

THE ECHO

Created by incarcerated people



NEWS
FROM
THE
INSIDE

Est. 2018

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EASTERN OREGON CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

2500 WESTGATE

PENDLETON, OR 97801

FIVE COURSE HAWAIIAN MEAL SERVED

Fine Dining Program Showcases Skills During Quarterly PAC Meeting

Written by Chris Ainsworth, Staff Writer



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

On March 4, 2025, during a quarterly meeting between prison administration and the Prison Advisory Committee, Mark Belen plates Kalbi ribs on a bed of pineapple fried rice. Belen is a participant in EOCI's Fine Dining training program.

On March 4, attendees of the quarterly Prison Advisory Committee meeting enjoyed a five-course Hawaiian meal at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution. Nine members of the fine dining program organized, prepared and served the meal. The program was developed to teach AICs culinary skills and provide them the opportunity to showcase their freshly-honed abilities.

The PAC is a collection of community leaders not associated with the prison that meets four times a year and provides feedback to DOC administration. Community figures that attended the event included former mayor John Turner, and Pendleton's current and first female mayor, McKennon McDonald, who attended her first PAC

See FINE DINING Page 6

THE STAIRWELL PROJECT, YEAR TWO

Project Begins Again; G-Building Stairwell to Undergo Repainting

Written by Jacob Harper and Phillip Luna

Tucked away in the nook between E and G building was the source of new construction last month. The side stairwell to G-building was updated with safety cages the week of March 17, 2025.

G-building is next in line to have its front stairwell stripped, repaired and repainted. Unit G2 will be moving to the newly painted E2 and units G3 and G4 will be using the side stairwell during the refurbishment.

Housing assignment officer Messenger confirmed G2 will be moving to E2, but the start date is tentative. The refurbishment of G-building's front stairwell is expected to take several weeks.

The week prior to March 17, the welding shop built panels and prepared materials. Approximately 60 labor hours were put into the planning and building of the panels.

"It's come together pretty fast," said

See STAIRWELL REPAINT Page 4

The Echo
Est. 2018



The Echo Team

Phillip Luna | Editor in Chief

Chris Ainsworth | Staff Writer

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James Paulk | Correspondent

Antonio McCaw | Correspondent

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ODOC Staff Support

Ray Peters | IWP Coordinator, Supervising Editor

J. Stewart | OS2, Research and Support

Advisor

Berit Thorson | East Oregonian, Journalist

The Echo - Mission Statement

To serve the incarcerated community by providing monthly news and other important information, while highlighting the human experience in the carceral setting.

Friends can receive a digital version of The Echo by texting the word "CORRECTIONS" to the phone number 22828.

The Echo and 1664 are sponsored by the Pollen Initiative. The publications can be found online at www.pollenpress.org. Incarcerated people can access both publications on EDOVO.

Sponsored by



www.pollenpress.org

EDITORIAL

THE ECHO AND 1664 RECEIVE SPONSORSHIP

By Phillip Luna, Editor

We are proud to announce that as of March, The Echo and 1664 are sponsored by Pollen Initiative, a non-profit fundraising organization that supports journalism in the incarcerated setting.

Our collaboration with Pollen Initiative is the first time an ODOC publication has been sponsored by an outside organization. For us, there are a number of potential benefits: increasing our online presence and potential readership; adding a journalism training course; and funding for equipment, resources, or print costs.

Through our sponsor, The Echo and 1664 can now be viewed at www.pollenpress.org - a website that

an outside audience can access. Additionally, both publications are available on EDOVO, which is accessible by more than one million incarcerated people in the United States.

Over the next few months, Pollen Initiative will be able to collect data on readership, identifying how many people and from what state our publications are being viewed.

Our readership potential has expanded to include more than one million AICs and any non-incarcerated person with internet access.

In the next phase of our sponsorship, we will seek ODOC approval to start the Pollen Initiative's 16-week journalism training program. We ex-

ABOUT THE EOCI NEWSROOM

EOCI's newsroom is the hub for the Oregon Department of Correction's fledgling journalism program. The newsroom aims to employ a diversity of AICs from every demographic, ethnicity, race, orientation and gender. We take a multi-faceted approach to training journalism.

In August 2024, the team was joined by Berit Thorson, a journalist for the East Oregonian. Thorson became an advisor for the newsroom, and meets twice monthly with the incarcerated writers, offering advice, feedback and training. Since August, Thorson has coordinated training sessions for the team with an editor, a publisher, a Pulitzer-Prize nominated journalist, and several professors at University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication. This year, Thorson plans for additional workshops with photographers, educators and experts in the field.

Incarcerated writers begin as part-time correspondents for The Echo and have the opportunity to promote to staff writer. Staff writers are supported in pursuing journalism correspondence courses with the Prison Journalism Project, a non-profit that teaches journalism through correspondence course to incarcerated people. PJP's courses are self-study and self-paced.

Finally, with Pollen Initiative the goal is to offer their 16-week journalism training program. Course completion would be a requirement to work in the EOCI newsroom.

Between our bimonthly writing workshops, correspondence courses, and the training program with Pollen Initiative, the EOCI newsroom approaches training in multiple ways.

pect this course will become a requisite to work in EOCI's newsroom, but will also be open to the general population.

Also, we are going to work with Pollen Initiative to obtain ODOC approval to fund and improve the media center for IWP, replacing dated equipment and bringing The Echo and 1664 into this century - literally.

Currently, our publications are created on a computer with Windows XP, from 1997. This nearly 30-year-old computer is the only computer in the newsroom that has the capability to produce our publications.

Finally, the sponsorship by Pollen Initiative may lead to future projects.

Pollen Initiative was formerly known as The Friends of SQ News, supporting the incarcerated run newspaper of the San Quentin Rehabilitation

Center and other projects at the facility.

SQ News is the most successful prison newspaper in the United States, and circulates nearly 50,000 print copies across the state of California and beyond.

In 2023, The Friends of SQ News was rebranded as Pollen Initiative with the goal of advocating at prison's outside of San Quentin.

The organization continues to support SQ News and several other projects such as Forward This Productions, which teaches filmmaking and content creation - the only program in the country which offers incarcerated film crews a platform.

We are hopeful that our relationship with Pollen Initiative will expand to education in other mediums for our journalism training program, such as

podcasts, radio and film.

The first phase of this new partnership puts us online and on EDOVO. The next phases will require additional ODOC approval. But when we say ODOC approval, it is not about approving the concept. EOCI administration and DOC Salem have been overwhelmingly supportive and enthusiastic. Approval is about finding a way to accomplish the phases that meets ODOC's security, logistical and practical concerns.

While our publications are created by incarcerated people, it is not without the support of administration and staff who understand that prison journalism lends a voice to an often marginalized population.

We are incredibly excited to reach what is a milestone-moment for us, and for all of EOCI.

ABOUT THE ECHO

The mission of The Echo is to serve the incarcerated community by providing monthly news and other important information, while highlighting the human experience in the carceral setting.

The Echo is EOCI's prison newsletter. It was established in 2018 with one AIC employee under the supervision of IWP staff. The publication has went through several redesigns and revamps. Today, The Echo is produced by eight incarcerated people who adhere to the ethical standards set by the Society of Professional Journalist and follow style and structure guidelines set by the Associated Press.



ABOUT 1664



1664 is a quarterly magazine that was established in 2024. The magazine is produced at EOCI and available in limited print copies and digitally at all Oregon prisons.

At the time 1664 was established, there were a total of 1,664 federal and state prisons in the United States. Together these systems along with jails, juvenile facilities and immigration detention centers hold over 1.9 million people.

The mission of 1664 is simple: to provide names and faces where there were once only numbers and statistics.

This quarterly publication features stories of incarcerated people and offers an anthology of creative art and writing from justice-involved individuals. Prisons are often factionalized societies with institutional, psychological, geographical and sometimes self-imposed barriers. 1664 aims to chip away at those barriers by sharing stories of humanity from behind the razor-wire.

AROUND EOCI

STAIRWELL REPAINT continued from page 1

Photos by Chris Ainsworth/The Echo

On March 13 the welding shop prepares safety cages for installation on the side stairs of G-building. The side stairwell will be used during the refurbishment of G-building's front stairwell, which is expected to occur sometime in spring.

welder Chris Vasey, who was a lead contributor to the project.

