilities in Oregon holding writing workshops.

During previous workshops the incarcerated writers were provided with the prompt of “connections” by Schlapp.

Over the past few months, each writer has produced work related to the prompt: poems, short stories, essays and memoirs.

Fernando Pelayo, a participant in the workshop, read a letter he wrote to his daughter as a result of the writing prompt.

Pelayo said, “Anytime we have an opportunity we should share [our] innermost experience as an incarcerated person.”

The recording was not limited to writing, either. Participant Luis Rodriguez played the guitar and sung a song he wrote for the event.

After the event Rodriguez stated, “It’s no longer just a song I wrote down. This shows we aren’t what people see on TV. We are humans longing for connections.”

Schlapp said she believes it is important for readers to hear the voices of incarcerated people



Leslie Halbert, right, takes photos with her phone while Schlapp and Wilson record writer Matthew Avina-Norris on Oct. 20. Halbert is the staff liaison for the workshop.

because it changes the context of the writing.

Regarding the expanding presence of the PonyXpress throughout Oregon, Schlapp said it's important to continue building. She explained the writers are "leaving trails" of themselves everywhere. She views this as a process of redemption.

According to Schlapp, one of the long-time workshop participants at Oregon State Penitentiary has changed the narrative about himself through his writing.

"It used to be when you looked him up [on the internet] the first thing you would see was why he is in prison. Now, you see all of this poetry he has written first," she said.

She hopes that will be the experience of many more incarcerated writers.

At EOCl, PonyXpress workshops and events are made possible with the support of liaison Leslie Halbert.

Halbert attends every workshop and often participates in the writing exercises.

PonyXpress began at OSP, but has expanded to include several Oregon facilities and in March started publishing writing and self-paced lessons on the EDOVO app.

EDOVO is an educational application available on tablets in correctional facilities across the United States.

The training material and online publication is a compilation of creative writing Schlapp and Wilson have gathered from correctional facilities in Oregon.

Many of the writers in PonyXpress workshops have had their work posted on the EDOVO app, which has more than 3,500 views since it became available.

PonyXpress has an editorial team from Lakota Oyate-Ki Culture Club at OSP, which provides editing and feedback to writers from other facilities.

PonyXpress is supported by the Oregon Community Fund, Oregon Humanities, and the Spirit Mountain Community Fund. |ECHO



Luis Rodriguez, an incarcerated writer and musician, began attending PonyXpress writing workshops in August. Rodriguez performed an original song at the Oct. 20 event.



A spring mix salad with tomatoes, toasted hazelnuts, whipped feta dressing in a cucumber ring. This salad was part of the five-course meal at the Oct. 29 event.



A pumpkin mousse with a chocolate motif. Created by Neil Watford for the fine dining event.

NEW PROGRAM HOLDS FIRST EVENT

EOCI's New Fine Dining Program Has Five-Course Debut

Written by Phillip Luna, editor

ON OCT. 29, Pendleton Mayor John Turner, members of the Pendleton community and Department of Correction's administration gathered for a high cuisine luncheon as part of a regular quarterly meeting. The five-course meal featured Beef Wellington as the main course, an entrée common to upscale restaurants. Unlike upscale restaurants, this meal was prepared and served by currently incarcerated people.

Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution held its first fine dining event as part of the Food Service Department's pilot program of the same name.

Five incarcerated people participated in the event under the tutelage of Food Service Manager Liza Emory and her kitchen coordinators. The meal served 18 people during a quarterly luncheon for the prison advisory committee, a group of community members.

Every element of the five course meal was prepared from scratch by three incarcerated program participants. The remaining two participants served as front-of-house waiters providing table service.

EOCI resident Neil Watford was the baker for the event. Watford created pumpkin mousse with a chocolate motif and an after dinner mint truffle.

"He is a better decorator than me," Emory said. "He has an

artistic eye and a steady hand."

Gary Kealoha and Alfred Velasquez were chefs for the meal. They had the task of preparing roasted pork belly with orange marmalade and savory shortbread, potato pavé in a wild mushroom cream sauce, a spring mix salad with toasted hazelnuts and whipped feta dressing in a cucumber ring, and of course, Beef Wellington.

Kealoha and Velasquez are experienced chefs, but trained with Emory's kitchen coordinators to prepare the meal – a process which began three days prior to the Oct. 29 event.

Beef Wellington is a complicated steak dish made out of fillet steak, coated with pâté and duxelles, wrapped in a coating of prosciutto, enveloped in a puff pastry and then baked.

However, the dish Kealoha and Velasquez said was the most tedious was the potato pavé.

Potato pavé is a russet potato sliced into paper-thin layers, soaked in cream, then carefully layered 50 slices high. The stack is then buttered, seasoned and fried.

Kealoha said it was a "really fancy French fry."

With the experience they gain this year, Kealoha and Velasquez may be part of the training team as the program expands.

"I think the plan is that we will

go through this process and next year we will help train the new people," said Velasquez.

Seth Milton and Ben Lundberg were front-of-house service (waiters) for the meal.

Lundberg and Milton wore button-up blue shirts and bow ties during the event.

Emory said, "This event is a showcase of what our program is going to be." She added this was a soft start to the program, which is slated to open fully in January of next year.

Emory intends the program to be a year-long course that teaches incarcerated people valuable skills in the culinary field.

She added the goal is for the participants to "develop the skills and experience they need" and that they "learn the five mother sauces and all the knife cuts" which will make them more employable upon release.

Emory has more than 20 years experience as an executive pastry chef. Originally from Oregon, she went to culinary school in Kentucky and graduated in 2006.

She said the food service industry is important in helping incarcerated people reenter communities.

"I learned a long time ago that many people who parole work in restaurants. I've wanted to start this program for a very long time, since I started here." Emory started working for ODOC in 2011.

Despite how long it took to start, Emory said she feels this culinary program can grow into something really special. She also acknowledged the support she has from ODOC administration.

According to Emory, there are only two or three prison programs like this in the United States. | ECHO



Gary Kealoha, left, plates the 50-layered potato pavé at the Oct. 29 event.



Seth Milton, left, and Ben Lundberg provide table service during the fine dining meal.



Beef Wellington was the main course of the meal. It is a complicated steak dish made out of fillet steak, coated with pâté and duxelles, wrapped in a coating of prosciutto, all inside a puff pastry.

AROUND EOCI



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Twenty-one graduates listen to a speech from keynote speaker B. Reed during the Oct. 4 GED graduation ceremony. The event was TVCC's first graduation at EOCI since they accepted the education contract last year.

IT TAKES PERSEVERANCE AND A LITTLE GRIT

TVCC Holds First Graduation Since Accepting Contract at EOCI

Written by Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

"GETTING MY GED might not seem like a big deal to some, but it means much more to me than I can explain," Chris Garcia told a room full of friends, family, staff and his 20 fellow graduates during the Oct. 4 graduation ceremony. "We aren't perfect but we definitely are not our mistakes."

The event was a major milestone for the education department as it was the first since Treasure Valley Community College accepted the education contract at EOCI.

Classes began Jan. 8, following the end of Blue Mountain Community College's contract.

Treasure Valley's inaugural graduation is the first since July 2023 when BMCC held their final graduation at the facility.

The state of Oregon requires any AIC who has not earned their high school diploma or GED to take GED classes once incarcerated; however, the state does not require post-high school education.

For some, seeking out an education is something that extends beyond the requirement.

"My son just graduated high school this year," said Garcia. "I wanted to show him even though I am here I can do things he can be proud of."

The large number of men enrolled and attending classes at EOCI are spread out over a handful of educators.

The education department employees 11 AIC tutors.

TVCC Education Director Eddie Alves said, "We have 148 men in school right now here and I have three teachers. It could not be done without the tutors help."

Educator B. Reed, a keynote speaker at the graduation, said, "The education journey is different for everyone ... it might be difficult finding the voice inside you that tells you that you need to finish this

thing you started."

Reed added, "But in all cases, it is perseverance that students had to find in themselves to finish."

EOCI's three teachers share over 40-years of combined experience.

Teacher P. Rasmussen said, "I tell my teacher friends this is like an oasis of education."

Rasmussen is the most recent addition to EOCI's education department. She has been employed as a teacher with the institution for nine months and she hopes this will be her forever job because of the impact education can have on the incarcerated community.

Data from the National Former Prisoner Survey reveals a 27% unemployment rate among Adults in Custody looking to reintegrate to society, while the national unemployment rate in 2024 is 4.8%. The same study found that these numbers are largely impacted by low levels of formal education.

"I think this job is the dream job I didn't know I wanted," said Rasmussen.

Rasmussen recently taught a college writing class for the New Direction Education Project (NDEP), EOCI's only college program and one of only four college programs in the state.

A study conducted by the Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College uncovered a GED earned in prison is rarely a stepping stone to higher education.

The study found that "of all formerly incarcerated people with in-prison GEDs, less than 10% go on to take any college coursework, and less than 1% attain college degrees."

Alves and his team hope TVCC can improve that percentage at EOCI.



Photograph by Phillip Luna

The 21 graduates include: James Anderson, Bryce Bushman, Anthony Cuevas, Joshua Curphey, Erik Diamond, Cristobal Garcia, Michael Hambleton, Devon Hernandez-Barajas, Jacob Hughes, Michael Jacobsen, Shawn Jeffries, William McClure, Michael Meneses, Jesus Ortiz-Rendon, Tyger Pearson, Elijah Pruitt, Daemon Stamps, Tyler Thompson, Jacob Whitman, William Williams and Timothy Taylor.



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Graduate Chris Garcia spoke at the podium during the Oct. 4 ceremony, saying "My son just graduated high school this year. I wanted to show him even though I am here I can do things he can be proud of."

He is currently working to bring college education through Pell Grants to EOCI and has ensured the NDEP remains functional.

When Alves spoke at the podium during the event, he addressed the students and said he believes a GED is a stepping stone.

