

# THE ECHO

TEXAS PRISON NEWS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER • 2023

## OVERCOMING BOUNDARIES

Mountain View Unit Hosts  
Braille Conference



Frequently Asked  
Questions:  
Parole

The Cancer  
Project:  
Lung Cancer

Family Literacy:  
Building Better  
Bonds

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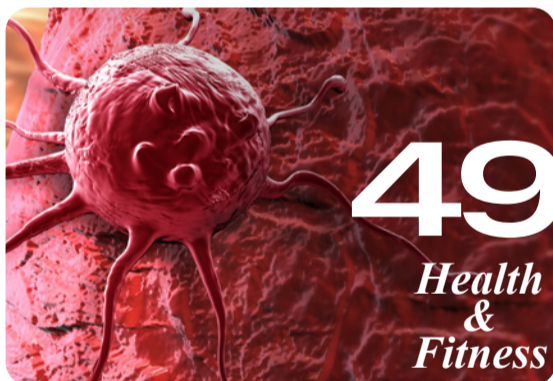
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# THE ECHO

## MANAGEMENT

**Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**  
*Superintendent*

**Bambi Kiser**  
*Managing Editor*

## STAFF

**Todd R. Carman**  
**William E. Hill**

**Fabian W. Flores**  
**William E. Hill**

**Elkanah E. Hendrix**  
**Edgar A. Sazo**

## CONTRIBUTORS

Sergio D. Alvarez—Ramsey Unit  
Jesse Castillo—Huntsville Unit  
Laura Anne Cloy—Henley State Jail  
Ruben Constante Jr.—Released  
Ashley Dack—Mountain View Unit  
Greg Freeman—Allred Unit  
Robert Fridell—Roach Unit  
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Brandon Hayes—Wynne Unit  
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Daniel P. Meehan—Connally Unit  
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Andrew R. Reynolds—Wynne Unit  
Bruce Ruckman—Duncan Unit  
Tim G. Scoggin—Stiles Unit  
Vincent Smith—Wynne Unit  
Misty Weaver—Mountain View Unit  
Michael Wiese—Luther Unit

## UNIT REPORTERS

Allred Unit—Kenneth Gardner  
Beto Unit—Quincy Patterson  
Boyd Unit—Michael Deen  
Clemens Unit—Lawrence Burks Jr.  
Clements Unit—Paul Gillette  
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**To the editor,**

Hi! A while back I submitted a pen-and-colored-pencils drawing on a handkerchief of a blue-eyed young woman, and yesterday I saw it in The ECHO. I didn't even leave any info or even a title. Y'all titled it "Young Woman." There were red angel wings and her septum had a ring in it. I cannot believe it was published. Thank you lots. It looks especially wonderful on the tablet in color. Thank you again.

**Laura Ann DeLaCruz**  
**Crain Unit**

**To the reader,**

*It gives us tremendous pride to share the remarkable art and talents of our readers. One of the best parts of offering The ECHO is its new digital format on the tablets is the opportunity to let you see the actual color version of art, photos and graphics. In addition, readers outside of TDCJ who cannot access the tablets may now view The ECHO in color on the Windham School District web site: [www.wsdtx.org](http://www.wsdtx.org). Please spread the word! We are happy you were able to see your original art on the tablet. Thank you for writing to The ECHO.*

**To the editor,**

I'm requesting to be a unit reporter for The ECHO. As far as I know, there is not one assigned here at the Murray Unit. If you would let me know what you are looking for, I will let you know if I can provide that. I love writing; I write in church all the time. I help some of my fellow residents with their writing, and I ghost write for some outside community associates. I enjoy it. Please respond to my letter and let me know if you are interested in me writing or not. Thank you for your time.

**Gloria Aiken,**  
**Murray Unit**

**To the reader,**

*Our records show that Brenda Williams is the reporter for your unit. However, you don't need to be a unit reporter to send us material for consideration. Send us your work! It can be verified and reviewed like other pieces. We are always looking to add content from our readers. Thank you for writing — we look forward to hearing from you!*





### **To the editor,**

The Recovery House came to the Michael Unit in 2022. I watched a friend of mine change from a drug dealer to a productive citizen of the resident population — and so did 46 other men who are now mentors. These men are serious about the program, and there is no “fake it until you make it.” It is about community, and holding yourself and each other accountable. It is a program for change.

The idea that we are a community brings back the concept of civilization. The 48 men who participated in the program are now teaching 48 other men the values of recovery, courage, perseverance, integrity and commitment. There are two sections on four building, and the plan is to have three sections on D-pod with men who have returned to civility, productivity and respect for ourselves and this community. The progress should extend to every section and rebuild an entire population. This program could be adopted on all the units. Most of the mentors have life sentences or life without parole.

We are grateful for the mentors and facilitators, along with the senior warden and the unit’s chief of classification. We’re all in this change together.

**Sylvester G. McGee**

**Michaels Unit**

### **To the reader,**

*Thank you for sharing your experience with the Recovery House program. This is one of the many activities available to the TDCJ population to help them better themselves. Telling us about the lifers in the program shows that individuals can have purpose and a better quality of life despite having long sentences. Thank you for writing!*

### **To the editor,**

Have you ever had that one moment when life gives you a wake-up call? On the Powledge Unit, many of us received that call with the loss of Mr. T. Teetz, the Trinity Valley Community College (TVCC) Auto Body instructor who passed away in August. The news spread through the small unit like a wildfire and caused those who knew him take a step back. I know because I was one of them; I am the clerk in the Auto Body class. When I heard the news, I cried, and I don’t care what anybody thinks about it. There are not many men on this unit whom Mr. Teetz did not impact. From his time as a supervisor in Texas Correctional Industries Metal Fab to teaching auto body classes, he tried to make all of us better men than we were when we entered his class. He taught us skills like how to combine two halves of cars into one solid product, or how to turn those old yellowed headlights to look brand new with a little wet sanding and buffing. Who ever thought about welding plastic? Mr. Teetz did, and he showed us how to do it. His passion for the profession showed in his willingness to pass on long forgotten tricks of the trade. He was never too busy to help one of his students; no one will fill his shoes. He taught us to be kind, be loving and be the best person you can be.

**M. Mecca**

**Powledge Unit**

### **To the reader,**

*We are very sorry to hear of the loss of this great instructor, man and mentor. As a correctional educator, Mr. Teetz served with both the Windham School District (WSD) and TVCC. His positive influence has been far-reaching, and we know you were fortunate to work with and learn from him. Thank you for writing to share this tribute.*

*We also have experienced the recent loss of Mr. B. Reilly, an influential and inspiring WSD literacy instructor at the Wynne campus. His genuine devotion to student success and his gift for encouraging students and staff to succeed in lessons and life will not be forgotten. His loss, too, brought tears to his students and coworkers. His remarkable influence rested proudly on the shoulders of each of his students who recently graduated with a High School Equivalency certificate. We are blessed to have these types of people teaching students; these teachers will not be forgotten.*



---

**Dear Darby,**

I got some things worth saying. First, stop saving seats in the dayroom. You are in prison and that spot was there when you got here and it will be there when you are gone. Just because you place your stuff on it does not make it yours. Second, to that guy that thinks he knows everything about every team in every sport and is always talking loud to the sports TV on behalf of everyone else: please take a day off. Third, to the people that believe that they have to throw their food tray in the scullery window — go easy on those guys. It's already bad enough they are stuck in the kitchen. The last thing they need is your leftovers on them. Four, to that guy that always makes a cake and puts it on display just to say, "It's not for sale," grow up. We can see you. Darb, keep doing what you are doing. I enjoy reading your section of the paper.

**Real Whitfield**  
**Johnston Unit**

**Dear Real,**

*You really had some stuff on your chest, didn't you? Just so you know, there's always going to be things you don't like or agree with in life. Saving seats is against the rules, but sometimes people do it anyway. Some people get self-validation by sharing their opinion about everything. It can be annoying, but ultimately isn't a big deal. People showing off their culinary creations are no different than someone showing off their artwork — they just want appreciation for their creation. And yes, selling the cake is also against the rules—but let them eat cake! You've got a valid gripe about the lack of consideration for people with less than glamorous jobs, though. Things would go better if folks would follow the "golden rule" of treating others the way you want to be treated. Anyway, thanks for writing ol' Darb and unloading — I hope the rest of your day goes okay!*

---

**Dear Darby,**

I find myself writing more and more. My creativity wants to explore. My belief is that I have much more in store. My thoughts gather and flow out of mind's door. The poem below has wisdom galore.

**Hold Still**

Untamed thoughts burst forth,  
earthly words are jumbled.  
Countless voices loudly speaking,  
causing mankind to rumble.  
Passing through the gate,  
many will tumble.  
My tongue, hold still,  
grace me to humble.  
Thy loose lips,  
to silence, not mumble.  
Lord, let not this fumble.  
Pick me up when I stumble.

**Richard Gawlik**  
**Stephenson Unit**

**Dear Richard,**

*Whether you know it, you are clearly a poet! This work you sent, has my heart rent, and these images move my soul. It's caused me to stop, consider my lot, and look at life as a whole.*



**Dear Darby,**

Hello, I've been down for a little more than six years, and I have become a fan of The ECHO. One thing that I have noticed is that you have a great habit of pointing people in the right direction. I am in dire need of your help. I have lost contact with my Nana and uncle, both of whom mean the world to me. The last letter I received from them was in 2019 in which they said they could not afford the bills on their home, and I have been trying to find them ever since. This brings me to the Wizard of The ECHO. Can you direct me to an organization that can help me reunite with my family? Help me Darby Wan Kenobi, you are my only hope. And if it's not too much, can you send me the address to every known business that sends books to prisoners, please.

**Jimmie "Twitch" Locke  
McConnell Unit**

**Dear Twitch,**

*Sorry, Bud, but this one's beyond my broad capabilities. Your unit of assignment and TDCJ number is available to those on the outside. Those on the inside needing to find folks on the outside have more of a challenge. Other than friends and family, I'm not sure how one would go about getting in contact with someone. I wish you luck in finding your loved ones!*

**Dear Darby,**

Thanks for publishing The ECHO for us. I've been reading it for 16 years. I always look forward to the NFL schedule, especially the ones for the Dallas Cowboys and Houston Texans. There seems to be some problems with the team schedules and road games. First, you have the Cowboys playing 11 road games. The game with Arizona, San Francisco and Los Angeles Chargers do not match those other teams' schedules. The schedule for the Kansas City Chiefs do not show them playing the Cowboys at all. I always cross-reference the schedule for its accuracy, times and channels. Would you please consider correcting it if possible?

**Alex  
Pack Unit**

**Dear Alex,**

*Yeah, about that... We realized that the schedule we initially published contained a few errors, so we went through the schedule line-by-line and made corrections. We republished the corrected schedule in the August issue. We apologize for any confusion, anger, wailing and gnashing of teeth resulted from this problem. We will also be publishing the schedule throughout the football season on the digital tablet version with the wins and losses of each team listed. Of course, that will be bringing a different round of wailing and gnashing of teeth — especially if them 'Boys have more games like the one against the 49ers. Losing by 32 points?! Brutal.*



**Dear Darby,**

What's up with the tablet version of The ECHO?! I went to the FYI app and tried to open an issue, and it would never open. What's the deal? You gotta' make it better, Darb. And are we still going to get printed versions of the newspaper? Inquiring minds want to know!