The material used was 3/16-by-2 inch angle iron and 1/8-by-3/4 inch flat bar to hold the "hog wire" in place. The material was custom fit for each section to create the safety cages. The safety cages were installed using a telelift.

"When you have a job this size it's really important that each piece fits," said Vasey, "so you're not wasting material."

For the welders, projects such as adding safety cages to a stairwell provide a unique opportunity to apply their skills.

"I think it is really important that everyone knows how to attack a job like this," said Vasey.

Separately, EOCI's paint shop painted and repaired unit E2, which has been vacant for several months.

"We used 15 lbs of spackle to fill in all the scraps and holes in the walls,"

said Zach Schrader, a paint shop worker. The work on E2 was completed the last week of March.

When unit E2 is occupied by residents of G2, the paint shop workers will begin the grueling and tedious

process sandblasting the stairwell at the front of G-building. An abrasive copper-slag material will be used to remove old weathered paint and rust.

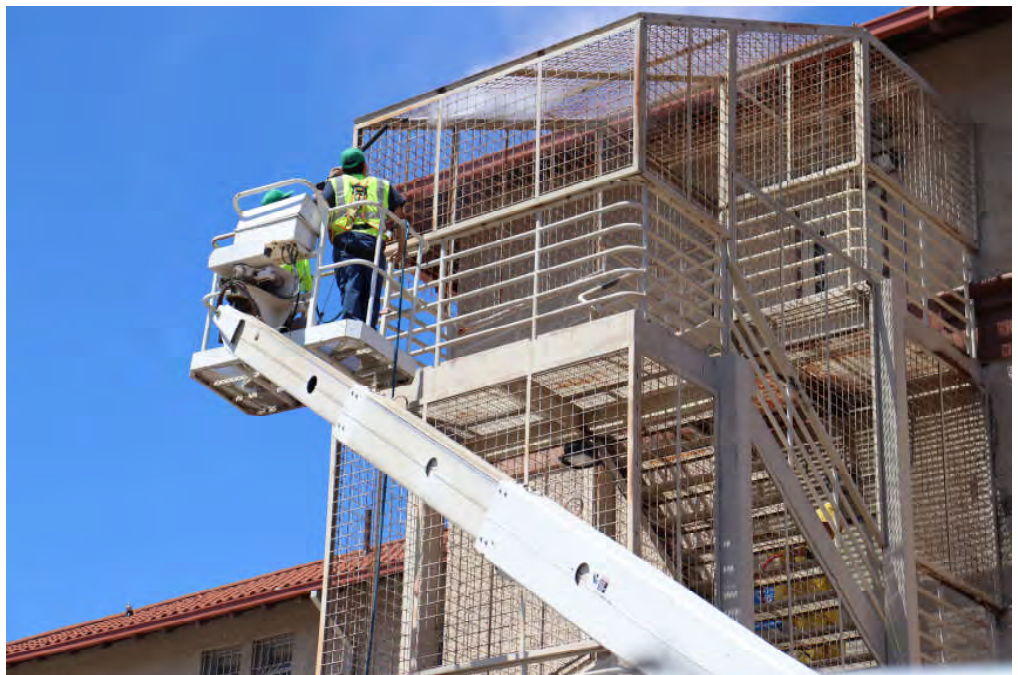
Once stripped, the stairs will be repaired where needed, shrink-wrapped and painted.

The process to repair and paint the stairwell is expected to last several weeks.

"I'm not very excited to live on a dorm," said Chris Ainsworth, a G2 resident. "But I understand this is an old facility and repairs need to happen."

Paint shop supervisor Cecil is in the process of hiring additional workers that will support the refurbishment of stairwells during the spring and summer, as well as numerous other projects slated for the paint shop this year.

The stairwell renovation project, which began on June 7, 2024, is seasonal because the stairwells are external. Last year, the stairwells for E and F building were repainted. | ECHO



Photos by Phillip Luna/The Echo

In August 2024, paint shop workers strip the paint off the safety cages of E-building.

GOGI SELLS GIRL SCOUT COOKIES

More Than 1,000 Boxes Sold in March

Written by Antonio McCaw, Correspondent



Photo by Chris Ainsworth/The Echo

Members of GOGI leadership handing out girl scout cookies on March 3, 2024. GOGI sold over 1,000 boxes of girl scout cookies with \$6,222 in gross sales.

On March 3 around 8 a.m., residents of EOCI were called from their housing units to pick up their girl scout cookies. Getting Out by Going In, a peer-led self improvement program and a club at EOCI, held a fundraiser to help benefit local scout troops.

Selling 1,037 boxes of cookies at \$6 per box, GOGI was able to raise \$6,222 in gross sales and another \$95 from AIC donations.

"I appreciate everyone's participation," said Keaton Stephen, a member of GOGI leadership.

The fundraiser will help the local girl scouts with 10-20% of funds going directly to the scouts. The bakery who made the cookies will get 25-35% of the proceeds and finally, the remaining amount goes to the troops council.

GOGI selected the item because it aligns with their mission statement, which says, "Positive lifestyle and

positive life changes for everyone."

GOGI is a group developed by AICs for AICs to work on pro social behavior and self-improvement. Their 12-week course introduces AICs to the 12 GOGI tools and how to use them.

"GOGI has helped me learn to control my anger, which I've struggled with a lot during my prison time," said Ricardo Villarreal a fundraiser participant and part of the Spanish GOGI classes. "It was nice to get girl scout cookies. Something I haven't had since coming to prison."

The girl scouts were founded Dec. 3, 1912 in Savannah, Georgia. In 1917, the Mistletoe Troop in Muskogee, Oklahoma sold the first known cookies at their local high school. All that was offered were simple home-baked sugar cookies. They were placed in wax paper bags, sealed with a sticker and sold for \$0.25-0.35 a dozen. | ECHO

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS AND WRITE-INS

Written by James Paulk, Correspondent

New promotional products will be sold in April through commissary. Items will usually appear on the canteen sheet. If they do not, however, they will need to be written in.

The best place to write in items is in the substitution section of the order form or any area there is enough room to be as specific as possible.

Requesting Promotional Items

There are a couple of ways that promotional products are introduced. One way is by AIC request through a canteen suggestion form, obtainable by sending a kyte to canteen.

Another way is by staff suggestion. If the institution security managers in Salem approve an item, the item is sent to the facilities for canteen employees to sample and review. Employees fill out review forms and rate the item.

Filling Out Canteen Sheets

When filling out a canteen sheet it is important for AICs to write legibly. This will ensure the items requested are received. When writing in substitutions, be specific.

For example, when ordering summer sausages there are two flavors to choose. In the substitution section, write in: "If out of beef salami, sub. hot and spicy."

The communication is short and to the point and will increase the chances of success.

Current Promotional Items

Jet puff marshmallows, pistachios, nutter-butters. advanced whey protein isolate, hazelnut spread, and an art pencil holder 48-count (level 3). Commissary will also be selling Treva 5" battery powered fans. The fans can be powered through a adapter cord, which will be sold separately. | ECHO

AROUND EOCI

FINE DINING continued from page 1

Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

On March 4, 2025 Tuna Tataki is plated and prepared to be served by AICs in the Fine Dining Program to the more than 20 guests attending the PAC meeting. Tuna Tataki is a slightly seared ahi tuna with avocado, mango, sesame seeds, wakame seaweed, and wasabi in a citrus sauce with garlic aioli.

meeting. Also in attendance were representatives from Oregon State Police, the local fire department and the general manager for Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon.

The meetings provide EOCI staff the opportunity to have a conversation with members of the community about new programs, rule changes within the facility and successes the facility is experiencing.

EOCI staff in attendance included Superintendent David Pedro, the facility's executive team, representatives from the Food Services Department, and EOCI's recreation specialists.

In addition to showcasing the talents of the Fine Dining Program the PAC meeting had a guest speaker. EOCI

Recreation Specialist Jerrad Templin gave a presentation about the many programs and recreational activities. On display during the event was a collection of paintings created by AICs in the prison's art program which is led by Templin's department. Additionally, EOCI residents in the music program, which is also part of the recreation department, performed and recorded music which was played in the background during the event.