"This quarter there are six college classes being offered at Snake River Correctional Institution, and we hope to do the same here," said Alves. TVCC is also the education provider for SRCI. "I tell you that because this, hopefully, is not the end of your journey but just the beginning." |ECHO

AROUND EOCI

MULTIPLE DEGREES AWARDED

Tim Taylor Receives Accolades During Oct. 4 Graduation

Written by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer and
Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

TIM TAYLOR WAS one of the 21 graduates celebrated at Treasure Valley Community College's graduation on Oct. 4. His recognition, however, was acknowledging the work put in for the last nine years.

Taylor earned a master's degree and two doctorate degrees.

"I was in junior high the first time I made National Honor Society and my grandmother told me, 'you are going to be a doctor someday,'" recalled Taylor.

After many years, the 68-year-old Taylor obtained his PhD in Biblical Theology and a Doctorate in Christian Counseling from the International Christian College.

Taylor said, "I believe my grandmother is cheering for me. She's part of the crowd.

Taylor added in a display of emo-



Photograph by Phillip Luna

EOCI Resident Tim Taylor poses with degrees on Oct. 4. Taylor earned two doctorate degrees - one in theology and one in Christian counseling.

tion, "I made it grandma."

Taylor said he maintained his faith throughout his life and many tribulations. Moving forward Taylor wants to inspire others.

What he learned from his experience was the power of never giving up, regardless of age or challenges.

"I used to be a fan of science fiction, dating back to Outer Limits and Twilight Zone," said Taylor.

He recalled a story about two people crawling through the desert, dying of thirst. The camera pans out as the last person gives up. On the other side of the sand dune is a city.

"One more dune and he would have been saved," Taylor said. "I think that's what our lives are like. That it's one more dune. Crawl, fight, do whatever you have to do; Get over that hump. Salvation could be on the other side." | ECHO

AFRICAN AMERICAN PROGRAM VISITS EOCI

Program Leadership Holds Informational Session on Oct. 23

Co-written by Shane Goins, correspondent and Phillip Luna, editor

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN Program visited EOCI on Oct. 23. Program leadership met with counselors, administration and a few select AICs to discuss the AAP program.

AAP begins inside institutions, identifying African American incarcerated people who are scheduled to release in Multnomah County within six months.

Incarcerated people selected for the program will be moved to Columbia River Correctional Institution, where they participate in counseling and programs aimed at supporting reentry.

AAP's mission is "To provide culturally-specific services to assist in the successful transition of African-Americans from prison to the community."

Between 2021 and 2023, ninety-eight people participated in AAP and they have a 95 percent non-recidivism rate. Eighty-seven percent do not abscond and 70 percent are employed.

Residents of EOCI who are interested in the program can send a communication form to their institution counselor to learn more about how to qualify. | ECHO



Photograph by Phillip Luna

June 2024 - In the foreground, EOCI's stair renovation project commences on E building. In the background the roofing project, which started in February, continues. Chain link fences indicate the walkways and restricted areas.

REPAIRS, RENOVATIONS AND RELOCATIONS

EOCI Undergoes Yearlong Project to Restore Facility

Written by Phillip Luna, editor

GRAVEL WALKWAYS, hand-crafted benches and Honeycrisp apple trees populate a small alcove between two buildings at an Eastern Oregon prison. But on a cold February morning, the apple trees - with their umber colored branches and leafy livery - are uprooted, placed in crayon-yellow plastic pots and carted away. The benches, once models of craftsmanship, have been unbolted and hauled out of sight. Heavy equipment tramples the gravel pathways and chain link fences barricade the alcove.

The once park-like area has become the ground floor for a construction site within the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution.

In February 2024 the institution began a multi-million dollar renovation project. The plans to restore parts of the 114-year-old facility include replacing the roof, gutters and stripping and refurbishing the six external stairwells.

The institution remained operational during the renovations and as a result the project has had a

ripple effect - changing daily routines, work schedules and disrupting the institution's agricultural programs.

The roof replacement project began on Feb.5, with six buildings expected to undergo major roof repairs.

According to Steve Cox, EOCI's physical plant manager, \$2.33 million was allocated by the state to replace the terracotta tile and any "damaged wood, trusses or eaves along the way."

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AROUND EOCI

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Ten apple trees sit behind the institution's auto shop in March. Forty apple trees were planted around EOCI in April 2023. Some of the apple trees were relocated during the renovations.

The apple trees, which were planted in April 2023, have been moved to make way for the necessary equipment.

For the next nine months the apple trees were placed at various locations around the compound, including temporarily on pallets in and around EOCI's autoshop.

ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION

Portland-based Carlson roofing was contracted for the roofing project which began in February. Butler Sheetmetal replaced the gutters.

Roof construction requires the use of cranes, forklifts or other heavy equipment, which are brought in and out of the facility daily.

During portions of the renovations, residents of the correctional institution had to navigate construction sites that changed often and periodically closed compounds and walkways.

"The compound is shut down so equipment and resources can be brought in from outside the prison," said EOCI resident Patrick Gazeley-

Romney in March. "Sometimes it can be difficult to maintain your call-outs [daily appointments]. There can be 30 minute delays."

On June 7, the prison commenced the second renovation project of the year - refurbishing the external stairwells for each housing unit.

Every building at the facility has an external stairwell with four flights of

stairs that are subjected to year-round weather.

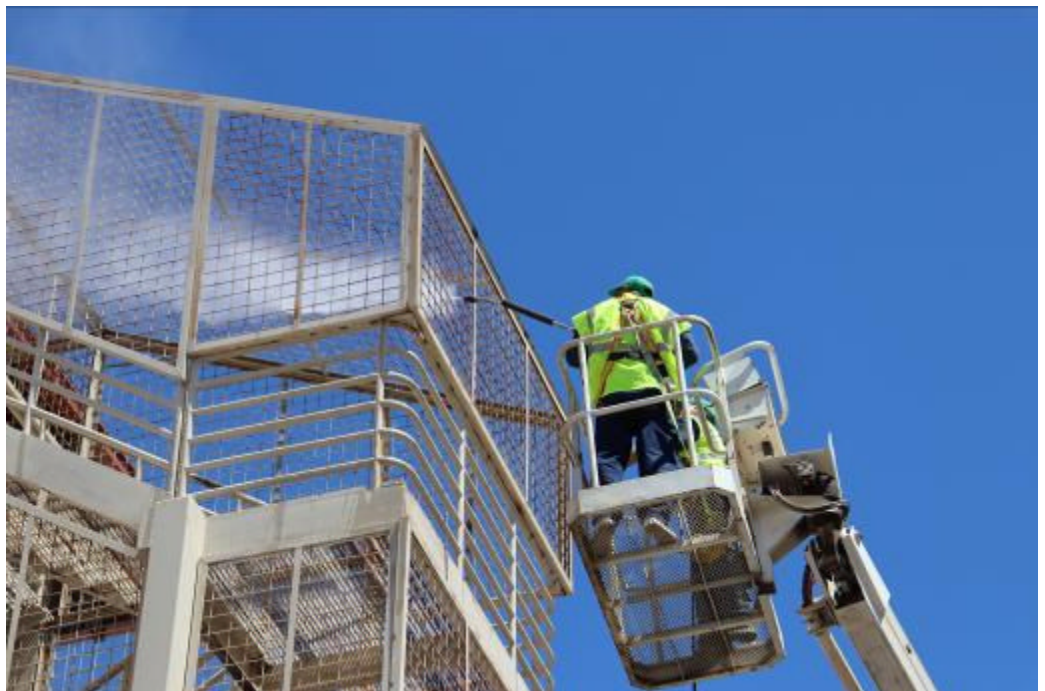
Residents of the housing units that the stairwells access cannot inhabit their unit during the renovation. Similar to the apple trees, residents must be relocated during stairwell the renovations.

For each stairwell, the more than 300 residents across four units must be moved throughout the facility for the weeks it takes to complete the project. When the work is complete, the residents will be moved back to their original unit.

Unlike the roofing project, which occurs simultaneously to the stairwell renovation, incarcerated laborers are refurbishing the stairwells.

The project began with half a dozen incarcerated people sandblasting the stairwells. An abrasive copper-slag material was used to remove old weathered paint and rust.

In July, during the E building stairwell renovation, paint shop worker Jonah Yeiser called the work "tedious and exhausting, yet character building."



Incarcerated worker stripping paint and rust off stairwell in June.

Yeiser added, "Having a project like this feels like being on vacation from the monotony of prison life."

The incarcerated painters have the task of stripping and repainting each stairwell – 24 flights of stairs across the institution.

Each set of stairs will be shrink-wrapped and painted after the old paint and rust has been removed.

ABOUT THE APPLE TREES

While the institution's projects are a break in monotony for some, the greenhouse and gardening crew find the multiple projects disruptive to their seasonal activities.

The garden plots around the compound produce more than 30,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables each year on average, which support the meals of incarcerated people.

In April 2023, apple trees were added to the compound to increase the quality and reduce the cost of meals for incarcerated people.

In August, then-greenhouse worker Rocky Hutchinson said the garden plots and apple trees "deplete the cost for taxpayers that pay for our food and it gives us a sense of fulfillment."

Hutchinson has been incarcerated for more than 17 years and has resided at several Oregon correctional facilities during that time.

"I've been to a lot of places and most don't grow their own produce. The fact that we are able to grow our own and it is served on the mainline is amazing."

Hutchinson said the roof "needed to be done" but that it has "caused problems with the plots, specifically the apple trees."



Photograph by Phillip Luna

F building stairwell wrapped for painting in August. Residents of F building were relocated, primarily to E building, during the renovation which lasted several weeks.

He explained how the uprooted apple trees have been affected.

"They have fire blight, which can cause them to wither and die," he said.

According to Hutchinson, this form of blight stems from neglect, and once the trees were moved out of sight they were mostly forgotten.

In October, as the roofing project nears completion, many of the apple trees have been returned to their original locations.

THE PROJECT CONCLUDES

Greg Carlson, EOCI's assistant physical plant manager, said, "The roofing will be done by the end of the year. The gutters have been finished."