**A Frustrated Reader  
Stiles Unit****Dear Frustrated,**

*Okay, okay! We had a few issues with learning to build the first digital issue. BUT NOW GO LOOK! We adjusted those settings and had the August version reloaded on the FYI App in a new, improved set-up, and it worked better. We will continue to tweak the settings over time to make the tablet version of The ECHO a great experience for readers. You do deserve our best — always! Sorry for any frustration and inconvenience you experienced while we got the bugs and gremlins worked out. A paper version is still being printed in a reduced quantity and it should be distributed by your Windham campus library. Please contact your Windham School District principal if you need assistance accessing the paper copies of The ECHO. And of course, the colored digital magazine-style is now literally at your fingertips — on the tablet! So — while I'm talkin' about digital, spread the word: a digital version of The ECHO is available to those in the community, for free. All they have to do is go to the Windham website at [www.wsdtx.org](http://www.wsdtx.org) and go to the bottom of the home page — they'll see a "keeping up with the ECHO" tab there. Your loved ones can click on that button and see the digital version in all its colorful glory! It's a flipbook and easy to view. Oh, one of The ECHO graphics guys wanted me to let y'all know that they set up the digital issue to be best seen LONGWAYS — where the blue light is on the lower left corner when you're holding it. Try that and enjoy; thanks for the critique! Glad you're payin' attention!*

**Dear Darby,**

I'm a long-time reader and first-time writer. I have a question that maybe you can help me with. I have lost contact with everyone on the outside, and I've been looking into finding a pen pal for a few years now. I was wondering if you could maybe point me in the right direction. Do you know of any pen pal services for residents that do not cost anything? I would really appreciate it if you could help me out, and I'm pretty sure this would help the ones going through it and need a friend. Thank you for your time.

**Bryan Miller****Dominguez State Jail****Dear Bryan,**

*Thanks for the readin' — and now the writin'! Unfortunately, we do not have any references for pen pal services, paid or otherwise. There is a place, Inside Books Project, that lists some pen pal services (along with a lot of other stuff), but we cannot vouch for the services they reference. Instead of focusin' on folks on the outside, why not devote your energy to improvin' yourself while you're in here? Contact your unit's education department and chaplaincy to see what's available to you. Psychological services, part of the medical department, also offers classes like anger, stress and depression management on many units. I think you'd be surprised at what's out there, in here. However, if you really want to contact the Inside Books Project about their resource guide, you can write to them at:*

**Inside Books Project  
ATTN: Resource Guide  
12th Street Books  
827 W 12th St.  
Austin, TX 78701**



# Mission Statement

Keith Randall

Wynne Unit

Writing a mission statement involves defining the goals we would like to accomplish and the identity to which we aspire. Many businesses and organizations use mission statements for guidelines in order to help solidify their goals and their culture. Some even go so far as to include it in their official Code of Ethics. Mission statements, however, don't belong to the business world alone.

As individuals, we have our own goals, values and guidelines to live by — the missions we would like to complete and the manner in which we would like to complete them.

The first time I heard about mission statements was when I read the book “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,” by Stephen Covey. I figured if I wanted to be “highly effective,” then I would need to write my own mission statement.

Here is what I wrote. While it may seem like a lot to read — compared to other examples I have seen at least — I wrote it that way for a reason. I set the bar high so I will be forced to reach higher and higher — so I would be challenged by my own personal goals. I did this because I know that if I set the bar low, then I would end up accomplishing far

less than I am capable of.

I encourage anyone to write their own mission statement. Make it personal. Make it mean something to you. You can use mine as an example or pick a style that suits you. Every now and then I reread my mission statement to ensure I am living up to my own standards. I have my mission statement written in ink so I can look back over it from time to time to remind myself of my mission.

Good luck on your journey. Make a statement of your mission in life and set the bar high.

*As a man, I will travel down whatever path life takes me with my head held high. I will prove my strength by taking on the weight of any given task and I will be successful at completing these tasks to the best of my ability. If I ever fail, I will use my failures as energy to help me of strive to do, and be, better.*

*As a Leader, I will prove myself through my actions and guide my peers in the direction of success. I will be proactive rather than reactive in all circumstances. I will walk with faith and wisdom when it comes to traveling down new paths to be certain I lead my*

*peers to a secure destination. I will first seek to understand, then to be understood.*

*As a Mentor, I will provide younger individuals with the knowledge needed to take life as it comes and share wisdom from experience for support rather than competition. I will mentor either one-on-one or to a group or groups of people who are willing to learn. In order to not halt the growth and success of my mentorship, I will not waste valuable time on individuals who are unwilling to learn. Mentoring time will be used for those who are seeking a mentor and also have the will to be mentored.*

*As a Christian, I will try my best to serve the Lord by being a positive influence on those around me. I will make a habit of praying to God every day and I will address my prayers in Jesus' name. I will be involved with the Church and volunteer at least once a week in order to be of help in whatever matter necessary.*

*As a Father, I will love and cherish my children. I will provide for their every need and discipline them to teach them to be well-behaved young individuals. Starting at their pre-teen years and during their teenage years, I will teach them the importance of love, work, and responsibility. It will be my duty to ensure that all my kids grow up*

*to be motivated, principle-centered men and women.*

*As a Husband, I will honor my wife and her values and respect her desires and hobbies. I will make an effort to spend quality time with the family aside from career and other activities. My wife will be the only woman with whom I will share myself. I will ensure that she has my full support physically, mentally, spiritually, socially and emotionally. I will have her full support. I will not allow my in-laws to be my enemy nor will I let their behavior, actions, or feelings effect my relationship with my wife. I will make an effort to bond with her family, as well connect her with my family.*

*As an Employee, I will prove my ability to work hard through my skills and willingness to learn. I will show leadership in all departments of my job company in order to be promoted and to support my employer. I will try my best to get along with all other employees to ensure a positive work environment. I will teach other employees the importance of leadership and management through words as well as actions.*

*These statements made in this Mission Statement are ones I pledge to stand by starting on this day through the rest of my natural life.●*

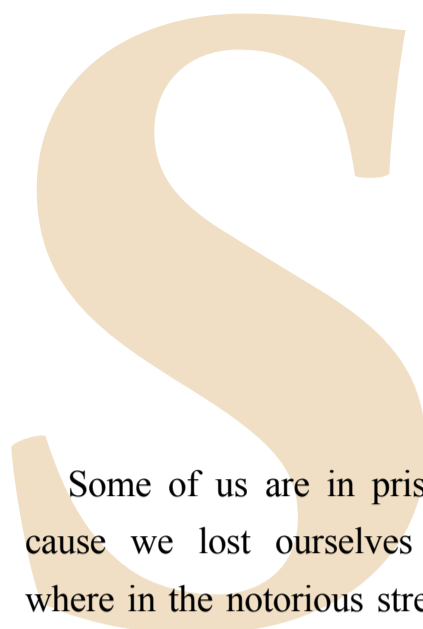
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**As individuals, we have our own goals, values and guidelines to live by — the missions we would like to complete and the manner in which we would like to complete them.**

# The Human Compass

Kevin Long

Memorial Unit



Some of us are in prison because we lost ourselves somewhere in the notorious street life; indulging in the popular vices such as money, sex and drug addiction. For some, prison has become a safe haven protecting them from further harming themselves. For others, they discovered they fit right in with like-minded people; continuing in harming others. From the rough terrain of the street life into the wilderness called prison, the misguided find themselves wandering aimlessly through life, becoming lost in the process.

For those of us who claim to have “been there and done that” when you were a lost boy I’m sure your path to perdition entailed a person or two who cared enough to intervene. Many lives have been impacted by those who seen potential in someone in need of a nudge in the right direction. We call these individuals who seem to take notice when no one else cares the “human compasses.” The human compass not only brings new meaning to a lost person’s life but creates an environment where broken relationships may find healing as well.

In a closed off environment such as prison we find ourselves

on the spectator’s end of another person’s torment. To what end do we find ourselves living up to the potential someone once saw in us? Are we paying our debt forward by reaching out to those who are in obvious turmoil, or are we thanking God that is not us anymore? Although we are all guilty of being judgmental at one point or another, our mistakes give room for improvement. Choose today to be a light in the darkness, to guide those in need of direction. Choose today to be a human compass. ●

“

**From the rough terrain of the street life into the wilderness called prison, the misguided find themselves wandering aimlessly through life...**

# Diggers and Grinders

Brandon Hayes

Contributing Writer, Wynne Unit

# T

The nature of doing time is different for many of us. We have dissimilar circumstances in most cases. We also have different temperaments, personalities and, in some respects, custody levels. The way we approach the mountain of doing time may be unique for some, but one thing is for certain, a mountain stands before us all. How do you go about climbing your mountain of time? I had a Mt. Everest-type experience when I took in the scope of my sentence. Notwithstanding, with the valley of restrictive housing behind me, I had to chart out how I was going to go about scaling my mountain. In case you haven't noticed, some people seem to have this 'doing time' stuff down to a science. This science is steeped in a healthy, balanced routine, and just like in restrictive housing, a steady supply of earplugs. Not to make light of a difficult life hurdle, but doing time can present us with any manner of situations to leave us flat — or in a hole.

The secret to doing time is finding a healthy routine and sticking to it. Having a job or some type of responsibility makes this unquestionably that much easier and gives us some-

thing to do. Finding a healthy routine requires a fair amount of digging, especially when we have spent 30-plus years burying ourselves in garbage. A major springboard to my personal routine is to rise one-and-a-half hours early to allow myself time to pray/study and thoroughly caffeinate myself. This routine took a great deal of digging, because who doesn't like sleeping in the wee hours of the morning? A routine born out of a healthy personal sacrifice is one that can be described as being "dug out." Some routines only require coffee and Judge Judy, and this can no doubt be an overly sour rut to fall into.

Carving out a healthy routine requires finding your groove and sticking to it. I have friends that are craft shop, study, workout and book warriors. All of these are routines that keep a mind focused and perpetually doing something. Are you doing something?

## ***FINDING YOUR GROOVE***

There are many shades of newness upon arriving at a new unit. These include new people, new procedures and an overall new experience. This can be daunting even for someone who

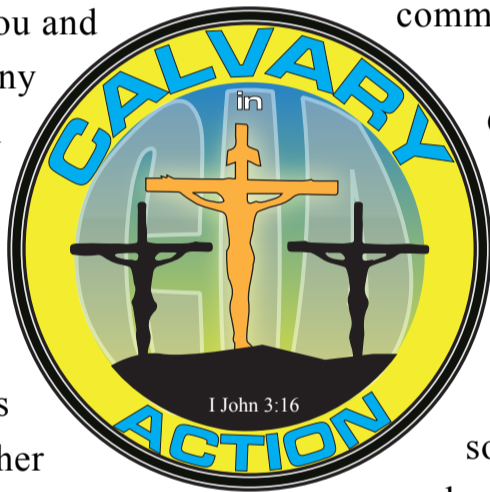
has been down here for a while. Setting yourself a routine allows you to be your best at any given time, and keeps your ducks in a row. Setting up a small routine of essential priorities keeps you grounded in an otherwise new environment. Finding your groove and sticking to it can easily turn into digging yourself a rut. A rut is anything that takes the wind out of your sails. A never-ending pile of cheese puffs can become a rut for me. If I keep digging this rut, I can be in a hole of bad health, bad knees and orange fingers to boot. Finding your groove is all about finding what works for you and

sticking it out. Any routine-minded person will no doubt be faced with occasional circumstances where a hitch gets thrown in his/her “get along.” Becoming too comfortable in our routines has the potential to be mistakenly labeled as “institutionalized.” There is never too much of a good thing in prison. A healthy routine that propels you forward while stimulating your personal growth can be very satisfying.