Liza Emory, EOCI's Food Service Manager, asked program participant Gary Kealoha to put together a traditional Hawaiian menu to be served at this quarter's PAC event. Kealoha, who has previous experience in the culinary field and is part owner of Ate-Oh-Ate restaurant in Portland, Oregon, is tak-

ing a leadership role in the program.

Emory placed the responsibility on Kealoha due to his background in the restaurant industry. He started cooking at 14 and by the time he turned 19 he was a sous chef. Kealoha appeared on Food Network All Stars and was trained by renowned sushi chef, Norio Yamamoto.

Kurtis Dodson, a food service coordinator who helped with meal preparation and plating, is a culinary school graduate, as is Emory. They have different areas of expertise and experience - Emory specializes in baking and Dodson specializes in kitchen service.

Some of the items for the meal had to be imported from Hawaii. Kealoha created alternate options in case items



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Gary Keahola cuts an avocado using a tethered knife. Keahola created the menu for the March 4 fine dining event. "Hawaii is like the melting pot of the Pacific," he said.

did not arrive on time or at all, such as using rainbow chard for the inner wrapping of the main course instead of traditional taro leaves.

Having alternative ingredient options is common for kitchens in the event of vendor supply and product availability issues.

"When you think of Hawaii, most people think of pineapple and coconuts," said Kealoha. "Hawaii is like the melting pot of the Pacific. The main thing in Hawaii is whatever you find on the island you turn into food, somehow somehow."

The appetizer was Tuna Tataki, seared ahi tuna served with avocado and mango, followed by a pressed watermelon salad.

Preparation for the meal began at 6 a.m. on the day of the event. The meal was prepared in an exhibition-style kitchen in EOCI's staff dining room. Guests at the PAC meeting were able to watch the program participants work.

There were also limitations to work around. Unlike a typical kitchen, the knives used for cooking were tethered to the kitchen prep table, which allowed only a short range of motion.

"There is protocol you have to follow with security," said Kealoha. "Especially when you are trying to do different knife cuts or certain styles of cooking and everything has to be tethered."

The third course was Korean short ribs served over pineapple fried rice; but the showstopper was the main course, LauLau.

LauLau is a traditional Hawaiian dish consisting of pork belly, salted black cod and beef shoulder wrapped in rainbow chard and then wrapped and steamed in a giant ti leaf. The attendees were served the main course contained inside the large leaves that they had to unwrap like an edible present.

"Anyone that has been to Hawaii, after they leave, LauLau is something they are always going to want to try again," said Kealoha. "That's Hawaii."

The final touch to the five-course meal was Sweet Potato Haupia Pie paired with coffee from Pendleton

Continued on next page



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Work from the Recreations Department's AIC art program is displayed at the March 4, 2025 PAC meeting. Recreation Specialist Jerrad Templin gave a presentation, explaining the various programs the department has led in the last year.

AROUND EOCI

Continued from previous page

Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Members of the Fine Dining Program pose for a photo on March 4, 2025. Bottom row, from left to right: Mark Belen, Ben Lundberg, Michael Morris, and William Alexander. Top row, from left to right: Gary Kealoha, Alfred Velasquez, OSII Clark, Food Service Manager Liza Emory, Neil Watford, Gareth Hall, Food Service Coordinator Kurtis Dodson, and Steve Larsen.

Buckin' Bean, the supplier of EOCI's Prison Brews coffee shop opening in April.

Kealoha explained each dish to the attendees before the servers delivered the plates. During the dessert's description, he explained how the Hawaiian dish had roots in Pendleton.

EOCI's beekeeping program donated honey that was used in the crust of the Hawaiian treat, giving the dessert a tie to another program at the facility.

"The biggest draw for me was actually Emory. She is a master baker," said lead baker Neil Watford, who helped with plating and anything else Kealoha needed. "She taught me a lot, refining my skills for when I get out."

Participants in the program were split between service and kitchen. Dodson and four AICs prepared and plated food, while five different AICs served the attendees each course of the meal and made sure their glasses of sparkling water or iced tea were never empty.

This is the second opportunity the Fine Dining Program has had to showcase their skills. The previous quarterly PAC meeting in October 2024 was the first event, which, for Oregon, was the first time a fine dining meal prepared by AICs was offered to the public.

"The fine dining program is one of three in the nation," said Emory.

Emory said the other two programs are different because they operate res-

taurants that are open to the community. EOCI's program is the only one that is offered inside the correctional facility.

The program could pave the way for other institutions in Oregon to develop similar programs. The goal of the program is to provide skills AICs can take to employers following their release.

"Different departments [within EOCI] have been requesting fine dining hold future events," said Emory.

In addition to providing meals at meetings for different departments, Emory hopes to be able to offer fine dining options at family events and special events for AICs in the future, so the program's participants can gain as much experience as possible. |ECHO

ELECTION HELD; FUNDRAISER FOR BACKPACKS POSTED

Club Hopes to Raise For Funds Backpack Handout During Family Events

Written by Antonio McCaw, Correspondent and Phillip Luna, Editor



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Enrichment Club President Ben Edwards during a fundraiser event. Edwards served as interim president in 2024 and was elected in 2025.

The Enrichment Club had an active February and March.

On Feb. 5, the Enrichment Club held elections and five council positions were democratically chosen. In March, the club posted its first fundraiser of the year – deli sandwiches with an optional ice cream add on.

The Enrichment Club held its blind ballot elections - a yearly event for the club. Ben Edwards was elected club president. Edwards served as vice president for two years and interim president last year.

The remaining elected council positions are: Jeremy Bonsignore, vice president; Warren Doescher, secretary; Zach Schrader, treasurer; and Zack Mersch, Sergeant at Arms.

The club is a democracy, with sub-committees meeting to review and select which fundraisers to propose to administration.

For the upcoming fundraiser, build-it-yourself deli sandwiches were selected with a ice cream as an add on option for

an additional cost. The meal is priced at \$30 with a \$6 cost to add on ice cream.

The deadline to turn in order forms is April 11, with the handout occurring on May 8-9.

Participants are able to select two 8 oz serving of sliced deli meat and two 4 oz servings of sliced cheese.

Meat options are smoked ham, turkey and roast beef, pastrami and salami. The four options for cheese are cheddar, swiss, provolone and pepper-jack.

Also included in the meal are two bottles of V8 Splash drinks, with flavor options of strawberry- kiwi, juice berry and tropical blend.

Participants who select the ice cream add on will receive three scoops of Tillamook ice cream and chocolate, strawberry and mango syrup on the side.

The proceeds from this fundraiser will be used to purchase backpacks and school supplies for visitors under the age of 18 that attend family events this year.

The Enrichment Club made a similar donation in 2023, but did not repeat in 2024, a fact Edwards hopes to rectify.

“The backpacks are one of the most popular donations we have done. It is one of the coolest things I’ve been a part of,” said Edwards. “We hope to make this a yearly donation.” | ECHO



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Backpacks and school supplies displayed during the October, 2023 donation by the Enrichment Club. The club is raising money for a similar event with their next fundraiser.

AROUND EOCI

ONE MAN'S TRASH, BECOMES A TREASURE

Scraps From The Woodshop Used to Make a Raised Garden Bed

Written by Chris Ainsworth, Staff Writer

A **raised planter bed** appeared in the gardening plot dedicated to EOCI's Master Gardener class near the east dining hall in March. The new planter bed was the result of some clever up-cycling.

It was installed by class facilitators Brett Lloyd and Joe Tuttle.

Discarded wood was salvaged from the discard pile behind the carpentry shop, and then given back to the carpentry shop. The shop built raised beds for the gardening classes.

"The reason for installing the raised bed is to give the gardening classes a more permanent presence on the compound," said Lloyd. "Raised beds help combine aesthetics with functionality."



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Program facilitator Brett Lloyd installs the upcycled raised garden bed with facilitator Joe Tuttle (not pictured) on March 13, 2025.

The bed is currently home to a variety of onions. Next year, however, the crops will change, rotating to help keep the soil nutrient rich.

The raised bed is part of an ongoing project to improve the gardening areas.

Lloyd and Tuttle plan to add one raised bed each year using scrap wood collected from the discard pile.