Carlson added the stairwells are on hold until next spring.

Stairwells for E and F building have been completed.

EOCI's buildings have undergone many changes during the last century. The buildings were constructed in 1910 and served as the

Eastern Oregon State Hospital and Training Center, one of Oregon's mental-health hospitals.

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. Oregon Senate Bill 780 appropriated \$9.6 million for the conversion.

Since being converted to a correctional facility, EOCI has been renovated and repaired several times. Despite the updates, remnants of the original structure remain.

One example is the 175-foot-tall smokestack that towers over the facility. This original structure once emitted black smoke that signaled operation of the coal-fired boilers, as well as the hospital crematoria. Today, it emits small amounts of harmless gas.

The Department of Corrections has the challenge of maintaining functionality while meeting the needs of a more than century-old facility, which will inevitably require more renovations in the future. | ECHO

FEATURE

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THE ECHO CELEBRATES SIX YEARS IN CIRCULATION

Publication Reaches 72nd Edition and is Featured in Local Newspaper

Written by Kurtis Thompson, correspondent

SLOW BEGINNINGS

Twenty-eight year Department of Corrections employee Ray Peters was hired as the Institution Work Programs (IWP) Coordinator in 2016. Peters' role included a small side note: produce a newsletter.

Prior to 2018, EOCI had a newsletter that ran six pages and mostly included official notices from the ODOC. There were no standalone writing positions at IWP.

Peters posted a job ad for a newsletter clerk with a one-page essay requirement. Applicants would need to write on their vision of a prison newsletter. In May 2018, he hired Phillip Luna.

"He had the best ideas," Peters explained.

Over the next few years the newsletter would undergo several changes: adding an official name (The Echo); expanding content to include news stories; increasing the page count; improving the quality of photos; changing style and layout; and publishing the newsletter on the tablet each month.

"I learned quickly that change in ODOC is a slow process," said Luna. "I had a lot of ideas I thought would be easy. They took five years to implement." Luna credits Peters and other staff with much of the newsletter's success.

"Everybody has ideas," he said. "But Peters has so much DOC experience it helps you navigate the system. I also noticed when Pedro became the Superintendent and



Photograph by Phillip Luna

The inaugural edition of 1664 was published in August. The Echo has been in circulation for six years as of November 2024.

when Niestadt became the Assistant Superintendent overseeing IWP, the dynamic changed. There seemed to be a genuine interest in the newsletter."

BUILDING A PROGRAM

In December 2023, Peters and Luna contacted and met with representatives from the Prison Journalism Project, an independent, nonprofit, national initiative that works with incarcerated writers offering training in journalism.

"It was very informative to meet with real journalists and experts in the field and get their perspective," Luna said.

PJP was in the process of starting a journalism correspondence program – the first of its kind. Luna was invited to participate in the pilot program which was only available to 200 people in the United States.

"It's difficult, and it will take be-

tween 18-months and two years to complete. But I'm very lucky. There are almost two million incarcerated people in the U.S., so making it into a pool of 200 is a pretty big deal to me," Luna said.

These advancements led directly to Peters' decision to hire additional writers for The Echo.

Brooklyn Sasso was the first to be hired in December, followed months later by Walter Thomas, Shane Goins, Chris Ainsworth and eventually Kurtis Thompson.

The writing team engages in weekly training sessions, much of which is derived from Luna's experience in the PJP program.

"The goal," Peters explained, "is to get more writers involved in the program and improve their writing skills."

Thanks to sponsorship from PJP, The Echo has also been recognized

by the Society of Professional Journalists, which verifies that individuals who represent publications meet ethics and other standardizations for journalism.

Simultaneously, Peters envisioned an EOCI magazine, separate from the newsletter.

"We had done a few human-interest articles in the past, which did not fit into the category of news," Peters said. "I thought a magazine was a good idea. Luna hated it."

"I hated the idea," said Luna. "It's more work. A lot more work."

Ultimately, Luna came to embrace the idea. The magazine was a concept in February and was out for print by the end of summer.

1664 gets its name from the number of federal and state prisons in the United States, and its goal is to put names and faces to those who have been relegated to numbers and statistics.

A copy of 1664 was provided to the East Oregonian newspaper, which inspired their administration to send journalist Berit Thorson to EOCI.

"We were interested in getting their advice, maybe a meeting or two," said Peters, "They wanted to write a story."

They did write a story, which led to discussions about developing a writing program.

Thorson obtained volunteer status and began holding in-person journalism workshops on Sep. 23. She is meeting with the writing team every other week.

Additionally, East Oregonian managing editor Phil Wright meets with the writing team monthly. There are plans for meetings with a publisher and photographer.

"The long-term goal is to turn this into a program," said Luna. "A place where incarcerated people can learn journalism, both through PJP's correspondence and monthly workshops. The Echo and 1664 are platforms for people to write."

The long-term goal is to turn this into a program. A place where incarcerated people can learn journalism.

A DAY AT THE OFFICE

The writing team meets each week to discuss potential stories, go over training and exchange information.

Each writer goes through a cycle of idea production, research, on-site investigation and interviewing, data compiling, writing, editing, rewriting and final submission for each article.

Writers at The Echo are responsible for fact-checking themselves and for adhering to the ethics of journalism as described by the PJP.

Despite sounding like a straightforward process, some news stories are anything but. Staff writer Brooklyn Sasso described writing a piece about gender-affirming care in prison which derived from her personal knowledge of the process.

This was a personal topic for Sasso. In addition, there are many who disagree on the subject. These two elements alone can create both personal and external conflict which in turn had the potential to add bias in the article.

In Sasso's writing process, she not only had to follow the AP writing style but also adhere to journalism ethics of fair and unbiased reporting. In short, that means Sasso had to question every line she wrote prior to the article being submitted.

Sasso said she was never academically inclined and that writing was a struggle for her growing up.

"This has shown me my potential," Sasso said. "This is completely counterintuitive to what I thought I would ever enjoy." Now she says she loves writing.

Staff writer Walter Thomas has dealt with challenges as well.

He pointed out that writing news is not a simple process of relating facts. A factor that sticks out to him is how stories and words impact readers.

"The biggest challenge for me is staying aware of [how] I describe something, and how it may make the next person feel," said Thomas.

He said taking these things into account while also accurately and honestly reporting the news is one of many challenges.

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FEATURE

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There is another angle to news reporting that presents a unique challenge: personal connections.

In the inaugural issue 1664, Thomas assisted in interviews with Larry Williams, a 74-year-old African American who was featured in the publication.

Two weeks prior to the interview, Williams was found unresponsive in the EOCI greenhouse, where he worked. Thomas had already developed a close relationship with Williams and said he was terrified for his friend who was whisked away to the hospital.

"When you develop a relationship with people, they almost become like family members," Thomas said.

Although Williams' health scare was unrelated to the story in 1664, Thomas explained that when you develop connections with the people you live with it can be difficult to do an unbiased interview.

Staff writer Chris Ainsworth said, "This is an opportunity to grow in an aspect that I didn't think was a possibility when I first came to prison ... writing is something I can do until the day I die."

Ainsworth, who has creative writing and lyrical background experience, jumped at the opportunity to write when he saw the ad for writing positions posted in The Echo.

Writing in AP-style was new to him. Ainsworth studies those standards and does article research on his days off because he wants to exceed the bar set.

"This gives me an additional, more productive direction to go," Ainsworth said. "There's a lot of writing opportunities on the streets, and most of the time, they don't care about your background."

A HOPEFUL FUTURE

EOCI's magazine, 1664, is now published statewide at every correctional facility. The magazine has an audience of 12,000 incarcerated people and many Department of Corrections employees.

The writing team continues to meet with local journalists twice monthly. On Dec. 16, the team will be meeting with formerly incarcerated author Keri Blakinger for a Q&A session. Additionally, there are tentative plans to meet with a journalism professor at University of Oregon, all arranged by Thorson.

"Berit Thorson and Phil Wright from the East Oregonian have really been great advisors for our publications," said Luna. "We are very lucky to have them."

The team will continue to work with PJP as well. PJP has plans to increase their cohort of writers in their program next year.

"We are hopeful when can get another writer in the correspondence program," said Peters.

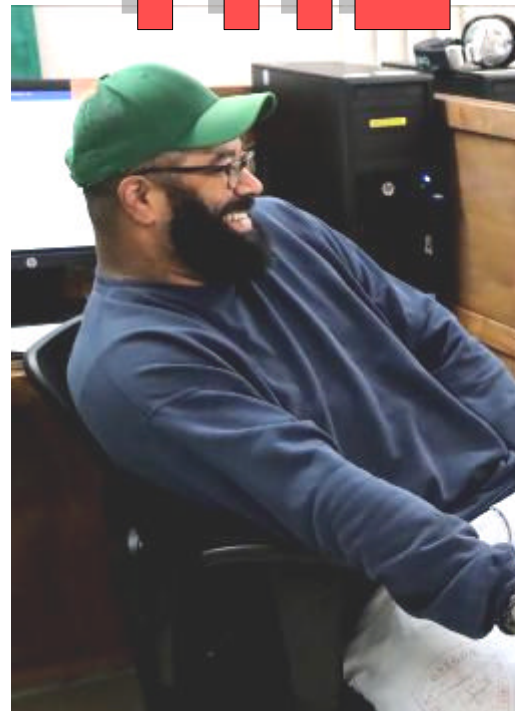
Additionally, Peters and Luna met with PonyXpress volunteers Tracy Schlapp and Danny Wilson on Nov. 1 via Zoom call. PonyXpress provides creative writing workshops to incarcerated people in Oregon.

"1664 is going to work with PonyXpress," said Peters. "We want to feature the best writers throughout DOC."

Luna said he hopes their publications will become the standard for prison journalism not just in Oregon, but in the United States.