**GRINDING**

While traveling this path of digging and grinding, there will be days when we “ain’t feeling it.” When excuses start to pop up out of the woodwork, that’s when we “grind on.” Grinders will quell the echoing excuses and press in when the going

gets tough. My personal routine requires me getting up at 1:15 a.m. and likewise going to bed super-early. I am privileged to live in a dorm setting, and by the time I rise, there is already someone across the dorm getting his workout in. This guy has a thriving music ministry and a very packed schedule, and he doesn’t necessarily have time to always get a daytime workout in. Therefore, he gets it done in the wee hours of the morning. He is always doing something and is an inspiration to many, including myself. Grinding in here prepares us to grind in the community.



Guess what? Grinders almost always succeed. Anyone willing to forgo personal comfort and ease for the sake of personal growth and development is destined to grind anywhere they may be. One of my mentors speaks heavily on things being “between the ribcage,” meaning that some things take heart to accomplish. When you are digging out your routine and finding out what works for you, and someone kicks dirt on you — keep digging! When you aren’t feeling leg workout day — grind on! When the game is on but you need to study for tomorrow’s test — grind it out! If excuses start landing in your groove and start to make you waver — keep digging! What’s between your rib cage? ●

“  
The way we approach the mountain of doing time may be unique for some, but one thing is for certain, a mountain stands before us all.

# A Woman's Perspective

## The Mask

By Terena Willoughby - Marlin Unit

Let's talk about the mask that many of us wear. The mask that makes us look and act a certain way. You know, the mask!

Hidden behind the mask are mixed emotions and feelings, some that we may have never felt. I can't help the feelings of rejection, disappointment, fear, violation, sadness, disrespect, anger and so many more. Today, I would like to encourage you to take off your mask and stand up! Stand up in freedom — freedom to know it is okay for you to feel the way you do. Yes! It is okay.

But it is not okay to take it out on others around you, nor is it okay to act on those feelings. Feelings change every second, but the consequences last a life time. Feelings will have you trying to prove yourself to others when, in fact, they have on a mask and are trying to impress you.

So, take a stand and take off the mask! ●



“  
**Feelings  
 change every  
 second, but the  
 consequences  
 last a lifetime.**”



Change Agent Graduate  
Christopher LeBlue

# Coffee Bean Banter

By Edgar Arturo Sazo

**T**he Change Agent program is impacting the residents who take the course. It is creating coffee beans, and those residents are affecting the boiling water around them.

Christopher LeBlue, a recent graduate, speaks to The ECHO about some of his growth. LeBlue and Damon West were both on the Stiles Unit, made parole in 2015, went to the same pre-release program and have since reentered their communities.

LeBlue came back.

“The difference between Damon West, the author of the ‘Change Agent,’ and me, when we went home, was the mindset he had,” LeBlue says. “He had no more money or opportunities than I did. He used his time to become the best version of himself. I have since taken those [Change Agent] principles and values and implemented them in my own life,” LeBlue said.

After having this paradigm shift, the contrasts to his former way of life are striking. There was a time when LeBlue, who has a 60-year sentence, saw it as a forgone conclusion that he would always return on a parole violation. When West says he is coming back, there is a pointed difference: West is coming back to help. LeBlue manifested negativity into his own life. A successful reentry was simply inconceivable while maintaining his egg-like attitude. Change was on the horizon, and it was quickly approaching. LeBlue seemed to speak his return into existence, but today he speaks positivity into his life. He has had to deal with his fair share of naysayers and sometimes, they were people he thought were friends. He

advises avoiding the influence of negativity.

“Do not let another person dictate your worth or tell you what you can accomplish,” LeBlue says. “Today I choose to be the best version of myself. Tomorrow I am going to choose to be the best version of myself.”

LeBlue will have another chance to reenter society. He plans to be an example to others on how to approach negative circumstances with a positive perspective. Visibility will be key to being this example. Coming back into the system to speak to residents about his experiences is the way LeBlue envisions making his future contribution to helping other residents.

He says it may seem like everyone is talking about the limits on what is or is not possible, but the possibilities are endless.

“If the sky was the limit, why are there footprints on the moon?” he asks. ●

*Editor’s note: Coffee Bean Banter is a new feature designed to highlight the Change Agent program and its impact on the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) population. The message of the program is we can deal with our environment and circumstances in one of three ways. We can be like a carrot in boiling water by turning soft and weak, like an egg which becomes hard and unforgiving, or like a coffee bean, which instead of being changed by the boiling water, changes the water into coffee.*



# Lee College's Kitchen on Wheels Prepares Meals, Future Careers

William Hill - Staff Writer

# F

Food trucks and trailers are gradually taking their place as part of culinary arts training offered in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). No longer merely a trend or novelty, these mobile kitchens and eateries are offering residents the opportunity to manage or even own food service businesses in the future — and the list of potential successful locations may be limitless.

The Lee College Huntsville Center (LCHC) is one entity that has recently added a new component to its Advanced Culinary Arts program, catering to the growing food truck industry. For many people, their earliest experience with a food truck was running to the neighborhood ice cream truck as a child. However, today's food trucks cater to a much more discriminating clientele, offering a mélange of fares ranging from French fries to falafel and cupcakes to gourmet-flavored shaved ice.

"I tell my students their menu is determined by two things: the demographics of their location and prep time," Brian Hunziker, LCHC's Advanced Culinary Arts instructor, said. "You don't want your customers waiting any length of time for their food. This is a grab-and-go business."

LCHC hires industry leaders to teach its career and technical education courses. As a graduate of the Art Institute of Houston's Culinary Arts program and owner/operator of several restaurants, Hunziker brings the academic qualifications and hands-on experience necessary to be an LCHC instructor.

The Culinary Arts program is divided into two sections: basic and advanced. While it is not necessary to take both sections of the program to earn a certificate in Culinary Arts, students who are interested in earning an Associates of Applied Science degree must complete both portions.

The curriculum for the first portion of the program covers the

fundamentals of the food service industry, such as sanitation and safety, basic food preparation, baking, and intermediate food preparation. Student must also earn their ServSafe® certification for safe food service.

In the Advanced Culinary Arts program, students learn how to run what Hunziker describes as "the whole house." In addition to classes that focus on advanced food preparation, advanced pastry shop and American regional cuisine, students learn operation management strategies such as planning, scheduling, inventory and supply management, and quality-control techniques.

"Our students learn marketing strategies, sales control and purchasing, and management of supplies and inventories," Hunziker said. "In relation to the food truck, we also teach them how to make a business plan. If they later want to start their own food truck business in their community, they will

already know how to do it."

Food trucks and trailers are an alternative to setting up a traditional brick-and-mortar restaurant. The cost associated with starting up a food truck business can be considerably less than starting a restaurant. These startup costs are dependent

on what type of cuisine will be offered and the amount of equipment that is required to prepare it. The trailer that Lee College bought from FUD Trailer of America costs approximately \$45,000 fully loaded with a complete kitchen. Due to relatively small startup costs, a food truck offers returning residents an affordable entry into entrepreneurship.

"I tell my students that they need to have at least three times the price of the truck in the bank for startup," Hunziker said.

The entrepreneur's startup capital should include not only the price of a high-quality food truck or trailer, but also a reserve to cover expenses until the business begins to turn a profit. What new business owners often fail to do is pay themselves, Hunziker said. Failing to do this can result in both the business and the individual experiencing financial hardship.

A second advantage of this industry is that food trucks can



Lee College's Food Trailer on Display

go to where potential customers are located instead of waiting for consumers to come to them. Many municipalities have food truck parks in areas where people are known to congregate to eat.

“As with almost every business, the key to success is location, location, location,” Hunziker said. “You must know the demographics of the area you are planning to serve. High traffic locations in urban settings are highly valued locations, but many smaller cities have created food truck parks.”

One of the most important things for new business owners to know is that local laws affect businesses. Not only are there regulations that govern all retail businesses — there are rules specific to food trucks. For example, all food service businesses must have a permit from the local health department, but some municipalities regulate how much propane can be carried on a truck, how far away from the curb a truck must be, and even how close to a building one can park.

The integration of the food truck component into the Culinary Arts curriculum displays the commitment of TDCJ’s Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD) in providing training for TDCJ residents in trending industries. By searching job sites such as the Texas Workforce Commission and others, the RPD, along with its postsecondary education partners, finds emerging markets capable of generating a living wage for individuals reentering society.

“We look at various websites to see what jobs are trending at the time,” Associate Vice President Donna Zuniga of the LCHC. “The interesting thing about the food truck industry is that its growth rate increased by eight percent in 2021, and the field’s market size has consistently grown by 4.9 percent annually from 2018 to the present.”

However, learning a skill to earn a degree or certification is only the first step toward a viable career. Becoming proficient in any skill requires constant reinforcement through repetition. The more a person does something, the better they get at doing it; this is true whether the activity is welding, fixing a diesel engine or preparing timbales of finely minced meat cooked in a pastry shell.

“If a person has 20 or 30 years to do [on a sentence] and they earn a certification in a particular discipline, we [TDCJ] need to make sure they stay up to date on it,” RPD Division Deputy Director Pennie Kempt said. “If a person earns a certification, why aren’t they working in that field?”

This opportunity to work in food-service related fields is also being tied to LCHC culinary training. Students in this program can gain chef experience as LCHC’s food trailer serves as more than just a classroom. It is also a place for students to gain valuable hands-on experience preparing dishes for officers and other employees on the unit. Eventually the school would also like to be able to take the trailer to other nearby units and set up on those units to serve student-prepared food for staff.

Zuniga gave an example of how this chef training can be tied to

support of culinary program partners.

“To support Lee College’s partners in the TDCJ community, we would like to be able to go to a unit on Employee Appreciation Day and show staff what our students are capable of doing,” she said.

In addition to LCHC’s food truck program at the Wainwright Unit, Central Texas College will offer its own version of the program to residents on the Crain Unit in the coming months. Through the Windham School District, students can participate in a culinary program at the Travis State Jail using a food trailer. Plans are underway at Travis State Jail to embed an urban farming program in the culinary class. This will give students a “farm to table” experience, according to Windham Career and Technology Education Administrator Ted Watts.

In each instance, students are learning culinary skills, food service practices, and preparation for employment or business ownership at beginning and advanced education levels. Food trucks and trailers are an innovative addition to this training for residents of TDCJ.

*Editor’s Note: Articles about several new career and technical education courses available to TDCJ residents are planned for upcoming editions of The ECHO. ●*

### **New Reentry and Integration Division Hotline Assists Family Members With Reentry Questions**

The Reentry and Integration Division (RID) of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has implemented a hotline to assist family members with questions regarding a resident’s release. Reentry support specialists can answer releasing-related questions to include transportation upon release, location of release, special needs releases, etc. Staff can also assist with reentry-related concerns including providing information for resources and needs such as identification documents, community resources and employment. If a call is received that cannot be directly addressed by RID, calls will be connected to the appropriate department or division for assistance.