"The goal would be to have nothing but raised beds in the gardening class plots," said Lloyd. |ECHO

VERITABLE FOREST OF PLANTS

Students Prepare for Spring; Plant Starts Sprout in IWP

Written by Chris Ainsworth, Staff Writer



An assortment of plant starts in the IWP building on March 25, 2025.

Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

As cold winter days are replaced rainy spring showers, new plant life sprouts up to greet the rains and sunshine.

Over the winter months EOCI's Seed to Supper class prepared for spring. The students will transition into their Master Gardner class - the second course in the gardening program.

The class has designed group plots and planted a collection of vegetables indoors that are not frost hardy – such as tomatoes, tomatillos, peppers, celery, cucumber and a few types of basil.

What started in February as an office for two AICs in the Institution Work Programs building, has turned into a nursery in March. While the greenhouse grows starts for the institution plots, the IWP building grows starts for the classes and programs offered.

Continued on next page

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The office contains three spectrum fluorescent light fixtures providing life giving rays to almost 200 plants.

Many of the plants have outgrown their homes twice, and threaten to outgrow a third by the time they can be planted outside in April.

Following the last frost date of the year the plants will find their home outside in assigned gardening plots where classes will tend them until harvest.

It isn't all playing in the dirt. The class is separated between practical

application, lectures and videos.

Unfortunately, it is too late to apply for the Seed to Supper class this season.

However, IWP will start accepting applications in November for the 2026 season. |ECHO

THE AUSSIE

Unique Dog Joins JLAD

Written by Shahid Baskerville, Correspondent

A **highly energized** Australian shepherd, Danner, arrived at EOCI in February. Breed, coat color and speed set him apart from the other dogs in the Joys of Living Assisted Dogs program. Yet the biggest difference is his purpose for being at EOCI.

Larry Wilt, a tenured JLAD trainer, was tasked with the special request from Danner's owner to turn the four-month-old pet into a fully trained assistance dog.

Training Danner is a rare opportunity as the program does not generally take requests. JLAD canines are usually birthed in whelping rooms at one of two prisons in the state.



Photo provided by JLAD

JLAD facilitator Larry Wilt poses with 4-month-old Australian Shepherd Danner in this undated photo.

This four-month-old pup has found its way into JLAD, a program that typically trains retrievers and Labradors.

Training newborn puppies starts a few weeks after birth and due to Danner's late start, he has missed out on a lot of training.

According to Wilt, his high fueled energy exceeds other dogs in the program.

"He is twice as fast and needs three times as much rest," Wilt said.

Wilt expressed how in their short time together, he and Danner have learned to react to each other, forming a bond as trainer and trainee.

"Danner has taught me patience," said Wilt.

Danner will undergo two years of training with JLAD. His brain developed prior to joining the program. It will take intense training that will place him on a career path as an assisted living dog. |ECHO



Photos by Chris Ainsworth/The Echo

Australian Shepherd Danner, left, poses with a standard JLAD canine, a retriever, on March 27, 2025.

AROUND EOCI

DECORATIVE FLAG FOR DISPLAY

Multi-Department Project to Create Display for the Prison Brews Coffee Shop

Written by Phillip Luna, Editor

The welding, carpentry and paint shop combined their efforts to create a decorative art piece for EOCI's new coffee shop, Prison Brews.

The 60-by-47 inch flag was created in the welding shop using mild steel. Stars were cut out in the blue section of the flag.

The carpentry shop cut the plastic framing for the flag. The framing was mounted with LED lights, including blue colored lights for the cut-out stars.

The paint shop completed the red, white and blue painting with air brushed shadows to create the folds, and the piece was hung in the coffee shop on March 28.

The grand opening for Prison Brews is April 2, 2025. | ECHO



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

A stainless steel flag displayed on March 27, 2025 in EOCI paint shop. The flag waits to be mounted and installed in EOCI's coffee shop.

PROJECT REPLACE GATE, INSTALLED

Massive New Gate Between F and G Buildings Installed in March

Written by Phillip Luna, Editor

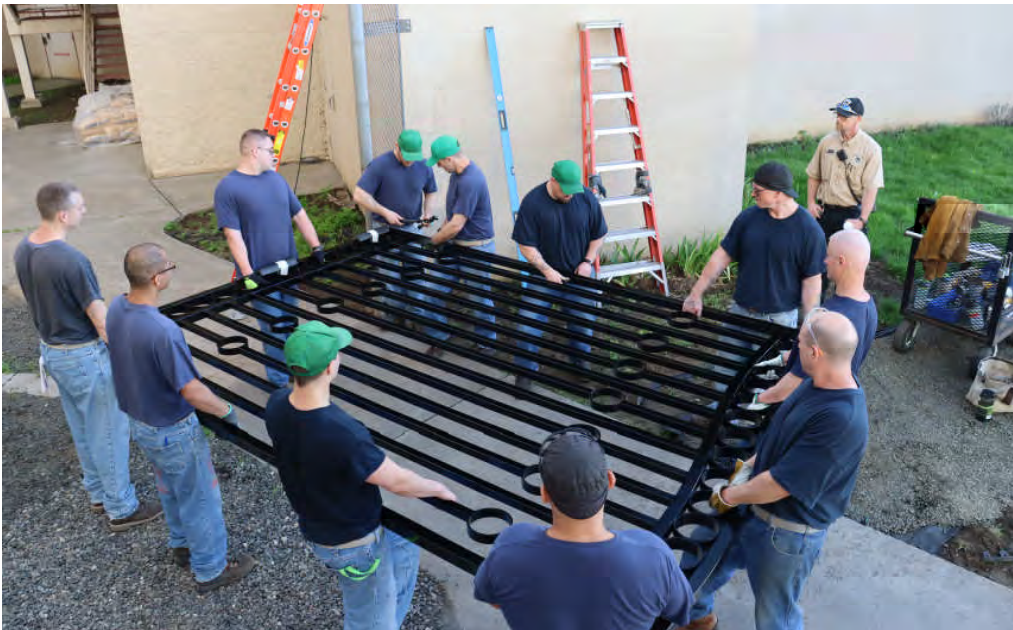


Photo by Chris Ainsworth/The Echo

On March 26, 2025 a 17-by-12 foot gate, weighing more than 500 lbs per side, is installed between F and G building. The gate was created in EOCI's welding shop in February.

The new 17 by 12-foot gate was installed on March 26, 2025 between F and G building.

The gate was manufactured in EOCI's welding shop in February. Welders Jacob Whitman and Benjamin Jones, along with maintenance worker Aaron Toole created the gate over several weeks.

Whitman created the design, which weighs 500 pounds per side.

The gate is both decorative and functional as it will be used in the coming months to allow G3 and G4 residents access to the side stairwell of the building. The residents will be using the side stairs for several weeks while the front stairs are repainted. | ECHO

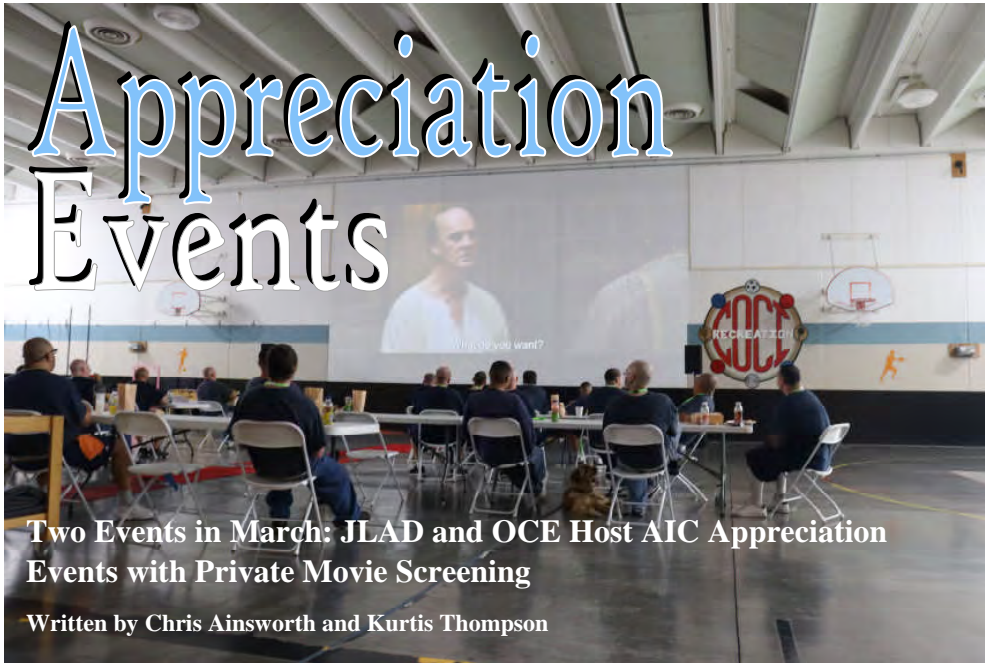


Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

On March 25, 2025 JLAD holds an appreciation event for their workers. OCE held a similar event the following day for call center, garment factory and laundry workers.