"The one thing I've learned is that if you want to be successful, work on your craft. Hone your craft. Study it. Everything else will follow," said Luna. | ECHO

MEET THE



Nov. 5 - Shane Goins, left, is a correspondent for The Echo and writes sports articles. Goins is a native of Ohio.



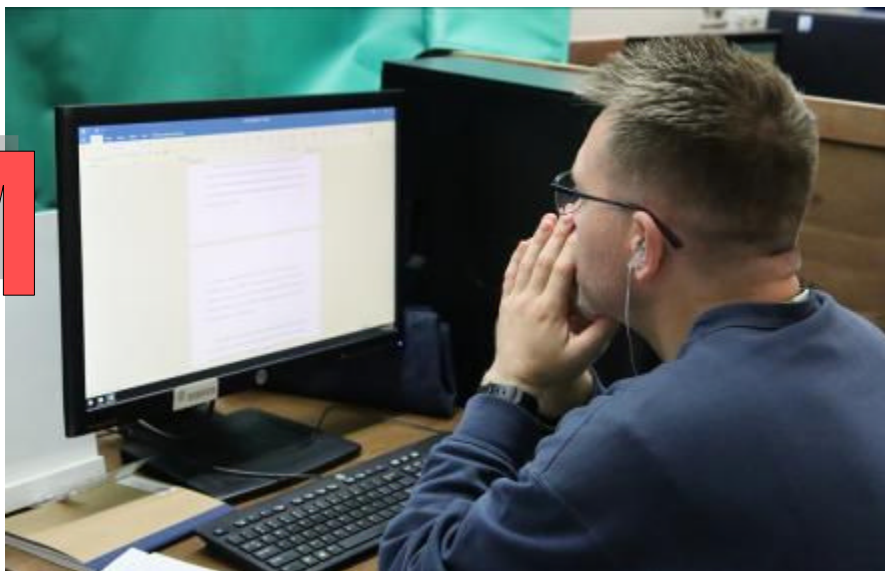
Nov. 5 - Juan Sanchez, left, helps proofread The Echo. Brooklyn Sasso provides perspectives from an often marginalized community.

NEWS TEAM



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Nov. 5 - Chris Ainsworth, right, a staff writer for The Echo. Ainsworth worked in photography prior to becoming incarcerated.



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Kurtis Thompson, the newsroom's newest writer, focuses on an article at his desk on Oct. 14. Thompson is a correspondent who currently covers artist highlights for The Echo.



Photograph by Britt Thorson, East Oregonian

Phillip Luna, editor-in-chief of The Echo and 1664, looks at photos with Ray Peters, supervising editor, on Aug. 16.



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Nov. 5 - Walter Thomas, a staff writer for the Echo, works on assignment each month. Thomas is from Atlanta, Georgia.



Photograph by Phillip Luna

Jaylene Stewart, OSII at IWP, holds puppy from the JLAD program. Stewart provides research and support for The Echo and 1664.



Photograph originally posted with PJP | photo taken by Patrick Gazeley-Romney

July 12 - EOCI beekeeping program. From left: Scott Steffler (facilitator); Jacob Whitman; Donald Kuehne; Kris Moe; Ian Lohrman; Chris Ainsworth; Lonny Prince; Jonah Yeiser; Ernest Baker; Joe Tuttle (facilitator); and Gary Kealoha. Not pictured: Shahid Baskerville; Phillip Brown; Brett Lloyd (facilitator); and Phillip Luna (facilitator).

BEE SEASON BUZZING DOWN

Ten Students Complete Beekeeping Program; Hives Prepared for Winter

Written by Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

TEN STUDENTS completed the EOCI beekeeping program in October, which culminated in a final project: overwintering the hives.

With winter on the horizon bees have long been preparing for their version of hibernation, a process called overwintering. Bees are especially susceptible to colder weather because their hives reside in the elements all winter long.

There has been increased human activity around EOCI's honey bee

hives during the first few weeks of October, activity that has helped prepare the hives to survive the coming winter.

Students and facilitators have treated the hives with pesticides derived from hops plants to prevent Varroa mite infestations, and have wrapped the hives with insulation blankets to prevent the internal temperature from dropping below 50 degrees, both hazards could prove fatal for honey bees.

Bees collect nectar and pollen then convert it into honey for a reason - and it isn't for humans to enjoy. Bees require those resources to raise new generations of young and feed the colony. Honey bees start in the spring and build up enough food stores for the year.

A typical winter in Eastern Oregon requires bees to store 60 to 70 pounds of honey to survive the winter.

Bees form a cluster in their hive

with the queen at its center. The cluster moves around the hive when temperature allows, to feed on the resources they spent the spring and summer collecting.

Through vibration, bees generate heat that allows them to stay warm in cold weather. This can raise the temperature to the mid-80s even when the temperature outside the hive is below freezing.

To help mitigate the cold, the hives are wrapped in an insulated material. Additionally, moisture control shims are added to the top of the hive.

Shims are square boxes with mesh netting that is then filled with sawdust and pine needles. The shims prevent moisture from collecting at the top of the hive.

Additional moisture in the hive can be even more deadly than the cold.

Each of EOCI's colonies is new to the program in 2024. Four hives were purchased at the start of the year because none of the previous hives survived the winter after the 2023 season.

There have been some conflicting opinions about why the hives died off last winter, though the beekeepers have said that everything was done by the book.

"One conclusion was Varroa mites. I didn't see any Varroa mites," said Brett Lloyd, program facilitator. "We opened the three hives and they had been completely decimated by yellow jackets."



On July 12 students treat hive with oxalic acid to ward off Varroa mites.

Varroa mite infestations are considered one of the major killers of bee colonies. They are deadlier than moisture in the hive, winter temperatures or starvation.

Whether the hives died from an infestation that killed off the bees or the bees absconded, the new hives at EOCI spent this season building up resources and population.

One sign of success for a hive is swarming, a natural process of reproduction for colonies.

One of the hives swarmed twice this year. Bee class facilitators caught the swarms and used them to create two new hives.

The first was a standard swarm and the second was what beekeepers refer to as a mega swarm. The difference between the two is the population the queen or queens take with her when she leaves the hive.

A standard swarm will only have

one queen and about 5,000 to 10,000 bees accompanying her when she leaves to start a new hive. A mega swarm will contain multiple queens and a much larger number of honey bees accompanying.

The mega swarm caught this year included three queens and between 50,000 and 60,000 bees.

Facilitators and students of the 2024 class worked all season long to help the bees prepare and survive winter as experienced in the high desert of eastern Oregon.

The beekeeping class, which starts in April and runs through October, is a combination of bookwork, tests, and application of learned skills. Beekeeping, like life, can have its own speed bumps, such as mite infestations or mega swarms.

"It is easy to want to apply what is in a book to beekeeping," said Lloyd. "But bees don't care about what is in a book." | ECHO



JLAD facilitator Paul Reyes works with service dog demonstrating training cues on a wobble board during the Oct. 7 passing of the leash ceremony.

THE PASSING OF THE LEASH

JLAD Holds Sixth Graduation Ceremony and Provides Service Dogs to Those in Need

Written by Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

JLAD HELD ITS passing of the leash ceremony on Oct. 7. The event is the program's sixth graduation since it arrived at EOCI in 2016.

Joe Cramer, a past recipient of one of the service dogs trained in EOCI's Joys of Assistance Living Dogs program, said, "These dogs don't make life easier, they make life better."

Cramer was one of the keynote speakers at the ceremony, an event held when service animals have completed their training and are given to their new owners.

The ceremony acknowledged the accomplishments of service dogs

and their trainers with a brief demonstration of tasks, or cues.

Ryan LeGore, Assistant Superintendent of General Services, said, "The AICs worked hard training the 36 commands we started with and as of today there are now 90 commands."

LeGore added, "We are proud of the progress and success of JLAD that continues today with this passing of the leash ceremony."

The canines trained in the program learn a variety of tasks; some as crucial as providing an anchor point to help someone sit down or stand up and others as complex as interacting with a checkout clerk to de-

liver groceries and offer payment.

Cramer attributed his statement to Joy St. Peter, founder of JLAD which is celebrating 20 years in business.

The program has seen eight years of success at EOCI - a success that is not limited to trained canines but shared by the AICs involved in the program.

"I couldn't believe the commitment that they had," said St. Peter in her keynote speech. "You don't do this job without facing yourself. Whether it's

learning patience, whether it's learning communication... they've all stepped up."

The graduation provided an opportunity for staff, recipients and trainers to explain how their lives have been impacted by the program.

Trainer Daniel Shoemaker spoke at the podium during the event.

"I was never given a training manual for personal growth," he said.

Shoemaker added, "I truly believe I am a better person today because I train these service dogs for other people."

Many new trainers were able to experience their first JLAD graduation.

"It was really cool to see the end product so early on in my career at JLAD," said Brent Bisset, who was hired three days prior to graduation.

"I know what we are working

towards," he said.

AICs involved in the program are able to invite family and loved ones to the passing of the leash ceremony.

Jeremy Adams, a new trainer with the program said, "It's made [my family] happy to see I'm doing something with my time that makes me happy and is productive."

He added, "They have definitely noticed the difference. They brought my niece up here to see me. She had a blast."

Lieutenant S. Vaafusuaga, known more commonly as Lieutenant V, experienced the graduation in a new role this year.

Vaafusuaga is overseeing the program following the retirement of Captain Jeff Frazier, who worked with St. Peter to introduce the JLAD program to EOCI back in 2016.

According to Vaafusuaga, the new assignment came with many challenges.

She had to balance her new duties associated with leading of the program and birth of a new litter of service dogs on Aug. 5.

EOCI is home to one of JLADs puppy whelping program, the second in the United States in the prison setting.

Additionally, this year the program was preparing for a five-year audit, which they successfully completed.

JLAD received the Golden Seal achievement from Assistance Dogs International following the audit in August. This accreditation was made possible through the dedication of trainers, St. Peter, Vaafusuaga and the countless others involved in the program. |ECHO



Jeremy Adams, right, and family visit after the Oct. 7 passing of the leash ceremony.