The hotline number for family members to use is (877)-887-6151. It will be open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. ●

# Windham Honors HSE Graduates, Inspiring Instructor

Elkanah E. Hendrix — Staff Writer

**W**indham School District's Wynne Campus recently celebrated its High School Equivalency (HSE) graduates while honoring one of the school's most dedicated teachers.

Principal Jason Evans opened the ceremony with a welcome, where he congratulated the graduates for accomplishing what he called "no small feat."

"Today we get to celebrate all the hard work and dedication you've shown in the classroom, gentlemen. Passing the HSE test is no small feat. There's a reading and language arts test, a math test, plus one for science and one for social studies. You all had to qualify to get to those points. So, for you guys to be able to do that, it was a lot of work and a lot of anguish at times. Congratulations!" Evans said.

Presentations and pledges to the flag were made by the Wynne Honor Guard, followed by a musical selection by the Rockwell Chapel Band. Resident Austin Buchleiter took the stage to give a valedictorian address, followed by resident Life Coach Thomas Miller-El, who delivered a commencement address that included recognition of the late B. Riley, a well-respected Windham instructor.



Principal Jason Evans addresses graduates



B. Riley, Windham instructor

"I want us to acknowledge Mr. Riley. He was an awesome educator, and that's because he understood something that a lot of people don't get," Miller-El said. "He understood that if you treat an individual as he is, good or bad, he'll stay as he is. But, if you treat him as he ought to be and as what he could become, then he'll be what he ought to be."

Before the recessional and closing remarks, students were presented with HSE certificates, and a special tribute to Riley was made via a presentation slideshow. Yet it was the words of one former student that echoed through the hall and hearts in attendance as he memorialized the Windham teacher.

"Mr. Riley, you had a way in bringing out the best in people," said Darius Davis, a former student and





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**In my low moments when I just wanted to quit and throw in the towel, I reflected back on your belief in me. That belief encouraged me to get my HSE; it encouraged me to keep going.**

Darius Davis, a former student and graduate of Riley’s class

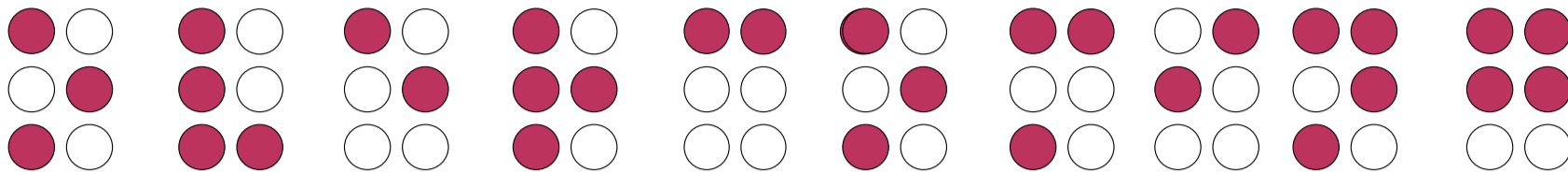
graduate of Riley’s class. “In the midst of all that we face in this environment, your belief in us made us strive to be better. In my low moments when I just wanted to quit and throw in the towel, I reflected back on your belief in me. That belief encouraged me to get my HSE; it encouraged me to keep going. I’ll be starting my third semester in Lee College, and I’ve recently graduated from my vocation. I wish you were here to see it. I speak for all of us when I say, we’re standing here today because of your belief in us. We can’t help but see the impact that you have made in our lives, and for that, we thank you. Thank you for believing in us.”

Following the salutatorian address, Mrs. Riley, who was in attendance with her daughter, was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a notebook filled with positive reflections of Mr. Riley and the influence he had on his students. The 2023 Windham Wynne campus HSE graduating class made the day more than just about celebrating academic success. Participants also celebrated the life of an instructor whose impact on students went far beyond the classroom.

As of August 2023, Windham has officially surpassed its goal of earning 3,000 HSE certificates during the 2022-2023 school year, according to a recent announcement from the district.

“This monumental accomplishment is proof of the diligent and persevering staff and students of Windham,” Division Director of Instruction Jon Lilley said. “Through dedication and determination, the district was able to meet this target, finishing the 2022-2023 school year with pride, accomplishment and honor.” ●

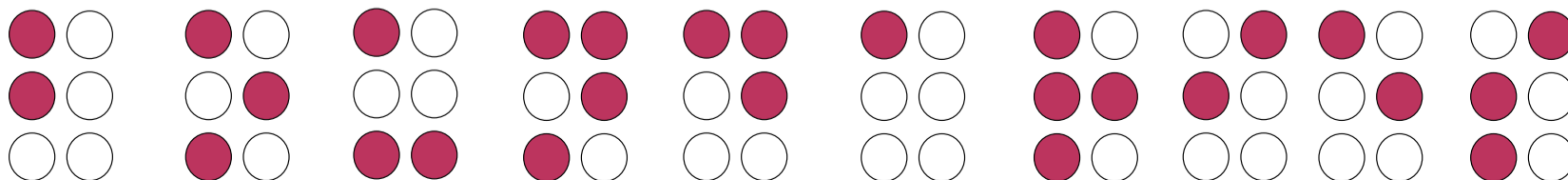
# OVERCOMING

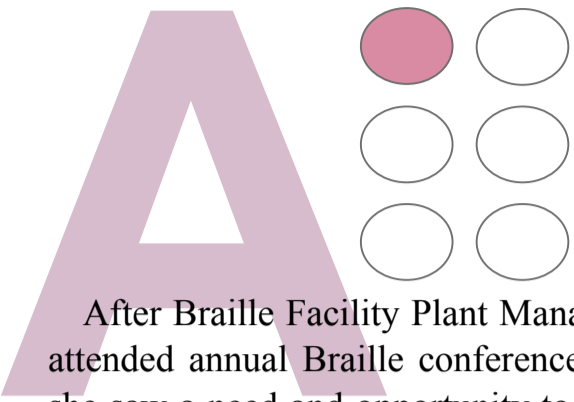


## First Mountain View Unit Braille Conference Promotes Employability Upon Reentry

By Todd R. Carman — Staff Writer

# BOUNDARIES





After Braille Facility Plant Manager Delores Billman attended annual Braille conferences in the community, she saw a need and opportunity to hold a conference at the Mountain View Braille Facility. Billman and the other facility supervisors decided to create a similar experience for the 80 women working at the facility, focused on the specialized field of Braille transcription. The Braille facility summer 2023 in-house conference was the first of its kind behind Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) walls. It educated unit workers while providing an experience on par with external professional conferences, giving all in attendance a chance to build professional skills and self-esteem.

**A Conference First**

“The National Braille Association holds a conference every year where people in the Braille trade learn and network. This helps participants with their Braille careers. I wanted the workers to have the same experience here at the facility,” Billman said. “The women here have created a tremendous network with the Braille community on the outside, and this will help them further their careers when they are released. Everything they do here counts on a résumé.”

Another facility supervisor added her perspective.

“We were able to pick and choose what we wanted to tell participants more about, which was helpful,” Facility Supervisor Cristal Hufstetler said. “The women at the Braille facility are hungry for knowledge, and they were excited to attend and learn.”

Twenty-two external community members attended the unique two-day event in June, including 12 releasees who gained experience and training when they were residents of TDCJ. In addition, all 80 women employed by

the Braille facility were able to join the event, gaining trade-specific knowledge while experiencing a conference aligned with external Braille conferences.

“Mountain View is the Nieman Marcus of Braille programs,” said Melissa Klepper, Braille Facility graduate



*Braille Conference Attendees*

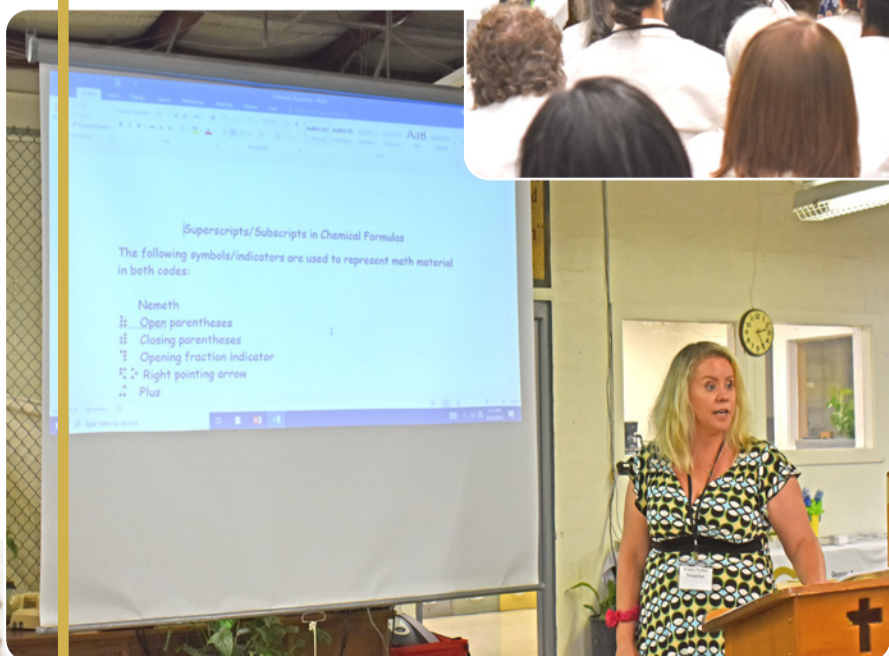
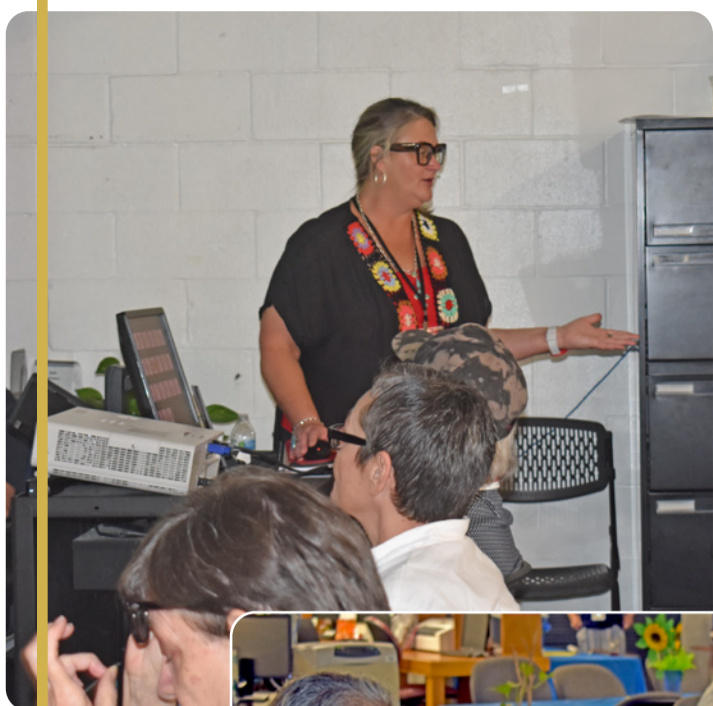
and conference presenter. “We participated in this conference to give these women the same information and experience they would receive in their communities.”