JLAD Appreciation Event

The aroma of Papa John's pizza and popcorn filled the multi-purpose building at EOCI on March 25 as part of a JLAD trainer appreciation event.

The 25 AICs involved in JLAD - facilitators, trainers, alternates, orderlies and a clerk - gathered around tables in front of the projector for a private screening of a movie before it is shown on the institution channel.

The new movie and the special meal was put on to give thanks to the hard work the JLAD trainers put forth each day.

"We work 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Robert Miller who has been a secondary trainer since July 2024. "Working with dogs is great, but sometimes it is good to see our efforts don't go unnoticed."

Typically, events that involve the service dog training program revolve around graduations, which are generally held two times a year.

The JLAD program has expanded in recent years, to Oregon State Correc-

tional Institution and South Fork Correctional Institution. Graduations are no longer held only at EOCI.

"We used to be responsible for the graduations [at EOCI]," said clerk Jesus Villareal. "Since adding OSCI, we share graduations with them."

The JLAD program started at EOCI in 2016 and has held eight Passing of the Leash ceremonies and graduated a handful of canines at each event.

Passing of the Leash ceremonies are JLAD graduations where the trainers physically pass the leash to the service animals' new owners.

The graduation also showcases the dogs' training with a demonstration of cues and skills during the ceremony.

"We took the graduation as a form of appreciation, but it is nice to have a specific event," said Earl CreeMedicine, who has been part of the program for six years and a facilitator for two. "It also gives the new people something to look forward to. It's in the name - appreciation."

Up next for JLAD will be a gradua-

tion at EOCI that should take place in October.

Until then, training awaits.

OCE Appreciation Event

Oregon Corrections Enterprises hosted its spring appreciation event for EOCI resident workers March 26 starting at noon.

Participants were from the three branches OCE operates within the facility - garment factory, call center and laundry.

AICs had a choice between pizza or a chicken strip meal, with various soda options such as Fanta and Pepsi. The workers ate and watched a movie played over the projector in the multi-purpose building.

According to OCE manager P. Potts, the event cost approximately \$1,500 and was attended by about 200 AICs.

The appreciation event for OCE is held twice each year, in the spring and fall. Potts said he enjoys working with the residents and credited them for contributing to a reciprocal learning environment.

"It's a good program," Potts said, "A place where [AICs] can learn skills for reentry ... I have over 30 years of manufacturing experience, but sometimes I'm even learning from our workers how certain machines run."

For the past two years, OCE has been involved in reentry transitions for their AIC workers. OCE works within their companies to provide job opportunities to AICs returning to local communities.

"I look forward to these events to celebrate their hard work. We're happy to give them an opportunity to succeed," Potts said. "We are committed to their reentry to the community."

|ECHO

SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT 2025

B4 Wins Overall Championship in Volleyball Tournament

Written by Shane Goins, Correspondent

On March 24, 2025 unit B4 won the 2025 EOCI volleyball tournament, beating unit G4 three sets to two, in a best-of-five final.

The tournament, which began on March 3, replaced the indoor soccer season this year. It was a bracket-style, double-elimination tournament.

The west side of the facility had eight teams while the eastside only had four: units G3, G4, H1 and H2- all incentive housing.

The first game of the season was A1 versus B1. B1 won the first set 25-7, with Dan Gajhabuka scoring B1's initial six points off serves. A1 scored 25-17 and 15-10 in sets two and three giving them a 2-1 victory.

In game one for the east, G3 won against H2 in two straight sets, 25-11 and 25-20. H2 put forth as much effort as they could, but G3's Ernesto Quiroz proved he was going to be as valuable in volleyball as he was in basketball with his lightning quick reflexes.

On March 4, unit H2 fell to unit G4, again, in two sets in a row due to strong performances from G4's Eric Evans and Joseph Cardoza.

March 10 west side units B1 and A2 played in what looked like would be B1's second loss in a week. Due to the brilliant communication of B1's Branch Niehouse who could be heard yelling "mine ,mine, mine" and the persistence of Maciel Munoz, B1 was able to staunch the bleeding caused by A2 in the second set. B1 won 2 to 1.

March 18, 2025 the eastside championship was played between units G4 and H1; two familiar foes matching up in yet another sport. The first set G4 handily won 25-10 led by Evans' ability to be in the right place at the right time to make the right play.

H1 couldn't get the serves right and showcased sloppy play, sluggish returns, and lack of communication.

Set two had H1 trying to climb out of a self-dug hole, taking the lead by

three points. But, once again, Evans and Cardoza proved to be too much and made spectacular play after spectacular play to seal the win, 25-20, and crown G4 eastside volleyball champions.

On March 19, it was units B1 versus B4 for the west side championship and a chance to play G4 for the overall championship.

The first set ended with B1 winning, 27-25. In the second set B4 made spectacular plays on offense as well as defense winning the set 25-18.

The third set was expedient, to say the least. A consistent pace and very few mistakes made the third set all the more competitive. A late spike by B4's Aaron Garcia helped B4 win the west side championship, 15-11.

Throughout the championship match, there were numerous mind-blowing saves by both teams including the patient, and very lucky, saves by G4's Micah Kennedy.

But, a few amazing serves mixed with a splash of all-star-style play (and a 6'5" spiker) from B4 is what helped them to overcome a resilient G4 and win the overall championship. | ECHO

ADVERTISEMENT

EVENT PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

AICs Can Purchase Photos From Events



Photo from March 4, 2025 fine dining event.

Photos by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Photos taken for The Echo or around the institution may be purchased through the Recreation Department.

Photo tickets must be purchased by filling out a CD-28 for \$2.00 per photo ticket and writing Acct# 2590 in the "Pay To" section.

For AICs that have photo tickets and want to purchase a 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.

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

WHAT

I'VE

LEARNED

Dominic Manson, 23, is looking forward to reconnecting with his family, eating street tacos, and furthering his art skills. With his release weeks away, he is excited to start his next chapter in life and stay in contact with the friends he has made.

Manson currently works at IWP, and is repainting the interior of the building.



With Dominic Manson

Interview by Antonio McCaw, Correspondent

One thing that surprised me... how differently you are treated by the staff and guards, like how you get looked down on.

Earlier on I wish I had... picked up more programs and tried to stay away from the drama a little bit more, because I dove right into it thinking I'd get the whole experience. The whole experience will just set you back in the end and give you more time.

The best advice I can give to someone is... to find a hobby and like-minded people who involve themselves in it. A hobby to just dive into and pour a bunch of your time in.

The best item to buy off canteen... butterscotch candies.

Since being in prison I've learned to value... family. If you have them too, cherish them. Try to kindle that relationship if that's with family or people outside as much as you can. Because realistically nobody has to talk to you in here, and the

ones that do are the ones who really care about you. Let them know you care too.

The change I'd like to see in the prison system is... I wish there was more training for the staff so they could see we're people - the same as everyone else and we should be treated that way, not looked at differently.

One thing I wish I never wasted money on is... sleep mask, ordered it once than threw it in the trash.

Before coming to prison, I would consider myself... somebody who was lost with no real direction in their life. Somebody who didn't really have too many morals and just did whatever the day brought with no thoughts on consequences

Now I consider myself... an artist, a son, a brother and a friend to the people in my life. Somebody who they can finally count on.

I can't wait to visit... my hometown of Portland, Oregon and see my family. Visit all my family and skate the Burnside skate park before it possibly gets torn down. |ECHO

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

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. A quick Q&A and you may be featured in the next "What I've Learned" section.



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Newly-hired Recreation Specialist Hall sits at his desk on March 25, 2025. Hall is an outside hire, previously working at the Pendleton Convention Center. He joins current Recreation Specialist Templin.