JLAD service canine waits patiently at the passing of the leash ceremony.



Joe Cramer speaks at the podium while trainers and EOCI staff listen. Cramer was a previous recipient of a JLAD trained service canine.



Photograph by Patrick Gazeley-Romney

Artist Herb Wood paints in the multi-purpose building during July art session. Wood is one of the facilitators for the Recreation Departments fledgling art program.

ADVANCED ART OPPORTUNITIES

Acrylic Painting Available to Advanced Artists

Written by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer and Christopher Ainsworth, staff writer

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution's Recreation Department introduced a new art program for advanced artists. The art program allows skilled artists to use canvas and acrylic paint in the multi-purpose building.

Seven individuals are currently participating in the art program, which runs weekday mornings and afternoons.

Long-time incarcerated artists Dave Camp, 52, and Herb Wood, 63, were hired to support the mentorship-like classes. The art program

was implemented by Recreation Specialist Travis Garton. "We want people who are true artists that have put in the time to become really good, and we hope to offer them another medium," said Garton. The exclusivity of the program is a result of its aim – to offer a new medium to serious and accomplished artists.

Wood has been an artist for most of his life, however acrylic is a new medium for him to explore and an opportunity not readily available to many who are incarcerated. "I was doing wood burning in the carpentry shop for about 13 years," he

said. Camp has more experience with acrylic paint.

Currently the program is restrained by funding. Resources and space come at a premium, limiting the number of people who can participate. The growth of the class will eventually encompass a basic training course through advanced classes.

The pilot-like program gives AICs the ability to learn from experienced artists in a medium they would not normally have access to.

"Dave Camp and Herb Wood are the lead artists; they only have



This piece, photographed on Oct. 1, is called *Sunset Over Isla* and was painted by David Camp. Camp is a facilitator for the art program.



Herb Wood compares his reference photo to his art in progress during a July art session. The piece depicts an old, rusty truck in front of a farm house and silo.

about 9 and 14 months left. Both are world class painters. I figured we should utilize them to the best of our ability so they can teach everyone else how to do it," explained Garton.

The current mentors are approaching release, working hard to pass their knowledge on to those attending the class.

Garton hopes to produce quality artists and show off their talents around the facility. His long-term goal is to create a sustainable program that provides alternative outlets for dedicated artists.

With limited space Garton has to be selective when accepting AICs into the class. He reviews the artwork himself to see if an applicant possesses the qualifications to participate in the program. His intent is to work with talented artists, which reduces the waste of supplies while producing art to

be displayed in hallways and offices around the institution.

One of the challenges of working with acrylic paint is that it dries quickly. In a classroom setting there can be times where artists feel the strain of trying to balance assisting each other and working on their own art pieces. However,

the sometimes tedious process is more satisfying in the end.

"It makes it more rewarding when they [the student] finally get it and it starts working for them," said Camp. "They come over and they are super happy. 'Look at what I just did!' That's pretty cool." |ECHO



This painting, called *Soaring*, was completed in the Recreation Department's art program and photographed on Oct. 1. Artist unknown.

JOB HIGHLIGHT



Photograph by Phillip Luna

EOCI's newest plumbing apprentice James Renfro working in the shop in August. Renfro is soldering a pipe fitting.

WORKING TOWARD SUCCESS

EOCI's Plumbing Shop Gives AICs New Hope

Written by Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

"I ALWAYS THOUGHT to myself, 'any college or anything like that doesn't really matter' because nobody is going to hire [people with felony records]," said plumbing apprentice Luis Rodriguez.

People with criminal records are often underemployed. Formerly incarcerated people experience a 27% unemployment rate, according to data collected from the National Former Prisoner Survey.

Trades in construction are often more accepting of criminal backgrounds when hiring employees.

Staff in the physical plant worked with EOCI to develop various apprenticeship programs to provide vocational training for AICs.

In June 2022 Allen Iverson began working at EOCI and agreed to oversee a plumbing apprenticeship program. Within a few months the program was up and running, allowing AICs to earn credits towards a journeyman plumber certificate.

As of 2024 the plumbing shop at EOCI employs four AICs working as apprentices towards their journeyman plumber license.

"I think [the apprenticeship program] has been very successful," said Iverson. "It gives them a purpose, gives them motivation. I think they have a sense of pride and belonging."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics salary for a journeyman plumber has increased 9% over the

last five years. A journeyman plumber's pay ranges from \$17.91 to \$48.65 hourly, with the national average sitting at \$28.89 per hour.

Oregon is toward the top of that range with a median pay of \$40.43 for a plumber following completion of their apprenticeship.

Plumbing apprentice Brian Hardegger said, "There are four of us here in the shop and all four are working towards our actual [journeyman]

license, just like electricians get."

Hardegger, who has worked in the shop for three years, added, "You actually walk out with a license. You can take those skills and apply them directly to the field."

The program offers AICs the opportunity to learn skills essential to jobs available in the labor market.

While most of the work in the facility falls into the maintenance side of plumbing, maintaining plumbing within existing structures, from time to time there are opportunities to work on the new construction side of the trade.

"Everybody thinks of a plumber and thinks 'oh they are just plunging toilets all day,'" said Rodriguez. "When a building's being built you are the first one on the site. There is a lot more than just plunging toilets and snaking drains."

Many of the tasks that a plumber is responsible for are often overlooked - Tasks as simple as

maintaining water temperature or functionality of faucet hardware.

The apprentices are currently working in the appendage of housing block B to install toilets and sinks in bathrooms being built for counseling offices being constructed.

The new construction work requires AICs to drill into concrete (known as core holing) for drainage and run water lines from existing plumbing to provide water for the new bathrooms.

As the coffee shop is being built on D2, the plumbers will have to apply skills they have learned for the coffee shop to function properly.

"We are going to be putting water-lines in and drain lines in. Core holing through concrete floor to put floor sinks in for drain lines," said Hardegger.

Some tasks are more unusual than others. The mobile shower units also fall under the purview of the plumbing shop. The units served AICs in A building's housing unit from the beginning of September through the end of October during a temporary hot water outage.

"The [shower] trailer that they have, the exhaust vent is too hot and is melting the plastic," said James Renfro, the newest addition to the apprenticeship program. "We ended up replacing the melting plastic with thicker PVC."

Renfro explained that every task is an opportunity to practice a skill set, which he hopes will help him upon release.

"You could be a licensed plumber starting out, with experience in a bunch of different scenarios," said Renfro. "It's a jump start on life. That's something I've never had before."



Plumbing apprentice Luis Rodriguez at his work station in August. In addition to being an apprentice, Rodriguez also serves as the plumbing shop clerk.



Plumbers often work in confined spaces such as the plumbing chase, show here. A chase is the space between each cell that houses plumbing, electrical and HVAC components.

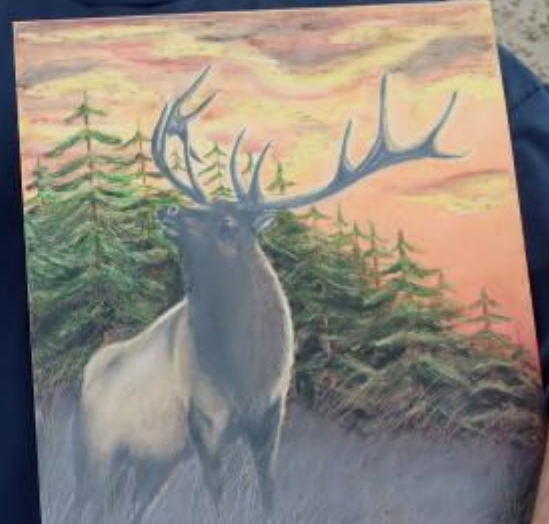
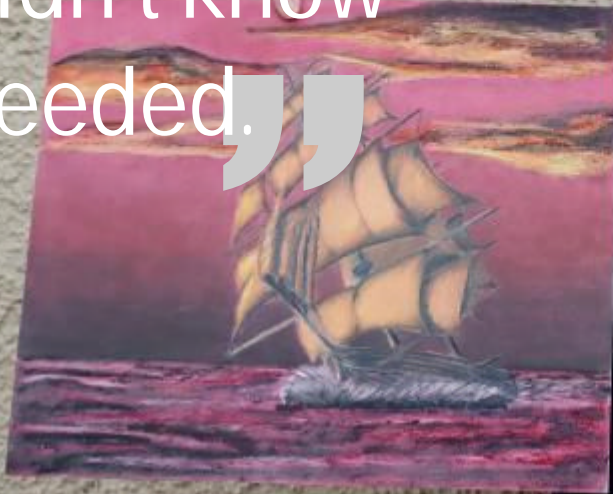
The apprenticeship is extensive, requiring 7,700 hours to complete. Included in the program is class time, testing on multiple categories associated with plumbing and tracking worked hours. In total the apprenticeship will take about five and a half years to complete.

Hardegger said it is the supervisors

that make the program so enjoyable.

"It's nice to be able to come to work every day and have two bosses, Mr. Iverson and Mr. Hardiman that look forward to you coming in here. They enjoy teaching you and showing you how to do things." | ECHO

“It became
the therapy
I didn’t know
I needed.”



Dan Harper poses with two of his art pieces on Oct. 9. Each piece, drawn with colored pencil, took Harper between five and six hours to complete.

REDEEMING HIS TIME

Artist Spotlight with Dan Harper

Written by Kurtis Thompson, correspondent

IN A DORMITORY, peace and quiet are rarely found. When they are, it’s usually somewhere between the hours of 10 p.m. and 10 a.m. The word “quiet” itself is a relative term, which in this case typically includes jazz-style snoring, jangling correctional officer keys, toilets flushing, and other nuisances. Despite these disturbances, some EOCI residents find peace in such a setting.

Thirty-nine-year-old Dan Harper is one person housed in a dormitory who has been spending some of his time through the tranquility of art.