The hope of the conference having a positive impact went beyond the workers who will be released in the near future. Women with lengthy sentences also grew from the interactive experience.

“Some of my students have a lot of time and might not get the opportunity to experience this on the outside,” Billman said.

The Braille conference was divided into two presentation areas, with concurrent workshops for the workers. During breaks and lunch, the women were able to network with the outside participants, forging connections that might help them with their careers post-reentry.

The workshops offered a variety of topics that benefit the women, both in working at the facility and with their careers. Topics included Mastering the Manuscript, Readable Tactile Graphics, Formatting Books, Building



a Braille Network, Quality Assurance and Where Do We Go From Here? — all aiding the women with successful Braille production. Participants also learned how their work positively affects students on the outside, as well as the impact made on the visually impaired.

“We were able to share what we learned and stress the importance of what everybody in here does every day — it’s not just about getting a job when you get out. What you’re doing [in the Braille facility] has an effect on people every day. This program works, and when you graduate from the program, you are likely to have a job waiting because they [employers] know what kind of training the Braille program provides,” said Melissa Klepper, presenter and Braille Facility graduate.

Participants were able to interact with presenters and even renew old connections.

“One of my Braille mentors came back and presented [at the conference]. I hadn’t seen her in four years, and it was very emotional for me,” said Ashley Dack, a five-year Braille veteran trainee. “The day-in day-out aspect of work can wear you down after a while, but the conference gave us a chance to refocus on our purpose.”

### Partners in Training

The Mountain View Braille Facility trains residents to produce Braille in its entirety:

*Transcribing text,*

*Creating tactiles (figures, maps and diagrams),*

*Proofreading and*

*Quality assurance.*

With its beginnings in 2000, training includes Windham School District (Windham) and Career and Technical Education short-courses that are offered as after-hour programs and On-the-Job Training (OJT). There are three OJT certificates available to earn specific to the Braille facility: Braille Typist, Graphic Designer and Proofreader. A Graphic Design Apprenticeship is also available through the Department of Labor in conjunction with Windham.

Also specific to the Braille program are eight internationally-recognized certifications workers can receive through the Library of Congress, the National Braille Association and other organizations. To date, 401 of these specialized certifications have been awarded to facility workers.

The work at the Braille Facility ultimately prepares wom-



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**We participated in this conference to give these women the same information and experience they would receive in their communities.**

Melissa Klepper, Braille Facility graduate and conference presenter



en to obtain and hold viable careers when released from TDCJ. They build resumes during their time in the facility with external agencies that will consider them for hire upon reentry.

Beverly North, a former Braille facility graduate who came back for the conference, said her training at Mountain View had a positive impact.

“I had a job almost immediately when I went home. I ended up starting my own business, which I’ve had for 10 years now. I also help other Braille facility graduates gain employment when they get out,” she said, adding, “In fact, I was able to help two graduates get a job recently.”

### Hard Work Required

Learning Braille requires hard work, a willingness to work extended hours and an ability to work as a team — all skills that can be acquired at the Braille facility. To promote the self-paced style of the certifications and provide more training, the facility has developed short courses to accompany the Literary, Textbook Formatting and Nemeth certifications through a partnership with Windham. Each short course navigates through related instruction manuals and in-house supplemental material that includes exercises, proofreading, games and targeted practice material. The Literary short course is 108 hours, Tactile Graphics is 30 hours, Textbook Formatting is 138 hours and the Nemeth Short Course is 140 hours for completion. The Graphic Design Apprenticeship requires 3,000 work hours and 216 related technical instruction hours to complete the work.

Completing these certifications and becoming competent in the Braille field can take several years.

“It takes about three to five years of working at the facility to become employment-ready in the Braille field,” North said.

Sometimes the time required to earn certifications can take some of the sting out of personal setbacks, such as a parole set-off.

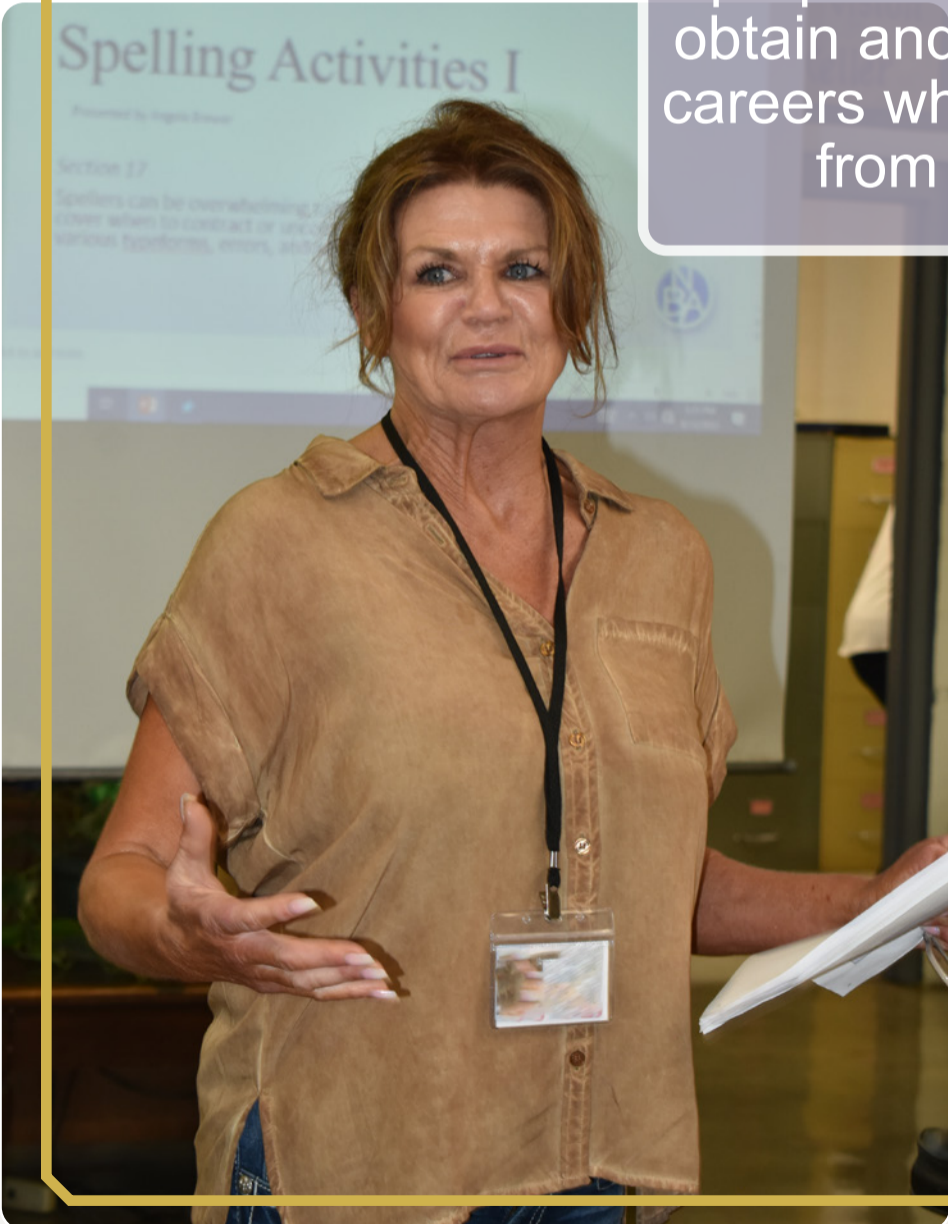
“Sometimes when a worker gets a set-off for parole, they’re a little down, but they then think about how staying a little longer gives them time to learn more and get more certifications in the field,” Billman said.

In 2000, the facility began with 25 residents and now averages 100 workers. Due to this





“The work at the Braille Facility ultimately prepares women to obtain and hold viable careers when released from TDCJ.”





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**I had a job almost immediately when I went home. I ended up starting my own business, which I've had for 10 years now.**

Beverly North, a former Braille factory graduate

large concentration of focused Braille work, the facility is able to accept complex, high-volume projects and complete them in a timely manner. This provides unique experiences for facility workers. They see a wide variety of material to both transcribe and create graphic tactiles.

In 2013, the facility began a partnership with the Center for Inclusive Design and Innovation at Georgia Tech University. This partnership has allowed workers to create numerous opportunities for those with visual impairments, including school-age children.

“This is a way to give back [to communities],” said Amber Willemsen, a current Braille facility worker. “A child actually holds what we produce and uses it in a classroom.”

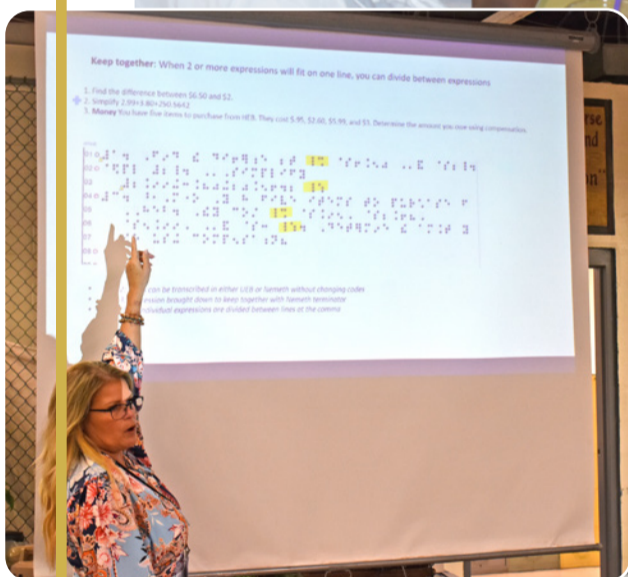
**Professional Networking**

In 2021, the Mountain View Braille facility became a member of the National Braille Association (NBA) with the support of the Windham Apprenticeship Program, and in April 2023, it became a Prison Braille Member of Visual Aid Volunteers Inc., based in Florida. The facility also has two staff members serving on the committee of the NBA’s textbook formatting committee. These connections help keep the facility current in the field while developing a ready-made network for former residents.

Networking was accomplished at the recent conference, as residents and visitors met to further their knowledge, skills and profession.

“It was the same quality of conference as we attend,”





said Tracy Shoesmith, Braille facility supervisor. “It was very beneficial to the participants and speakers. The presenters that attended were the cream of the crop for the industry — the popular ones that we would want to go listen to, like [those at] conferences in San Antonio and Detroit.”

The Braille facility, and the conference, provided education, guidance and inspiration to participants.

“The Braille program gave me a sense of direction and purpose when I got out. I came here not knowing that I could do anything else but clean house and raise babies, but this program pushed me to be much more than I knew I could be. Having a conference took it to another level. A conference that is as close to an outside experience as possible gives the women [workers] hope and focus — it definitely sparks something in them,” North said.

Conference attendees also said the meeting gave them new insights and experiences.

“The conference was a bit overwhelming on many different layers. It gave us feedback and let us know how the outside Braille community works,” said Danna Busby, a Braille facility worker. “The outside participants came in and treated us as peers and professionals. It was very emotional and made me tear up.”