EOCI HIRES NEW RECREATION SPECIALIST

Recreation Specialist Hall Joins the Team; Meets with The Echo for Interview

By Correspondent Antonio McCaw and Editor Phillip Luna

EOCI recently hired a new Recreation Specialist in February. Outside hire Zach Hall will join current Recreation Specialist Templin.

Historically, EOCI did not have a Recreation Specialist role. At the start of 2024, two Recreation Specialist were hired.

A Recreation Specialist is a staff member in charge of facilitating events, activities and fundraisers throughout the institution.

After creating the Recreation Specialist positions in 2024, many events and activities that were stymied during COVID-19 began returning. Addition-

ally, many new events were created.

The Recreation Department began offering game nights and various tournament - table top games, basketball, pickleball, cornhole, foosball and ping pong.

In February 2024, the Recreation Department purchased a new projector for the purpose of reinstating movie nights. The projector more than doubled the old projector's lumen count and could produced a 4K image. After a five year break, the first movie night in the multi-purpose building occurred on Aug. 25, 2024.

As Hall joins the Recreation Depart-

ment he hopes to help further the department's goals.

Hall told The Echo during the interview about his love for sports and the excitement for the position he now has.

The following are excerpts transcribed from that interview:

Echo: What kind of work did you do before coming to EOCI?

Hall: I worked at the Pendleton convention center, so pretty much I did all kind of events such as dinner banquets to high school basketball tournaments, wrestling tournaments, concerts, big

conferences, conventions - a little bit of everything. Doing all the set up, sound and audio visual stuff too. I was there for a year and half, almost two years.

Echo: What are your goals for EOCI's recreation program?

Hall: Goals? I'm still getting adjusted. Getting through the training and all that kind of stuff, so I haven't been able to fully put my mind towards what I want to bring.

Obviously, any kind of new sports that we can do I'd love to coordinate and do something like that. I also play board games and card games so to bring more of that in here.

We have our whole music department which is fun, so any kind of outside concert or open mic night is a blast.

I think it is important to throw a couple events a month and see which ones are good and which ones are bad. I'm excited to get in here and see what you guys want to do and what we can do.

Echo: What made you decide to become a recreation specialist at EOCI?

Hall: It fell into my lap. It was a cool opportunity and I was ready to transition out of my previous job. I applied and got it. I'm excited to bring some sports and different areas that I have experience in.

Echo: Do you play in sports or

participate in any competitions?

Hall: I play a lot of pick up basketball and football games. Nothing official. I play a lot of golf tournaments and as I get older, my body doesn't

“It's been eye opening for me. I've never been exposed to a corrections world ... It's been super laid back and fun, been a cool experience.”

function as well. Golf is a nice way to get those competitive juices flowing.

Echo: What are your thoughts on EOCI in general?

Hall: It's been great. Everyone I've met, staff to AICs, it's been wonderful. Not what I expected coming into a prison. It's been eye opening for me. I've never been exposed to a corrections world. I expected it to be a lot higher-stress like the movies. It's been

super laid back and fun, been a cool experience.

Echo: Who is your favorite athlete?

Hall: It's hard not to say Michael Jordan. I grew up watching him, so he would probably be my favorite. Obviously, Tiger Woods is up there being in the golf world. If I had to pick one favorite athlete of all time it would probably be MJ.

Echo: Do you have a favorite sports team?

Hall: In football, it's the Green Bay Packers. Basketball being an Oregon boy, Portland by default is my team. We haven't been good in a long time but it is what it is.

I enjoy it though. I've been to a couple Blazer games this year. But, we're just not very good. Getting Cooper Flagg would be awesome and it would be a sweet, sweet team. Cooper Flagg is the real deal.

Echo: If there was one sporting event in the world you could go to, what would it be?

Hall: It would be the summer Olympics. The whole two-week period where you get sports non-stop all the time, I think the Olympics would be super fun.

Echo: What is your preferred sport to play?

Hall: Golf is my favorite. |ECHO

Upcoming Events

March 29 Ramadan ends
April 2 Prison Brews: Grand Opening
April 4 GED Graduation
April 9 Open Mic Night
April 11 National Licorice Day
April 12 Religious Services: Puppet Show

April 19 Religious Services: Movie Night
April 21 Multi: Movie Night: The Sound of Freedom
April 12-20 Passover
April 20 Easter
April 23 Religious Services: Full Gospel Baptisms
April 26 Religious Services: Mennonite Choir Concert

April 26 Religious Services: Lighthouse Baptisms
May 3 Car Show
May 8-9 Enrichment Club Build-Your-Own Sandwich
May 12-13 EOCI Weddings
May 15-16 Family Luncheon
May 11 Mother's Day
May 26 Memorial Day

NEWS YOU CAN USE

BUG FREE SUMMER

How to Avoid the Insects

Written by Phillip Luna, Editor

With the river sitting right next to EOCI, it's no wonder spring brings a swarm of uninvited flying insects. On particularly humid days, it's best to avoid the grassy areas of the yard altogether, it is not uncommon to catch a face full (or a mouth full) of bugs. It turns out there are a few natural remedies that may help.

Tip One: Vitamin B can actually help prevent mosquito bites and deter bugs interest. Studies show mosquitoes are more likely to bite people low in vitamin B. Vitamin B is found in vegetables, eggs, pork and fish - or a vitamin supplement.

Tip Two: Baby oil on the skin will keep mosquitoes and insects from biting.

Tip Three: Mint is a natural bug repellent. A DIY repellent can be made using an empty hairspray bottle, some mint mouthwash and a little bit of water.

Tip Four: Avoid using deodorants, shampoos, or products that have a lot of fragrance. Sweet scent attracts bugs.

Tip Five: Sweaty skin also attracts bugs. After a workout at yard, make a stop at the outdoor shower and rinse off. |ECHO

OREOS AND LICORICE

Special Housing Department Offers Various Events and Items

Written by Phillip Luna, Editor



Photo by Phillip Luna/The Echo

A package of Oreo cookies handed out on March 6, 2025, National Oreo Day.

On March 6, 2025, National Oreo Day, packages of Oreo cookies were handed out to EOCI residents during the regular meal.

The handout is part of ongoing efforts by the Special Housing Department (formerly Correctional Rehabilitation) to have interesting and fun events and offerings each year.

Previous events included Dr. Seuss

week, where a Dr. Seuss book was available for check out on housing units. AICs could check out a book and read to their children over a phone call or video visit. Another offering was the Super Bowl nacho kit.

Up next, April 12 is National Licorice Day. The department will be providing licorice on April 11 (April 12 is a Saturday). The handout location is to be determined. |ECHO

FINANCE

FINANCIAL CORNER: HOW TO CANCEL CD-28 AFTER IT'S SENT

Written by Kurtis Thompson, Staff Writer

When an AIC sends a CD-28 to the Business Service Office for processing, it is still possible to cancel or recall the request even if the check has been completed by Central Trust.

According to EOCI's Accounting Technician Susan VanEpps, the

"Business Office can return a CD-28/envelope that is still on [her] desk."

If the person who sent the request contacts VanEpps prior to the processing of the CD-28, she will return the form and attached envelope to the AIC. VanEpps said the "Business Office

sends approved outgoing CD-28s every two weeks to Salem Central Trust for final review and processing."

If the CD-28 was already sent to Central Trust, then the requestor will have to follow a different process to

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cancel their request. VanEpps said, “once a CD-28/envelope has been mailed to Salem Central Trust, AICs must pay a \$10.00 fee, and complete the stop payment form to halt the processing of a check. This is exactly like out in the community.”

VanEpps also suggested to “wait three months from the transaction date on your free monthly statement to see if the recipient has received your envelope. This gives the U.S. Postal Service time to deliver and return mail if undeliverable.”

She added, “[The] Business Office will send you a stop payment form if you want to fill out and pay the stop fee. If your envelope is not delivered by USPS and the envelope returned to EOCI, then the Business Office will return the undelivered envelope to you with the reason why it was undeliverable.”