Harper became an artist through unusual circumstances: a severe injury to his right leg in 2013. Confined to wheelchair, he spent his time learning to draw.

Ten years and many art pieces later, Harper’s work is being featured in a gallery, he is co-authoring an art book, and he has donated numerous pieces to non-profit organizations.

Harper’s unusual path to artistry began in 2013 in Snake River Correctional Institution’s kitchen freezer.

“I would not recommend people follow the route I did to find art,” he

said. “I slipped, dislocated my leg, broke my kneecap, and spent a year in a wheelchair.”

Harper has spent over 11 years turning that unwanted pain into a profitable talent. Being confined to a wheelchair had a silver lining.

“[Art] started out as something to do because I was not managing well being unable to walk. Then it became a therapy I didn’t even know I needed,” he said.

Harper said art helped him cope and that it became a way for him to add color to prison life. It became a way for him to earn money and be charitable at the same time.

He started by learning from people he called “old hats”, or experienced artists, at SRCI, where he was lodged from 2010 to 2016.



Photograph provided by Open Sky Gallery

Harper's artwork is featured on a corner wall at the Open Sky Gallery in Montague, Calif. On Oct. 31.

They not only gave him hand-me-down art pencils but also suggested Visions of Hope as recipients of his first art donations.

"I still find people who are less fortunate than me, and I want to keep paying it forward," Harper said.

One way Harper hopes to pay good deeds forward is in co-authoring books some of whose proceeds will be donated.

Harper and EOCI resident Arlen Arcoren are working on a book they call Art Hacks.

Art Hacks is a collection of art tips, tricks and shortcuts to help aspiring artists both in and outside prison get started. It has a section dubbed "Learning From Your Mistakes" which shows the reader how to take their mistakes and turn them into art - a powerful metaphor for an incarcerated adult.

Harper said he has been donating to Visions of Hope, a faith-based organization that offers prison ministry and supports orphans in Africa, since 2017.

He also began sending donations to

the late Time Does Not Fit the Crime organization - a non-profit that advocated for Measure 11 reform - while it was still active.

Over the course of his two-and-a-half years working in Joys of Living Assistance Dogs program, Harper said he donated many art pieces which were sold and the profits used to purchase items for the program.

Harper's most recent art donation went to the Open Sky Art Gallery in Montague, Calif., as part of a gallery event titled Voices of the Voiceless.

The gallery's vision is to positively affect the lives of justice-impacted individuals and one way is by bringing attention to the creativity of incarcerated people.

Harper said he is excited and enthusiastic to be the first Oregonian to participate in this gallery event, but he is even more satisfied about donating to causes who recognize that incarcerated adults are people who have value.

Harper said, "[Art] ended up being a way for people to start a conversation ... a way for people to see that we are capable of more than just destroying things; we can learn to create things as well."

Open Sky Art Gallery can be contacted at:

Snow Thorner, Open Sky Gallery,
125 S 11th St., Montague,
CA 96064

| ECHO



Photograph provided by Open Sky Gallery

On Oct. 31, Above a coach in the Open Sky Gallery, Harper's artwork is displayed. The Open Sky Gallery's Voices exhibit is a display of artwork from justice-impacted individuals.



Photographs by Ray Peters

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

With Trevor Sorenson

Interview by Chris Ainsworth, staff writer

One thing that surprised me was... The mass warehousing of people and lack of care.

Earlier on, I wish I'd... Thought about my future more and applied more work skills to what I want to do when I get out.

The best advice I could give someone is... Buy into the programs and do as much for future you as you can.

The best item to buy off canteen is... Coffee, everybody knows coffee.

One thing I wish I'd never wasted my money on... Little Debbie's.

The food I am looking forward to eating after I release is... Bacon cheeseburgers.

The program that helped me most was... OCE Garment Factory.

Before coming to prison, I would consider myself... Lazy.

Now I consider myself... Motivated.

The change I'd like to see most in the prison system is... Better help for people getting out and more programs to help people get marketable skills.

What I've learned... Be self-reliant because nobody else is going to do it for you.

I can't wait to visit... A restaurant.

What was your job at EOCI? I was employed with OCE garment factory as a clerk three. I processed sales orders, purchased requisitions, production schedules, accounting, basically everything needed to get an order out, besides actually sewing a product.

How did being a part of OCE change you during your prison term? Before OCE I was planning on going back into construction because that is all I have ever done. Now I have a job with one of the biggest customers the garment factory has, Correction Connection. I am going to be going into more remote work and using my brain rather than my back. |ECHO

ABOUT TREVOR SORENSON

Sorenson was incarcerated in 2014 and released in October 2024. He was employed as an OCE clerk for the garment factory for three years.

While incarcerated he completed his paralegal certification through Blackstone Career Institute and was in an OCE graphic design certification program.

Upon release he will be working with Correction Connection to start a non-profit helping provide housing, education, and employment for AICs following their release from prison.

HELP SHAPE THE CONTENT

Are you interested in sharing what you've learned during your time in prison? Edging closer to that release date?

Send a communication form to IWP and let us know. You may be featured in next month's *What I've Learned* section.

MEET A CONTACT TEAM MEMBER

Interview with Officer L. Daniel

Interview by Phillip Luna, editor

I joined the Contact Team because... I want to be able to help people better their own chances for when they release. Giving them the opportunity to set their own individual goals, big or small and help them by guiding them in the right direction.

I have been working for ODOC for... Six years now. I enjoy my job and the people I work with. Sometimes it can be crazy but I knew that signing up.

Before working at EOCI I used to... I was in the Navy when I was in my early 20s. My last job just before I join the crew at EOCI was working for a perlite plant. I was a shift supervisor loading semi-trucks and railcars with perlite to ship to various locations. Perlite is a volcanic mineral that is used in things such as kitty litter, potting soil and even fireproof doors.

One thing people don't know about me is... I enjoy playing chess and reading. I love most genres of reading material. I mostly like historical fiction from authors such as Bernard Cornwell, Conn Iggulden and so on.

Whether AICs or staff, what I expect from people I work with is... Open and honest communication. I don't care if you think your going to hurt my feelings. If you can't be honest with me, then how can you expect to be honest with anyone else? I would rather you damn my feelings and be honest than lie to me.

For AICs just starting their sentence, my best advice is... Do time your way. Ignore the outside influences that can get you caught up in going to DSU or IMU. Also while you are here take advantage of the opportunities afforded to you to better your life.

My experience on the Contact Team has been... Eye opening. I have learned a lot from this so far. I hope to get a better understanding of how the team works.

People will see me working... Various posts. I love being able to work different posts to better myself and my career here at EOCI. It affords me the ability to interact with various people. |ECHO



Photographs provided by L. Daniel

ABOUT OFFICER DANIEL

Officer L. Daniel started at EOCI in 2018. He is currently an out-of-class Sergeant.

He reads historical fiction, enjoys playing and previously worked for a perlite plant.

Pictured above, Daniel poses with one of the JLAD puppies in August.

ATTENTION STAFF

Help Shape the Content of The Echo

Is there a question you find yourself answering all the time? Is there something you wish was better understood by the incarcerated population? Do you have a program, group, or class having a graduation or event?

Contact IWP and let us know!

Help Shape the Content of 1664

If you are interested in shaping the content of 1664 there are three ways to get involved.

- 1) Submit creative writing in the form of a personal non-fiction essay, poetry, or music lyrics;
- 2) Contribute artwork in any medium; or
- 3) Be featured in one of our person-first profiles. We accept submissions from all people - inside and outside of prison.

Topics for future magazines

Due Dec. 31: Music

Due Jan. 31: Culture

Send a communication form to IWP to learn more.

Help Shape the Content of The Echo

If you are interested in shaping the content of The Echo there are several ways to get involved.

- 1) Showcase your artwork! Request to be featured in an artist spotlight.
- 2) Pitch an idea to the writing team. We are always looking for new angles.
- 3) Write a letter to the editor. Was there an article that really impacted you? Was there something we missed? Let us know.

Send a communication form to IWP.

ARMISTICE DAY UNTIL 1954

A Time to Remember Veterans

Written by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer

"VETERANS DAY is when we celebrate each other as a group," said Marine Corporal Juan Sanchez. "A lot of the time it's more of a checking-in type of thing. For me Veterans Day is more of a 'let's get together and make sure everyone is okay.'"

Known as Armistice Day until 1954 when it was changed by congress to Veterans Day, Nov. 11 is meant to honor those who served in the Armed forces.

From World War I to the Afghanistan War that stemmed from the Sept. 11 terrorist attack in 2001, people have put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms most Americans experience today.

Holidays are observed differently in prison. The bright and colorful floats of a parade do not occur. Often, holidays are celebrated by sharing a meal with friends or fellow incarcerated veterans.

"I put a meal together for myself and a couple close friends; they recognize what I am doing, they partake and congratulate me," said Sanchez. "Some guys who served

don't want to be reminded so I have to be aware of that."

According to Sanchez, some veterans do not want to be reminded of their service - either because they feel they have let down their country by becoming incarcerated, or the memories of their time in service are difficult to bear.

Nationally the recommended observance for Veterans Day is a two minute moment-of-silence at 2:11 p.m. eastern standard time.

The reason for this is because World War I ended on the 11th day, of the 11th month, and in the 11th hour in 1918. Of those who served, more than thirty million were killed or wounded. That day was called Armistice Day.

Veterans day - Armistice day - was meant to remember the day that World War I came to an end and those who fought during the war.

Sanchez celebrates two military holidays this month. The first is the Marine Corps birthday on November 10th, followed by Veterans Day on the 11th. |ECHO





Shutterstock | Ju See

HOLIDAYS AT OCTOBER'S END

Halloween, Samhain, and The Day of the Dead

Written by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer

HALLOWEEN

On Oct. 31, Halloween is celebrated in many different countries around the world.

Some popular Halloween traditions include: trick or treating, going to costume parties, carving pumpkins into jack-o-lanterns and attending festivals.