After the conclusion of the conference, the facility supervisors said they look forward to having future conferences at Mountain View in Gatesville.

“This was the first Braille conference, but it definitely won’t be the last. I’m already looking forward to the next one,” Billman said.

She said women interested in learning a marketable trade in Braille are encouraged to send an I-60 to:

**D. Billman**  
**Braille Facility**  
**Mountain View Unit ●**

# The What and Why of Braille



Louis Braille

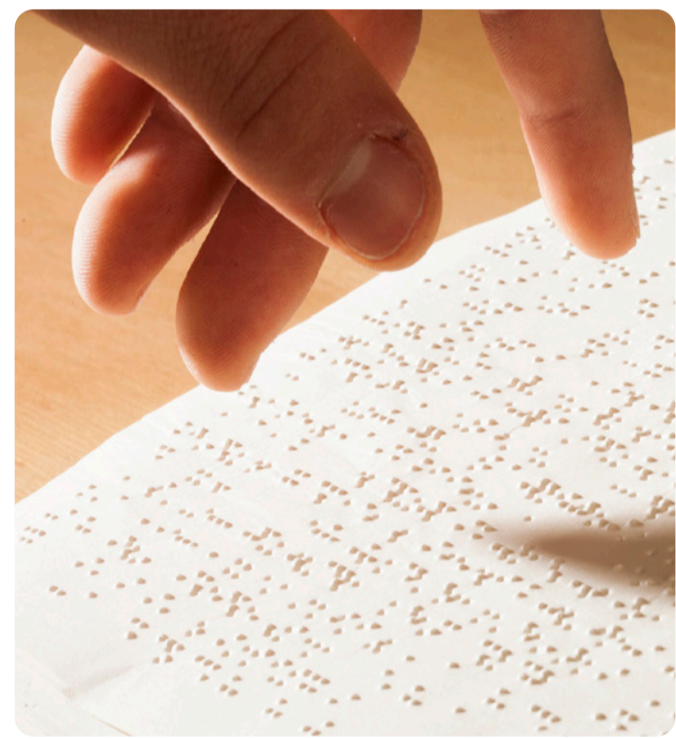


Braille (pronounced BRAYL) is a tactile writing system used by people with visual impairments, including people who suffer from low vision, blindness or deaf-blindness. It can be read either on embossed paper or by using refreshable Braille displays that connect to computers and smartphone devices. Braille can be written using a slate and stylus, a Braille writer, an electronic Braille notetaker or a computer connected to a Braille embosser.

Braille is named after its creator, Louis Braille, a Frenchman who lost his sight as a result of a childhood accident. In 1824, at the age of 15, he developed the Braille code based on the French alphabet as an improvement on night writing. He published his system, which subsequently included musical notation, in 1829.

The second revision, published in 1837, was the first binary form of writing developed in the modern era. Braille

characters are formed using a combination of six raised dots arranged in a  $3 \times 2$  matrix, called the Braille cell. The number and arrangement of these dots distinguishes one character from



another. Since the various Braille alphabets originated as transcription codes for printed writing, the mappings (sets of character designations) vary from language to language, and even within one; in English Braille there are 3 levels

of Braille:

- **Uncontracted Braille** — a letter-by-letter transcription used for basic literacy,
- **Contracted Braille** — an addition of abbreviations and contractions used as a space-saving mechanism, and
- **Grade 3** — various non-standardized personal stenography that is less commonly used.

In addition to Braille text (letters, punctuation, contractions), it is also possible to create embossed illustrations and graphs, with the lines either solid or made of series of dots, arrows, and bullets that are larger than Braille dots. A full Braille cell includes six raised dots arranged in two columns, each column having three dots. The dot positions are identified by numbers from one to six. There are 64 possible combinations, including no dots at all for a word space. Dot configurations can be used to represent a letter, digit, punctuation mark or a word.●

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

# Building better bonds



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Family Literacy  
Program  
Connecting Parents  
to Children

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By Elkanah E. Hendrix — Staff Writer



# Part I: Facilitating Parental Involvement

By Elkanah E. Hendrix — Staff Writer

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"Being incarcerated isn't easy for me, but I can't imagine how hard it is for my son, in school and at home. The last thing I want is for him to make the same mistakes in life that I have. This program has connected me to my boy in ways I couldn't imagine. It is giving me a second chance at being a father and a man," said Frederick Wilson II, a Family Literacy program participant at the Wynne Unit campus.

The Wynne campus is one of nine locations offering the Windham School District's (Windham) Family Literacy program for fathers and mothers in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). The program currently has 114 participants and was designed to enlist the parent's assistance in alleviating the adverse effects a child may experience, academically and at home, due to the mom or dad's incarceration.

Windham Transition Service Specialist Jerry Brown said the program was the brainchild of Windham Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman.

"It was her initiative. After surveying the population and determining that the data heavily suggested there was a serious need for increased parental involvement, she immediately took action,"

Brown said. "She assigned me as a lead for the program development."

*DRE'YUN*  
I Love That you love  
Music and Love to Sing! I  
Loved our Video Zooms  
That we had. I Love the  
Way you took this class  
with me! I Love how close  
you and your mom are!  
Love Always  
Your DAD!



ment, designated to set up what this program would look like on each campus. "

"I was encouraged to take on the assignment because I had experience through federal programs working on policy and initiatives that involve parental engagement. I took what she gave me and a lot of what I know about parental engagement and incorporated it into our Family Literacy program."

"We are all so passionate about this. At the end of the day, you can't overlook the impact a parent's incarceration has on their children."

The Family Literacy program is using education to fight the statistics of generational incarceration.

"This program means the world to me. It's brought me and my wife together as parents; she no longer feels like she's doing it alone," program participant D'Audre Hight-Ealy said.

One coordinator believes the program can be life altering.

"I believe most caregivers really love the children they're raising, but a good number of them are doing it alone," Windham Family Literacy Coordinator J. Joyner said. "These mothers and fathers in incarceration have the opportunity to really play an active role in their child's education. They can help change the outcome of their kid's life."

Every day, custodial parents and caregivers at home struggle to provide for the children for whom they are caring. The Family Literacy program gives program participants an opportunity to care for their children in ways not previously





available. It is equipping moms and dads with the tools needed to break the cycle of generational incarceration.

“A lot of times parents don’t know exactly what to talk to their kids about because it’s been so long since they’ve had conversations. Some of these children weren’t even born yet when their parent became incarcerated. Others were too small to remember. Now they’re 7 to 12 years old and communication has all of a sudden picked back up. Many of these parents just aren’t equipped. They want to help, but they don’t know how. This is where the parenting course comes in,” Joyner said.

In Phase One of the program, participants enter a parenting course. This class can be completed in a little over 30 hours. In this phase, Family Literacy coordinators use instructional videos and discussion to facilitate learning. Parents also participate in role play to prepare them for Phase Two where they meet twice a month for about two to three hours over the span of approximately five months. It involves projects moms or dads can then send home to their children.

“These projects are used to break the ice or to show children that parents care. Phase Two receives a lot of attention because this is also the phase where we introduce ‘book zooms,’” Joyner said. These are virtual meetings via Zoom that involve parents and children reading together, although they are at separate locations.

Mothers and fathers are given a second chance to teach their children, and they are learning a thing or two themselves.

“I have two boys. Being away for so long, this program has helped me learn about my sons’ schooling. I’m able to read with them. I’m not going to lie to you! My oldest boy can read a lot better than me. He’s actually been helping me with some of the harder words I struggle with. Then I have my younger son who has a hard time reading, and I’m able to walk him through some of those same hard words. We are helping each other,” dad Joseph Cancino said.

Parents in incarceration aren’t the only ones forming connections through Family Literacy.

“Family Literacy has built a bridge between my family at

home and me. It has laid a strong foundation for the love of reading and education that my son will carry with him for the rest of his life,” said Kelly Cobb, a mother and Family Literacy program participant at the Crain campus.

Parents aren’t just talking on the phone to their kids. They actually get to see them and read face to face through the Zoom virtual platform. They gain confidence and are suddenly a part of their children’s lives again.

“These Zoom meetings are really helping repair relationships. This project builds the importance in that child’s life so they don’t drop out and repeat the cycle,” Joyner said.

One mother shared her outlook on the Zoom meetings.

“I’m thankful for the video calls I get to have. I enjoy seeing my children when I’m not physically able to do so,” said Billie Jean Duckworth, a student at the Hilltop campus.

Other mothers also added their perspective.

“I’ve been with this program from the beginning. I’ve had my ups and downs through my incarceration. This program and my teacher, Mrs. LeNoir, have given me opportunities to keep in touch with my child. I’ve learned a lot and have been reminded of the qualities of being a present parent,” said Gabriela Villegas at the Hilltop campus.

Participating children, who now have mom or dad back in their lives, are receiving better grades. According to one Family Literacy program coordinator, they are also seeing a major decrease in negative behavior.

“There is one young man whose father hadn’t been gone long. Missing dad, he started to really act out. Any time he was presented with a difficult challenge, he was just ready to give up. Not too long after the first Zoom meetings within this program, the teacher reported that this child did a total 1800. He was no longer causing





## Part 2: Windham's Family Literacy Day

By Elkanah E. Hendrix — Staff Writer

F

For one day, visitation areas were converted into learning and fun-filled family rooms for Windham School District's (Windham) Family Literacy Day. This event offers program participants an opportunity to pour love and positive experiences into their children, face-to-face.

When the Family Literacy Program was implemented, Windham Transition Service Specialist Jerry Brown visited the different campuses with one question for all participants.

"I asked them what we could do to maximize what they are learning in the program. The reoccurring theme, from the men's campuses to the women's, was their reference to the Day with Dad's program. They all wanted to put into action everything they've learned. So, I said, 'A special event can do that,'" Brown said.

"What makes Family Literacy Day unique is the training and learning from the course curriculum beforehand, along with the opportunity [for participants] to exercise what they've gained in a hands-on way with their children," Brown said.

At the Wynne Campus, a colorful balloon arch served as the entrance to the special event. Fathers escorted their

problems. Instead of just hanging out in the bathroom all the time, he returned to his class and his attitude in general, especially toward learning, showed improvement," Joyner said.

She said this child's father was invited to participate in a parent-teacher conference via Zoom. After parents met with the teacher, the son was called in, but he had no idea his dad was going to be in the classroom via Zoom. Joyner said he was so excited that he went and told his teacher, "My dad was at my parent-teacher conference!"

Joyner sees a positive future impact from family literacy efforts.

"This is just the beginning, and we are already seeing a difference in academics, behavior and morale. I'm really curious to see in the next few years how much progress these kids make. Again, by involving resident parents, we can really change the outcome of these children's lives," she said. ●



children into a room adorned with orange, yellow and purple streamers, and a banner with the words "Family Matters" hung from one wall. The room was sectioned off into different stations, each identified by the signs hanging above. One section was dedicated to craft activities: popsicle sticks glued together to create designs, small hands painted and glittered, and children's hand prints stamped on a canvas with the heading, "The best things in life aren't things." A few feet away, a father read from a pop-up book to his son and across from him a participant used dominoes to teach his daughter math. In another activity, seeds were planted in tiny pots for kids to take home so they could watch the plants grow. The children, their fathers and those responsible for putting the event together saw it as a success.