Jo Panuwat D/Shutterstock

It is also possible to wait for the check to expire. VanEpps said checks have a “two-year expiration” and “Salem Central Trust runs a report of

all checks not cashed 30 months after the transaction date and Central Trust will automatically return monies to an AIC trust account.” |ECHO

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

SLEEPING FOR HEALTH IN THE CARCERAL SETTING

Recommendations for Getting a Better Rest

Written by Kurtis Thompson, Staff Writer

Sleep psychologist Dr. Daniel Jin Blum suggests methods for improving sleep that can be applied to the carceral setting.

Blum said sleep is so impactful that professionals were able to significantly reduce violence at a youth facility’s high security unit simply by improving their sleep health. These same methods work for adults, too.

His recommendations include more than just a bedtime routine. He said that daily habits of exercise are important as well.

The body has multiple circadian clocks, with the primary one residing in the brain. Blum said there are second-

dary clocks located within muscles, and their activation has an impact on the setting of the primary clock.

To synchronize biological clocks, Blum said it is important to do five to 10 minutes of moderate exercise after waking, thus setting the awake phase.

He also said that 10 minutes of moderate exercise in the afternoon and evening helps set the circadian rhythm by increasing core temperature. This is a stark difference from the body’s sleep phase temperature, which is lowest two to three hours before waking.

According to Blum, the difference helps the body determine its sleep phase.

Blum said sleeping areas should be

kept as clean, quiet, cool, dark and comfortable as possible, and lounging or work activities should be done anywhere else but in bed.

He suggested sticking to a schedule and getting between seven to nine hours of sleep, including a half hour of getting into bed with no television or videogames at that time. Screen time during the evening hours makes it more difficult to sleep.

Blum also recommended cleansing breathing, taking in slow and deep breaths through the nose, filling the lungs, and slowly out through the nose, counting to four until the lungs are empty. |ECHO

RELIGIOUS EVENTS

RAMADAN CONCLUDES IN MARCH

A Brief Introduction to a Muslim Tradition

Written by Jacob Harper, Correspondent

Across the planet there are people who fast, pray, reflect and celebrate their community. For approximately 30 days, crescent moon (or *hilāl*) to crescent moon, during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar Ramadan is observed. Ramadan commemorates the first revelation of the Prophet Muhammad and is regarded as one of five “pillars” of Islam.

Fasting from dawn to sunset is required for all healthy adult Muslims. The pre-dawn meal is referred to as *suhur* and the nightly feast after the sun has set completely is called *iftar*. It is commonly believed that the spiritual rewards are multiplied during Ramadan. From sunrise to sunset abstinence is required from food, drink, tobacco,

sexual behavior and vices of any sort. Replacing food, drink and the assorted vices is prayer and deliberate study of the Quran, a holy book of the Islamic faith.

Ramadan is the month the Quran is believed to have been revealed as guide for humanity to delineate the difference between right and wrong. There is also a provision for the ill or for those on a journey to fast and honor the holiday for an equal number of days after Ramadan has occurred. It is during Ramadan that the scriptures were revealed, encompassing the scrolls of Abraham, Torah, Psalms, Gospel and Quran.

During Ramadan, Muslims zealously engage in prayer, acts of charity

and self-discipline. Fasting is intended to redirect the heart and cleanse it of harmful impurities. A principle of Ramadan is for Muslims to practice acts of generosity, charity, sacrifice and empathy for the less fortunate.

Typical dishes served for *iftar* include stewed lamb with wheat berries, lamb kebabs with grilled vegetables and roasted chicken with chickpeas and rice pilaf. Desserts include baklava, lokma or knafeh. The community aspect of *iftar* has been celebrated by banquets involving hundreds or even thousands of people at Mosques across the globe, such as the Sheik Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi located in the United Arab Emirates.

Exempt from the rigors of fasting are pregnant women, the severely ill, women who are menstruating or breastfeeding. Those exempted are considered obligated to take part in the tradition at a later date. |ECHO

RUSSIAN BAPTIST CONCERT

Group Performs First Concert in Prison Setting on March 3

Written by Jacob Harper, Correspondent

Folk music from the Russian region emanated from the EOCI chapel on March 3, 2025. Performing the cultural treat was the youth team of the Russian Baptist group, 15 young adults who sang and played for the congregation with two older advisors. There was a selection of 11 songs with four instruments and three speakers.

This was their debut in a prison setting, having practiced together and gone to conferences but not performed previously as a group.

The youth team for the Russian Baptist organization was formed of members primarily in the Vancouver, Washington area. The church has a rotating schedule of volunteers from Portland, Vancouver, Salem, Seattle, Tri-cities and Walla-Walla, each community

sending people to minister at EOCI either as a group or individually, representing the church at large.

After two months’ practice to prepare, the group was excited to be able to come into the facility and minister to AICs and remarked on how encouraged they were by seeing the congregation bring bibles with them to follow along.

“This was way better than I thought it would be,” said vocalist Benjamin Goldinov.

The performance was a balance of musical numbers broken up by spiritual messages relying on biblical reference.

Opening the music was Maskim Tkachenko, playing “Deeper Than the Oceans and the Seas” supported by the harmonies of choir, clarinet, piano,

violin and dobra.

The dombra is a three stringed instrument that is played much like a mandolin, rapidly strummed to create a rhythmic melody.

The sermons delivered by the youth were about the grace of God. They illustrated grace with the story of Zacchaeus from Luke 19, God’s plan for hope and a future from Jeremiah 29:11 and the story of Joseph beginning in Genesis 37.

The first focused on how God’s grace for a sinful man can transform a life, the second provided a prophetic intent to the plans that God can have for them and that he does not want to hurt them, and the last sermon about a

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boy thrown into slavery by his own family later becoming the second most powerful man in Egypt.

He faced brothers who sold him to slavery and forgave them, gifting them with a bountiful life. The final message entailed the importance of faith.

“We are happy to see people who

have the courage to believe,” said Mikhael Shutkin, who - with his brother Petyr - had immigrated to America at the age of 10 from the Kursk region, which is currently embroiled in the war between Ukraine and Russia.

Two of the performers had a message for the EOCI population.

Lesia Kotliarova, originally from Ukraine and most recently from Vancouver said, “If you want to change, start from within God is everything.”

Emelia Gavrilita emphatically stated that “God loves all of you. Pray for what you want, God loves you.” | ECHO

NEWS YOU CAN USE

FULLY LOADED, SLOW RELEASE

Breaking Down Nintendo Switch Game Orders

Written by Kurtis Thompson, Staff Writer

Quick turnaround times are rare for Nintendo Switch-related orders, which has often led to people wondering if their request was somehow lost.

To demystify the long waits, J. Stewart from IWP and Fully Loaded Electronics’ customer service department explained their procedures in the ordering process.

When IWP receives a Switch order, staff check those forms for several things. They make sure the requesting AIC is incentive level three, has space for any requested games within the 20-game limit, the forms have the correct selections and dollar amount, the forms are both stamped by a unit officer and signed by the person making the request, and the AIC has funds available for the request.

Once IWP has confirmed the Switch order, they send the request to Salem Central Trust where all AIC trust accounts are processed.

If the AIC account has sufficient funds available, Central Trust will send

a check and the order to Fully Loaded Electronics.

According to FLE’s customer service department, an AIC’s order and payment check arrive in the same envelope and orders are generally processed the day they are received. However, all orders are placed on a six to eight-week processing window even if items are currently in stock.

The FLE representative said they processes orders across the United States for correctional facilities, hospitals, libraries and more. The six to eight-week standard processing gives the company time to complete all the orders across the nation equally.

Stewart said if an order takes longer than eight weeks, AICs can send a kyle to IWP requesting an update. Staff will check with Central Trust to see if an order was somehow disrupted during processing.

She said orders being lost or processed incorrectly are exceedingly rare, and she verifies any late orders.



Stewart added that her department is no longer the middle-man between AICs and FLE. IWP will still be processing all Switch-related orders, but moving forward AICs will have to contact FLE directly for any questions, complaints or troubleshooting.

Fully Loaded Electronics is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific time and can be contacted at the following;

Fully Loaded Electronics
2710 Colby Avenue
Everett, WA 98201

Phone: 425-582-3173
Email: customer-care@fullyloadedelectronics.com
| ECHO

Help Shape the Content of The Echo

For AICs: If you have a story you think should be covered in The Echo, send a communication form to IWP and let us know. The Echo is always looking for new and interesting story ideas.