James Renfro, resident at EOCI, said, "I usually call my kids on Halloween, and they will send pictures of their costumes. You just try and be a part of it as much as you can."

Parents inside have to find creative ways to share the experience with their children and make new traditions during incarceration.

Some incarcerated parents purchase candy bars from commissary and mail them to their children to help fill up their basket during trick-or-treating.

SAMHAIN (SAH-win)

Samhain is a wiccan holiday and the earliest recorded Oct. 31 celebration, dating back to around the ninth century.

Ancient Celtic, Irish and Gaelic people celebrated this holiday by communing with nature and connecting with ancestors.

Pagan and wiccan individuals have to find their own unique ways to recognize these events because it is a nature-based religion.

"I feel the natural world," said Seth Milton, a lifelong pagan practitioner as he sat in the grass on the east yard. "It doesn't take much. For example, I can smell the river when I am out here at yard. Even though I can't see it, I can smell it and that helps."

Traditionally Samhain lasts for seven days that span from Oct. 28

to Nov. 3. During these seven days there's usually bonfires, feasts and mumming or guising - which is similar to what trick-or-treaters do today. Historically, people would dress up in costumes, go house to house and sing songs in exchange for food.

Daniel Shoemaker, a longtime Wiccan practitioner said, "I tend to spend time during the day to meditate, I like to do things that are hermetic, an inner visualization."

DAY OF THE DEAD

The Day of the Dead is celebrated through the Halloween season (Oct. 31 – Nov. 6) depending on local influences.

The event is observed over a couple days rather than one night. Day of the Dead traditions focus on celebrating those who have passed away.

This holiday is mainly observed by people of Hispanic descent.

Juan Sanchez resident of EOCI said, "In Mexico it's a bigger deal than it is in the U.S."

Traditions for Day of the Dead include: using calaveras and marigold flowers; building altars (called ofrendas) decorated with the favored foods and beverages of the departed; and visits to grave sites of departed people.

"My mom was cremated and is at my brother's house," said Sanchez. "They celebrate it there. For me it's about remembering to make the phone calls home on certain days."

|ECHO

PERPLEXING PUZZLES

Three Puzzles for November

Provided by Walter Thomas, staff writer

One:

What is the missing number in this sequence?

(7, 8) (19, 27) (37, 64) (61, 125)
(91, 216) (?, 343)

Two:

Unscramble these letters to make a word: **R A L L E A P L**

Three:

The diagram below is the beginning of a “magic square” in which all rows and columns and both diagonals add up to the number 34. Can you fill in the rest of the numbers?

1	8	13	12
14			
4		16	
15			

COMICS OF THE MONTH

Created by Seth Mathews, Illustrator

Did you hear the one about the claustrophobic astronaut?



He just wanted a little space.

Why did the nose feel sad?



Because it was getting picked on!

Ingredients

Crust:

- One (1) package of cookies
- One (1) package of brown sugar oatmeal
- Five (5) spoonful of water (add slowly)

Filling:

- One (1) pint of ice cream (melted)
- Two (2) packages of non-dairy creamer
- One (1) candy bar (melted)
- One (1) package of cream cheese

BRRR... ICE CREAM CHEESECAKE

A Not-So-Winter Recipe for November

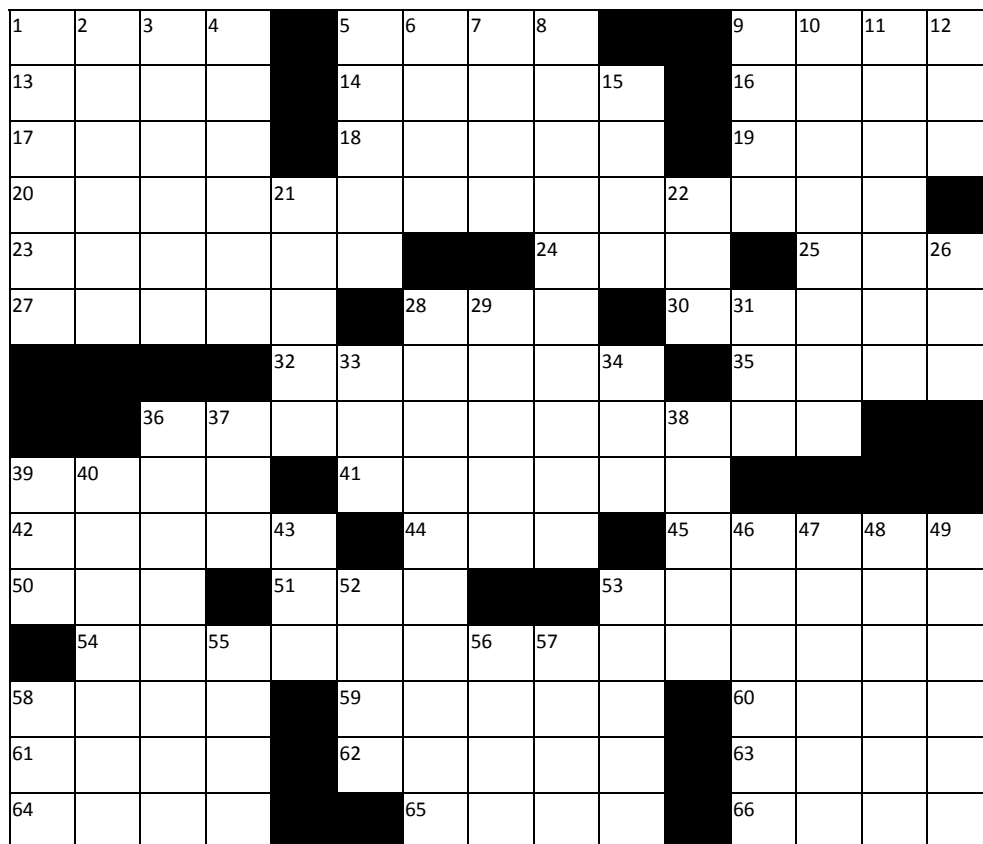
Recipe by Brooklyn Sasso, staff writer

- Step 1: Crush cookies in a bowl. Add the package of brown sugar oatmeal into the cookie powder. Slowly add the water until a crust like consistency is reached.
- Step 2: In a second bowl slowly mix the non-dairy creamer into the melted ice cream, stir until mixture is smooth and thick (do not add any water to the filling).

- Step 3: In crust bowl press finished crust around bowl forming the dough to make a pie crust. Then pour in the ice cream mixture.
- Step 4: Place the melted candy bar and cream cheese into a sandwich bag and mix well. Tear a small corner off the bag and decorate the cheesecake. Finally place cheesecake on ice and let rest for a couple of hours. Enjoy!

NOVEMBER CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Theme: Home of the Brave



From USAtoday.com

Transcribed by Walter Thomas

Across

1. Trappist, e.g.
5. They're on the books
9. Chicago daily, familiarly
13. "Take__leave. . ."
14. Oahu adieu
16. Improve, as skills
17. City southeast of Milan
18. Descend into dementia
19. It can be private
20. Serves more than one purpose
23. Makes jubilant
24. Assumed command
25. "__Clown" (Porter)
27. Archaeologist's find
28. AL Fatah's gp.
30. Radial footprint
32. Like the things that belong to us
35. Protagonist
36. Promise
39. En route to England, maybe
41. Recorded
42. Their dishes may be fancy
44. Olive that goes with a little salt?
45. It was tested on Bikini, 1954
50. "Say what?"
51. Water, to Monet
53. Inquiry for a lost package
54. Lifestyle magazine
58. Troupe's itinerary
59. Exceedingly caustic
60. All atwitter
61. Ambiance
62. Defense grp. Abolished in 1977
63. It's within your range
64. __-bitsy
65. Canonized femmes, briefly
66. Word with chin or head

Down

1. Less sharp, as cheese
2. "Lord jim" star Peter
3. "The agreement's off"
4. Olympian Yamaguchi
5. Nigerian city
6. Baseball's Felipe or Moises
7. Where something wonderful is created
8. Gwyneth Paltrow
9. Traffic sign word
10. Pop flavor
11. 12 months from today
12. Night spot
15. "Zip-__-Doo-Dah"
21. Interior design
22. Banned pesticide
26. "Much__About Nothing"
28. Articulates
29. High, as goals
31. P, in the Greek alphabet
33. Japanese salad ingredient
34. Alphabetic run
36. 1 and 2, e.g.
37. Stumbleum
38. '60s jacket style
39. German exclamation
40. Allow no runs in a victory
43. Clinton, e.g. briefly
46. Maine metropolis
47. Pianist's span
48. Mixes, as companies
49. Bear of Alabama football
52. Some batteries
53. Brouhahas
55. "King Kong" headliner
56. "Phooey"
57. Allude to
58. __chi chu'an

EVENT PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

AICs Can Purchase Photos From Events Starting Nov. 1

Some photos provided by the Recreation Department.



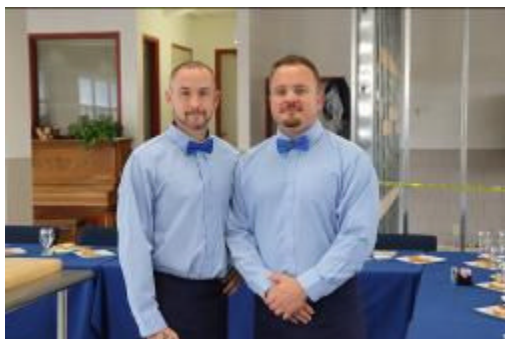
Fernando Pelayo at the October PonyXpress event.



Incarcerated people during August Pow wow.



GED graduate Chris Garcia and friends during the October ceremony.



Ben Lundberg and Seth Milton pose for photo at the October Fine Dining Meal.

THE RECREATION department and The Echo have partnered to make sports/event photos easier to purchase. AICs may now purchase photos taken at sporting events or other activities throughout the year.

Photo tickets must be purchased through multi by properly filling out a CD-28 for \$2.00 per photo ticket and writing "Acct# 2590" in the Pay To section (example: three tickets are \$6.00).