"It's a win-win-win situation," Brown said. "The children, the resident parent — even us — we win, too. We get the opportunity to become better and more effective for the next group of parents that come to us to learn how to be more family literate."

Brown isn't the only person who can recognize a winning scenario.

Resident Frederick Wilson II, a participant of the Family





Kaytlyn LeNoir, Windham Family Literacy Program Coordinator, and Hilltop and Crain Units participants



J. Joyner, Windham Family Literacy Program Coordinator, and Wynne Unit participants

“

It's all about building relationships. The kids may not remember a specific activity, but they will remember spending time with mom.

*Kaytlyn LeNoir, Windham Family Literacy Program Coordinator*

Literacy Day, sat beside his son under a sign that asked, “What Would You Do?” He read from a set of small flash cards in his hand: “Pretend you are playing with another child who is younger than you, and that kid has a toy you want to play with. You could just take the toy if you wanted, or, you could switch it with the toy you have. The other child might cry, but maybe you don’t get in trouble if you pretend you didn’t do anything. No one is looking. What will you do?” Wilson asked his son.

“Um...” his son thought out loud. “I think I would ask for the toy nicely.”

“Okay, so what if the kid says no?”

“I don’t know what I’d do if he told me no. What would you do?”

“Good question. Let me see. What would I do? I would try and see if there is a win-win scenario.”

“What’s that?” the son interrupted.

“It’s a situation where we both win. I’d present my toy and ask if we could play with the toys together.”

“That’s cool, dad. I like that idea; I’d do that too,” said the son, leaning in closer to his father.

Windham Family Literacy Coordinator J. Joyner said this event really helped the children to see that the program wasn’t just lip service with their dads.

“By the time Family Literacy Day came, these kids had already had some interaction with their dads. Being together

helped them see that the love was genuine and that the dad’s attention was totally on them. It was all about the children. There was a complete laser focus [on them], and the kids ate it up,” Joyner said.

One participant, who hadn’t seen his own father or children in quite some time, expressed his gratitude for Family Literacy Day.

“I haven’t seen my own dad in about four years. He was hiding when I entered the room and he surprised me. It was a good surprise, I almost couldn’t let go when he hugged me, and now I know how my kids feel when they see me. It’s been almost a year since I’ve seen my two boys, and that was at a regular visit, but I’ve never had a chance to interact with them like this. I just want to thank Ms. Joyner and everyone involved for this experience,” participant Joseph Cancino said.

In Gatesville, the women at the Hilltop and Crain campuses met at Hilltop for their Family Literacy Day, and they later shared similar sentiments.

“A regular contact visit is not the same; it’s nothing like this at all,” said resident Kristal Santiago. “In a contact visit, I’m in a little visitation room with a one and a two-year-old that want to run and play. They want to be all loud and be all over me. At a regular visit, they could not do that, but Family Literacy Day was the best because they were running around, playing with balloons and doing projects. You know, being kids.”

For some participants, the Family Literacy program is the only line of communication.

“It’s hard for me to interact with my son outside of this program. When you don’t have the means to stay connected, this is a program that helps. These coordinators make the connection,” Gabriela Villegas said.

Windham Family Literacy Program Coordinator Kaytlyn LeNoir organized the women’s Family Literacy Day, which she said was a success.





“  
The Family  
Literacy program is  
using education to  
combat the statistics  
of generational  
incarceration.”





“It was a successful day; a very emotional day,” she said. “Some of the families hadn’t seen each other for a very long time. There were plenty of tears.”

Family Literacy Day participant Billie Jean Duckworth couldn’t agree more.

“I was crying like a baby,” Duckworth said. “My kids live eight hours from here so I don’t get to see them often at all. They were really excited for this day, and so was I. We ate well, we got to play games, then we took pictures together — and that really meant a lot to me.”

LeNoir believes Family Literacy Day is the perfect event to help reconcile relationships and make up for lost moments.

“It’s all about building relationships,” she said. “The kids may not remember a specific activity, but they will remember spending time with mom.”

She described a very unexpected moment from the event: “One of our participant’s daughters had tried out for cheerleading and made the team, but her mom was never able to see her do her cheer routine. When it was over, we were taking down decorations and we removed the fringe on the backdrop of the photo station. The daughter asked, ‘Can I have that?’ and I said ‘Sure.’ She made herself some pom poms and showed her mom her cheer. I think that touched everyone watching.”

Thanks to the Family Literacy program’s coordinators’ shared passion, these positive experiences are strengthening family bonds while emphasizing support for education of all generations.

“I know this is not my program; it was someone else’s brainchild. But while I am here, this is my program. We all feel this way, and that’s why the event came out the way it did,” Joyner said.

For Duckworth, the food and fun with family aren’t the only things she’s gotten out of Family Literacy Day. It also made her reflect, and this is what the Family Literacy program is all about.

“Family Literacy Day made me more appreciative of the time I did have with my kids,” Duckworth said. “It makes me look in the mirror and ask myself, ‘Why did I do the things that I did that forced me to be away from my kids?’ It makes me want to be a stronger mother, a stronger woman. I’m going to be a better person and build a better life. My kids deserve the best of me, and for that reason, they are my main reason to rehabilitate myself — that’s for sure.” ●

“

I haven’t seen my own dad in about four years. He was hiding when I entered the room and he surprised me. It was a good surprise, I almost couldn’t let go when he hugged me, and now I know how my kids feel when they see me.

*Participant Joseph Cancino*

# Parole Review Process



- The Parole Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice identifies inmates six months prior to their initial parole eligibility, and four months prior to subsequent review dates, and directs the case file to be pulled for review.
- Notice is sent to trial officials, victims and victim family members.
- An Institutional Parole Officer (IPO) of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles interviews the inmate and prepares a parole case summary for the Board.
- The inmate's file is sent to the designated board office for review and vote by a Parole Panel.

## Standard Parole Panel

A standard parole panel consists of three voting members, usually one board member and two parole commissioners; a majority of two votes is needed for a final decision. Panel voting is sequential, with one panel member recording their vote and passing it to the next panel member. If the first two votes are the same, the vote is final. If the first two votes differ, the third panel member reviews the case and breaks the tie.

- An interview with the inmate is at the discretion of the Parole Panel member, as are interviews with individuals in support or protest of an inmate's release to parole.
- Parole Panel members must grant an interview to victims, as defined by statute, upon request.
- The inmate is notified of the Parole Panel decision via correspondence. A denial will include the next review date.

- An approval may include special conditions.

## Full Board Parole Panel

A full board parole panel consists of parole board members only; parole commissioners do not vote these cases. A two-thirds majority vote of the Board (five out of seven voters) is necessary for a positive parole decision for the following:

- Inmates convicted of or serving a sentence for a capital felony
- An offense under Penal Code section 20A.03 [Continuous Trafficking of Persons]
- An offense under Penal Code section 21.02 [Continuous Sexual Abuse of Young Child or Children]
- An offense under Penal Code section 21.11(a)(1) [Indecency with a Child]
- An offense under Penal Code section 22.021 [Aggravated Sexual Assault]
- Inmates required under Texas Government Code Section 508.145(c) to serve 35 calendar years before becoming eligible for release on parole.

These inmates, except capital felons serving a life sentence and those convicted of or serving a sentence for Aggravated Sexual Assault, are eligible for a minimum of a 3-year up to a 5-year set-off. Capital felons serving a life sentence and those inmates with Aggravated Sexual Assault offenses are eligible for up to a 10-year set-off. ●

Source: <https://www.tdci.texas.gov/bpp>

### Parole Review Status Line

A parole decision status can be checked by family, friends and loved ones at:  
<https://inmate.tdcj.texas.gov/InmateSearch/start.action>  
or call: 844-512-0461



### General Office

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles  
P.O. Box 13401  
Austin, Texas 78711-3401  
E-mail: [bpp\\_pio@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:bpp_pio@tdcj.texas.gov)



### Support Letters and Parole Packets

TDCJ—Review and Release Processing  
8610 Shoal Creek Blvd.  
Austin, Texas 78711



# Reasons for Approval and Denial



## ▼ 1. CRIMINAL HISTORY

- A.** The record does not include a documented pattern of violent or assaultive arrests or convictions.
- D.** The record indicates that the inmate has repeatedly committed criminal episodes that indicate a predisposition to commit criminal acts upon release.

## ▼ 2. NATURE OF OFFENSE

- A.** The record indicates non-violent offenses and the instant offense indicates no tendency toward violent/assaultive behavior, with limited potential for future assaultive type offenses.
- D.** The record indicates the instant offense has elements of brutality, violence, assaultive behavior, or conscious selection of victim's vulnerability indicating a conscious disregard for the lives, safety, or property of others, such that the inmate poses a continuing threat to public safety.

## ▼ 3. DRUG OR ALCOHOL INVOLVEMENT

- A.** The record indicates limited or noninvolvement with substance use.
- D.** The record indicates excessive substance use involvement.

## ▼ 4. INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

- A.** The record indicates that the inmate has maintained a satisfactory institutional adjustment.
- D.** The record indicates that the inmate has an unsatisfactory institutional adjustment.

## ▼ 5. ADJUSTMENT DURING PERIODS OF SUPERVISION

- A.** The record indicates successful periods of supervision on probation, parole, or mandatory supervision.
- D.** The record indicates unsuccessful periods of supervision on previous probation, parole, or mandatory supervision that resulted in incarceration, including parole-in-absentia.

## ▼ 6. PARTICIPATION IN TDCJ PROPOSED OR SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

- A.** The record indicates participation in and completion of TDCJ-CID programs and activities in the individual treatment

plan that should enhance chances to obtain and maintain full-time stable employment.

- D.** The record indicates that the inmate refused to participate or intentionally failed to complete TDCJ-CID programs and activities in the individual treatment plan.

## ▼ 7. TIME SERVED

- A.** The record indicates that length of time served by the inmate is congruent with offense severity and criminal history.
- D.** The record indicates that length of time served by the inmate is not congruent with offense severity and criminal history.

## ▼ 8. FELONY OFFENSE

- D.** The record indicates that the inmate has been charged before a magistrate, indicted, or convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction, with a felony offense committed while incarcerated.

## ▼ 9. DISCRETIONARY MANDATORY SUPERVISION (DMS)

For a vote not to release, it is necessary to vote both D1 and D2, along with any other reasons that may apply.

- A.** Release to Discretionary Mandatory Supervision.
- D1.** The record indicates that the inmate's accrued good conduct time is not an accurate reflection of the inmate's potential for rehabilitation.
- D2.** The record indicates that the inmate's release would endanger the public.

## ▼ 10. GANG AFFILIATION

- A.** The record indicates that the inmate is not a confirmed member of one of the TDCJ-CID designated security threat group.
- D.** The record indicates that the inmate is a confirmed member of one of the TDCJ-CID designated security threat group.

## ▼ 11. OTHER

- A.** or **D.**—Write an explanation. ●

# Parole Panel Has Many Voting Options



The voting panels of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles do not just vote “yes” or “no” — they also vote the type of parole approval or denial, length of set-offs and any stipulations upon release.