For Staff: Have an idea for a story? Have a program or class that is graduating? Are you implementing a new process or policy in your area? Send an email to Ray Peters or J. Stewart.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



“After I survived cancer, they told me it was going to come back. My mom told me just to live life, to live as full as I can.”

Photos by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Artist Andrew Slover poses for a photo on March 25, 2025. Slover, who survived at age 12, tries to live life to the fullest, putting effort into things that he values, such as artwork.

SKATING ON ICE

Artist Spotlight with Andrew Slover

Written by Kurtis Thompson, Staff Writer

Andrew Slover spends his time skating on ice. The boundaries of his arena depend on the performance. When he skids over a thin surface of translucent white, the colors of his presentation spread out like paint. But this is not ice skating. It's colored pencil art, and skating on ice is a term he uses to describe one of his shading and blending techniques.

Slover, 34, is a cancer survivor and has been incarcerated since 2015. He has lived at Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Oregon State Correctional Institution and finally EOCL.

Over the past seven years, he has been developing his artistic skills in colored pencil. His art looks like high quality tattoos, where color and form flow together to create an evocative expression.

“It's almost like painting,” he said.

It may sound strange to compare solid pencil colors to liquid paint, but when layered correctly the colors can be pushed around in a similar way.

Slover said he layers his colors just as he would in tattooing, going from dark to light. Once he has applied a

layer, he will then go over it with white, creating the metaphoric ice.

The next step he calls “skating on ice,” which is putting the next layer of pencil on top of the white and then working the color like tacky liquid.

“Once the white is on there, when you lay the next layer, it's like paint,” Slover said. “It's so easy, it just lays on there and then you're able to manipulate the colors.”

A great example is the piece he did of a Spartan with soldiers reflected in the man's steel helmet. A portion down at the bottom of the helmet used to be all black, but using his layering technique, he was able to pull much of the black upwards and spread it out with a dusk rose color, creating a shading and blending effect.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



Photos by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Andrew Slover's art displayed on a table. He said once he has applied a layer, he will then go over it with white, creating the metaphoric ice.

He said his skills are an amalgam of experience from himself and others. In one example, he credits a woman who corresponds with him through the Write a Prisoner pen pal organization.

"I wouldn't be the artist I am today without people," he said. "I met Jozette through Write a Prisoner, and she's the one who opened me up to different artists. She would send challenges to me."

His friend would send him projects that would challenge Slover, like recreating something in all blue, or doing a pastel project using his non-dominant left hand.

He said life experiences also had a significant influence on him pursuing art. One incredible story is how he survived cancer at the age of 12 and had to go through two years of treatment and surgery.

In 2002, the then twelve-year-old Slover skated down the brightly lit hallways of Portland's Legacy hospital on slippers issued to patients during their stay.

The sterile smell of antiseptic in the air had blown past his face, and he smiled at nurses in scrubs and doctors in medical coats as he entertained himself. He said that to the onlooker, he

appeared to be like any other kid – carefree, full of energy and playful humor.

What the onlooker could not see was the tumor growing inside Slover's adolescent body, the size of a cantaloupe, stuck between his heart and lungs.

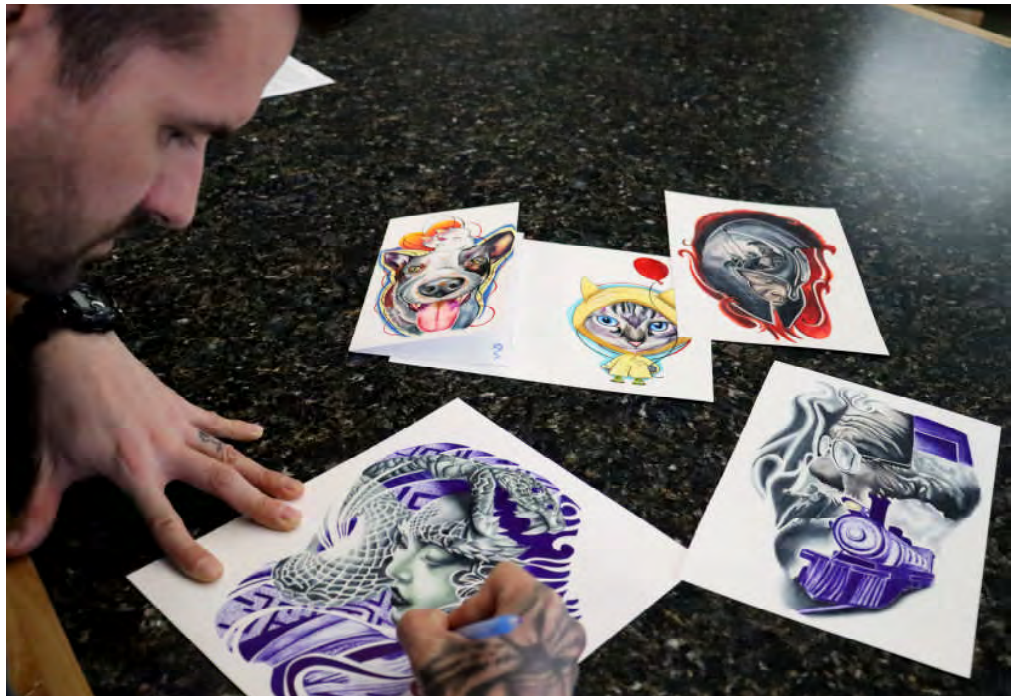
The skills of the doctors and technologies of the times saved him, and after two years that included surgery, chemotherapy and recuperation, Slover walked away with his life. But there was a caveat.

"After I survived cancer, they told me it was going to come back," he said. "My mom told me just to live life, to live as full as I can."

Slover said he took that to heart and aimed to do the things that made him happy.

One thing that made him happy was art – something that had many forms and he has carried into his current life.

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Photos by Phillip Luna/The Echo

Andrew Slover working on a piece on March 25, 2025. He credits the influence of other artists. "I wouldn't be the artist I am today without people," he said.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

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Prior to incarceration, his choice of artistic expressions was in wood crafts and setting up choreographed skateboarding tricks for cameras.

Now he looks for what wows people, and aims to take those impacts and incorporate them into his own unique expressions.

Slover looks forward to release in 2038, if it takes that long.

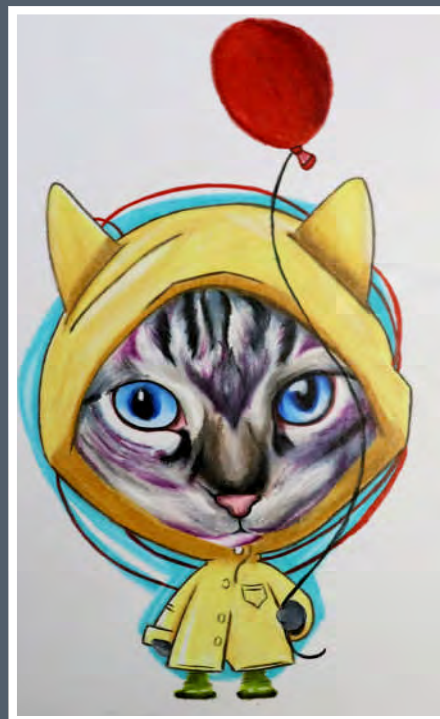
He currently has a post-conviction release case championed by the Innocence Project to get him out ten years earlier.

He said he is nervous about the up-

coming hearing, as many would be, but he is unusually optimistic about his time in prison.

“I didn’t get good time,” Slover said, “but I’m having a good time. I think it’s really how you look at things.”

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Andrew Slover's Art

Top left: Slover did the dog and bug-eyed gerbil just to mix things up with splashes of color. He said the gerbil made him laugh, so he decided to include it in his drawing

Top middle: The old train conductor is inspired by a tattoo. The side profile of a man smoking and the train shows a combination of hard lines in ink and wispy graphite.

Top right: The snake with woman amalgam was inspired by a tattoo. It has an Asian origin, and the original tattoo was done with a single needle by hand.

Bottom left: The Spartan had a mistake in the dark shading at the bottom of the helmet that was corrected using Slover's skating on ice technique

Bottom middle: The disproportionate anthropomorphic cat is a reimagining of the children from the film "It," complete with yellow raincoat and red balloon.