For AICs that have photo tickets and want to purchase the photo, please send a kyte to multi asking to review the multi-snapshots binder. AICs will attend a call out with their photo tickets to review the multi-snapshots binder.

A few notes:

- In most cases, AICs that are featured in The Echo will receive a free copy of their photo starting in November. Photos containing other people's families or staff will not be printed.
- The Recreation Department and The Echo team will take photos throughout the month.
- Due to limited storage, photos are removed every 90 days from the snapshot binder.
- Please do not interrupt the photographers during events.

Contact the Recreation Department to purchase photo tickets and set up a time to review the multi-snapshots binder. |ECHO



Paul Reyes during October passing of the leash ceremony for JLAD.



Brian Sierra-Jacobo kicks soccer ball during September Soccer Championship game.



Gary Kealoha treats bee hive for mites in July.



H1 basketball team poses for photo in October.

NEWS AT A GLANCE

Bulletin Board Notices and Other Information

HIRING BARISTAS

EOCI's Food Services is now accepting applications for AIC baristas to work in Prison Brews.

Hired AICs will receive on-the-job training from a local business The Pendleton Buckin' Bean.

Job duties will include:

- Working closely with staff
- Making pastries daily
- Working with food and drinks
- Working with job specific equipment
- Taking orders
- Ability to self-manage
- Organizational skills

Requirements:

- Level 3 (No arson, no staff assaults, no escapes)
- Experience would be nice
- Kitchen experience is preferred
- Work without direct supervision
- Able to follow directions

Interested applicants should send an application to: IWP

HOLIDAY SPENDING

The holiday spending period begins Monday, Dec. 2, and goes through Friday, Jan. 3, 2025.

AICs with DOC debt and external obligations, the following parameters will be in place:

DOC debt (disciplinary fines, copy, and postage debt) will be collected through Wednesday, Nov. 27, prior to the holiday spending.

At the conclusion of the 2024 holiday period any funds remaining in

the General Spending Trust Account for AICs with debt will be collected in accordance with OAR 291 Div. 158-0065(d).

For more information please refer to bulletin board on units.

HOLIDAY CANTEEN STORAGE

Effective Dec. 2, AICs may store two bags of clothing under assigned bunk. This will allow the storage of canteen items in their drawers during the holiday spending period. This allowance will continue through Jan. 31, 2025.

PHARMACY LABELS

ODOC pharmacies will be making a minor change on the pharmacy label for your medications. It is a small change, but it will be noticeable for some.

Medications that are dispensed in capsules or tablets will remain the same. However, for tubes, inhalers and other pharmaceutical containers the quantity now indicates the number of grams or milliliters that the container holds.

For example, previously a 30-gram tube of ointment, the pharmacy label would have read "1," indicating one tube of ointment.

Now the pharmacy label has changed and the quantity will show "30," to indicate the number of grams in the tube.

The change is being made because the pharmacies are about to use a new computer program that requires record of the quantity dispensed in grams and milliliters.

NOVEMBER EVENT LIST: RECREATION

- Fantasy Night in Multi: November 2
- Daylight Savings: November 3
- Opportunity Oregon: November 8
- Movie night in Multi: November 11
- Activity night in Multi: November 12
- Monday Night Football in Multi: November 18
- College Game Day in Multi: November 22
- Classic Movie Night in Multi: November 25
- Open Mic Night in Multi: November 29

2024 BASKETBALL STATS

Rebounds

Westside

Anthony Mack (A2) - 35
Joshua Schoen (C1) - 42
Maciel Munoz (B1) - 45

Eastside

Eric Evans (G4) - 21
Michael Altherr (G4) - 22
Michael Epperson (H1) - 27

Total Points Scored

Westside

Shawn Weisner (A2) - 86
Tahrim Brown (B4) - 86
Lamar Stanton (B1) - 87
Xabien Riley (B1) - 88

Eastside

Benjamin Marquez (F3) - 59
Zackery Mersch (H2) - 66
Ernesto Quiroz (F4) - 73

NOTICES

ANSWER KEYS

Crossword puzzle (page 35)

M	O	N	K		L	A	4	S		T	R	I	B		
I	T	O	R		A	L	O	H	A		H	O	N	E	
L	O	D	I		G	O	M	A	D		R	O	A	D	
D	O	E	S	D	O	U	B	L	E	D	U	T	Y		
E	L	A	T	E	S			L	E	D		B	E	A	
R	E	L	I	C		P	L	O		T	R	E	A	D	
				O	U	R	O	W	N		H	E	R	O	
		W	O	R	D	O	F	H	O	N	O	R			
A	S	E	A		O	N	T	A	P	E					
C	H	E	F	S		O	Y	L		H	B	O	M	B	
H	U	H		E	A	U				T	R	A	C	E	R
	T	O	W	N	A	N	D	C	O	U	N	T	R	Y	
T	O	U	R		A	C	R	I	D		G	A	G	A	
A	U	R	A		S	E	A	T	O		O	V	E	N	
I	T	S	Y			S	T	E	S		R	E	S	T	

Perplexing puzzles (page 34)

One:

What is the missing number in this sequence? (7, 8) (19, 27) (37, 64) (61, 125) (91, 216) (**127**, 343)

Answer: The missing number is 127. Starting with (7, 8). The difference between each enclosed pair of numbers is a cubed number: 1^3 , 2^3 , 3^3 , 4^3 , 5^3 , 6^3
 $6^3 = 216$

$$343 - 216 = 127$$

Two:

Unscramble these letters to make a word: **R A L L E A P L**

Answer: **PARALLEL**

Three:

Can you fill in the rest of the numbers?

1	8	13	12
14	11	2	7
4	5	16	9
15	10	3	6

LEGAL AND LIBRARY SERVICES UPDATE

Thin Client and Thumb Drive Notice

Provided by Legal and Library Services

Thumb Drives:

In accordance with OAR 291-139-0190 (2)(a), Legal and Library services, "may make removable media devices available for [AIC] use for saving and storing legal documents created using word processing equipment in the facility law library." Please note that access to thumb drives is a privilege.

Allowable Documents:

In accordance with OAR 291-139-0190(2)(c), only legal documents are allowed to be stored on the legal thumb drive that is assigned to you. Per OAR 291-139-0110 the following are considered legal documents:

- Pleadings (i.e., complaint, petition, or response)
- Legal motions and memoranda
- Affidavits
- Court orders and Judgments
- Necessary papers submitted to a court in connection with a legal action.
- Necessary papers submitted to a paroling authority in connection with official actions and proceedings of such authorities.

General Print and Thumb Drive Information:

- It is possible for thumb drives to be corrupted. To help prevent this, please ensure that you properly eject your thumb drive every time.
- ODOC is not responsible for corrupted files.

- A cursory review is required for all documents that are copied and printed (See OAR 291-139-0170(1)(c)).
- Printed documents must contain your name and SID to verify that the documents belong to you and are legal in nature (See OAR 291-139-0110(2)).
- We may not have the forms that you need – you may need to make your own form.
- Correspondence (letters) with legal counsel is not considered a legal document (See OAR 291-139-0110(10)).
- Thumb drives are subject to cursory review (See OAR 291-139-0190 (2) (c)).

OREGON CURE

The mission of the Oregon Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE) is to reduce crime by advocating for effective criminal justice policies, procedures and programs. Oregon CURE advocates for pro-family policies; improved medical and mental health care; broadened education and job training; reformed sentencing laws and parole; and effective transition programs.

AICs can write or send donation to Oregon CURE at:

Oregon CURE

PO Box 80193

Portland, Oregon 97820

Or at www.oregoncure.org. Friends and family can find *The Echo* published on their website.

RULES CHANGES

From the Administrative Rules Program

PROPOSED RULES:

291-006 Discrimination Complaint Review System

Amends rule to exempt reports related to sexual abuse and sexual harassment from the department's grievance and discrimination complaint systems to simplify and clarify the process for AICs who are seeking to report a PREA-related issue; and for revisions that improve clarity of the rules and consistency within these rules, align these rules with other department rules, and reorganize these rules.

Last day of comment period: 12/16/24 at 12:00 PM

291-109 Grievance Review System

Amends rule to exempt reports related to sexual abuse and sexual harassment from the department's grievance and discrimination complaint systems to simplify and clarify the process for AICs who are seeking to report a PREA-related issue; and for revisions that improve clarity of the rules and consistency within these rules, align these rules with other department rules, remove gendered language, and reorganize these rules.

Last day of comment period: 12/16/24 at 12:00 PM

PERMANENT RULES

291-011 Segregation (Disciplinary)

Amends rule to clarify what department staff will visit with an adult in custody on a daily basis to assess that adult in custody's medical or health care requests or needs when the adult in custody is in disciplinary segregation at a minimum-security correctional facility that

does not have an onsite health care professional available on a daily basis. Effective 10/23/25

291-086 AIC Access to Information Technology

Amends rule to change the term "inmate" to "adult in custody (AIC)" and to better reflect statewide standards and industry modernization; expand and clarify the department's policy on AIC access to information technology; update definitions; adopt new rules concerning management of approved information technology, approval processes for requesting information technology to assist with a disability, and for the review and removal of access restriction; and to reorganize these rules. Effective 10/14/25

291-105 Prohibited Conduct and Processing Disciplinary Actions

Amends rule to update the maximum Loss of Privileges sanctions for Level I and Level II rule violations and allows for an Adjustment to Final order for loss of privilege sanctions of 30 days or more; and to add definitions for the following terms to aid understanding: Adjudicate, Disciplinary Segregation, Drug Paraphernalia, and Loss of Privileges (LOP).

Effective 10/22/25

291-127 Visiting

Amends rule to increase the number of eligible visitors, and clearly articulate an objective administrative review process; improve clarity and consistency, align with other department rules and department philosophy; and change "inmate" to "AIC." Effective 10/08/25

PREA INFORMATION

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. AICs family can report on their 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
3601 State St.,
Salem, OR 97301