## The board’s parole panel approval vote options:

**FI-1**—(Further Investigation 1)—Release inmate on parole supervision as soon as eligible.

**FI-2**—Release on parole on a specified future date.

**FI-3R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation program. Release to parole only after program completion and not earlier than three months from specified date. Such TDCJ programs may include either CHANGES/Life Skills, Voyager, Segovia Pre-Release Center (Segovia PRC), or any other approved tier programs.

**FI-4R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation program. Release to parole only after program completion and not earlier than four months from specified date. Such TDCJ program shall be the Sex Offender Education Program (SOEP).

**FI-5**—Transfer to a DWI Program and release to a continuum of care program.

**FI-6**—Transfer to the DWI rehabilitation program and release to continuum of care program.

**FI-6R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation program. Release to parole only after program completion and no earlier than six months from specified date. Such TDCJ programs may include the Pre-Release Therapeutic Community (PRTC), Pre-Release Substance Abuse Program (PRSAP), In-Prison Therapeutic Community Program (IPTC) or any other approved tier program.

**FI-7R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation program. Release to parole only after program completion and not earlier than seven months from the specified date. Such TDCJ program shall be the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI).

**FI-9R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation program. Release to parole only after program completion and not earlier

than nine months from specified date. Such TDCJ program shall be the Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP-9).

**FI-18R**—Transfer to a TDCJ rehabilitation treatment program. Release to parole only after program completion and no earlier than 18 months from specified date. Such TDCJ program shall be either the Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP-18).

**CU-FI**—Designates the date on which the inmate serving consecutive sentences would have been eligible for release on parole if the inmate had been sentenced to serve a single sentence. This date shall be within a three-year incarceration period following the panel decision.

**RMS**—Release to mandatory supervision.

## The board’s parole panel denial vote options:

**NR**(Next Review – Month/Year)—Deny parole and set a time for next parole consideration. State law requires annual reviews except for inmates serving a sentence for an offense listed in Section 508.149(a), Government Code, or for an offense punishable as a felony of the second or third degree under Section 22.04, Penal Code. For these inmates, the next review date (month/year) may be set up to five years from the panel decision date, but in no event shall it be less than one calendar year from the panel decision date.

**SA**(Serve All)—Deny parole with no regular subsequent review, requiring inmate to serve balance of sentence, unless eligible for mandatory supervision consideration prior to projected release date.

**CU/NR** (Month/Year-Cause Number)—Deny favorable action and set the next review date at one year from the panel decision date. If the inmate is serving a sentence for an offense listed in Section 508.149(a), Government code, or for an offense punishable as a felon of the second or third degree under Section 22.04, Penal Code, the next review date (month/year) may be set at any date in the five-year incarceration period following the panel decision date, but in no event shall it be less

than one calendar year from the panel decision date.

**CU/SA** (Month/Year-Cause Number)—If the inmate is serving a sentence for an offense listed in Section 508.149(a), Government Code, or for an offense punishable as a felony of the second or third degree under Section 22.04, Penal Code; deny release and order serve-all, but in no event shall this be utilized if the inmate’s maximum expiration date is over five years from the date of panel decision. If the inmate is not serving an offense under Section 508.149(a), Government Code, deny release and order serve all, but in no event shall this be utilized if the inmate’s maximum expiration date is over one year from the date of the panel decision.

**DMS** (Month/Year)—Deny Release to mandatory supervision and set the next mandatory supervision review date one year from the panel decision date. This decision denies mandatory supervision (and sets next review date) because inmate’s accrued good conduct time does not accurately reflect the potential for rehabilitation and the inmates release would endanger the public.

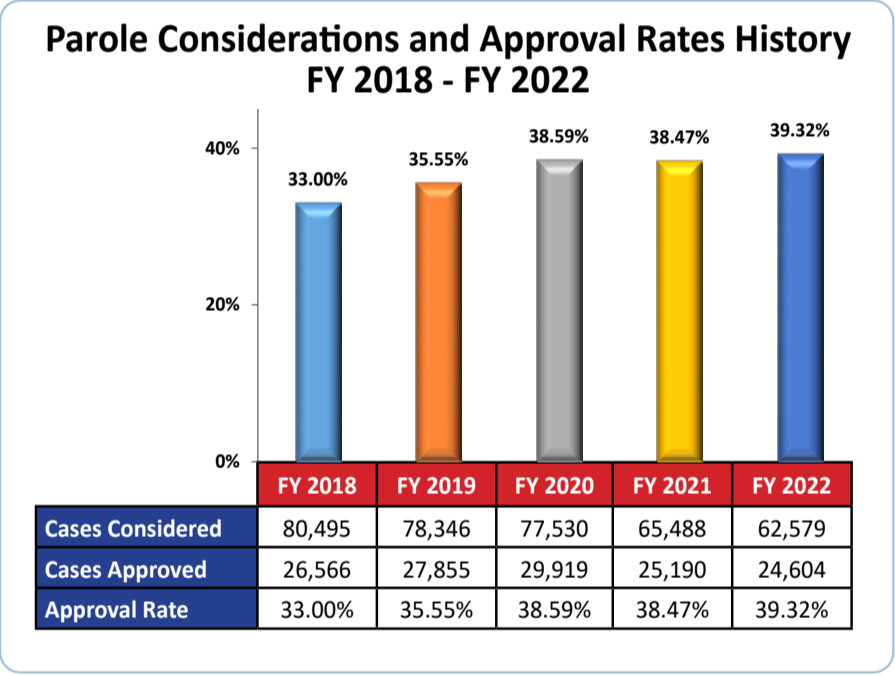
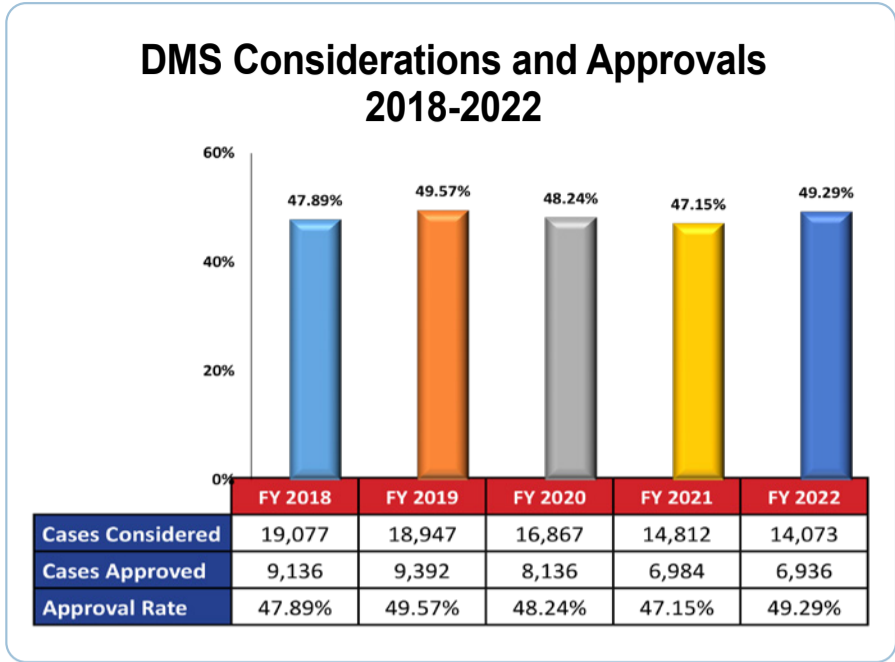
**The board’s parole panel set-off options:**

**From three to 10 year**—Inmates convicted of an offense listed under Tex.Gov. Code §508.046 are eligible for a three-year up to a 10-year set-off.

**From one to 5 year**—Inmates convicted of an offense listed under Tex.Gov. Code §508.149(a) are eligible for a one-year up to a five-year set-off.

**One year**—Inmates convicted of other, non-aggravated offenses are eligible for a one-year set-off.●

Source: <https://www.tdci.texas.gov/bpp> and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles



## SUMMARY OF BOARD ACTIVITY

### Parole Considerations and Approval Rates by Offense Type

	CASES CONSIDERED	CASES APPROVED	APPROVAL RATE
Violent Aggravated Non-Sexual	10,725	4,389	40.92%
Violent Aggravated Sexual	3,499	1,424	40.70%
Violent Non-Aggravated Non-Sexual	11,413	3,617	31.69%
Non-Aggravated Sexual	1,930	673	34.87%
Non-Violent	35,012	14,501	41.42%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>62,579</b>	<b>24,604</b>	<b>39.32%</b>



# Frequently Asked Parole-Related Questions



## Does an interview with a parole panel member increase the chances for parole?

No. An interview merely provides the resident, their family and/or friends the opportunity to speak with a voting parole panel member before the parole panel reviews a case.

## What can family members do to help a resident gain parole?

Residents' behavior and accomplishments in prison are factors that are considered in all parole decisions. Family members should encourage residents to maintain a clear conduct disciplinary record and to participate in the educational, vocational and character development programs offered at their unit of assignment. Also, in many instances, the resident must rely on family or friends when arranging a suitable parole plan.

## When does release become effective?

A parole release becomes effective when the resident signs his or her release certificate. The certificate orders the release and tells the resident in clear and understandable language where to report and to whom. The certificate lists the conditions of release and gives the date on which the resident will discharge his or her sentence and be free from supervision. The certificate also includes a waiver of extradition. The parole certificate must be signed by the resident.

Residents released on mandatory supervision are given

release certificates that provide parole office information and release conditions. Mandatory supervision residents are not required to sign their release certificates, but they nevertheless must obey the rules and conditions of supervision and are subject to revocation if they violate the rules or conditions.

## Will a large number of petitions and letters make more of a difference to the parole panel than just a few?

No, a few clear and concise letters stating the nature of support (financial, vocational, residential, etc.) are preferable to voluminous petitions and letters. It is not necessary to send a copy of the letter to each parole panel member. Letters are placed in the resident's file to be available to any reviewing parole panel member. ●

Sources:

<https://www.tdci.texas.gov/bpp>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

- PAROLE PANEL REVIEW
- SUPPORT LETTERS

Information in this section is derived from the Board of Pardons and Paroles web site:

<https://www.tdci.texas.gov/bpp>  
and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles Annual Statistical Report for Fiscal Year 2022 ●

# Parole Contact Information



Source: [tdcj.texas.gov/bpp](http://tdcj.texas.gov/bpp)

## Amarillo Board Office

5809 S. Western, Suite 200  
Amarillo, TX 79110  
Phone: (806) 359-7656  
Fax: (806) 358-6455  
BM: Elodia Brito  
PC: Jeffrey Marton  
PC: Edward Davila

### ▼ Units

Allred	Roach
Clements	Robertson
Dalhart	Rudd
Daniel	Sanchez SJ
Formby SJ	Smith
Fort Stockton	Wallace
Jordan	West Texas RMF
Lynaugh	Wheeler SJ
Mechler	Wilderness III
Montford	

## Angleton Board Office

1212 North Velasco, Suite 201  
Angleton, TX 77515  
Phone: (979) 849-3031  
Fax: (979) 849-8741  
BM: Marsha Moberly  
PC: Joel Butler  
PC: Sandra Fletcher

### ▼ Units

Carole S. Young MC	LeBlanc
Clemens	Lychner SJ
Gib Lewis	Stringfellow
Gist SJ	Plane SJ
Goodman	Ramsey
Henley SJ	Scott
Hightower	Terrell
Hospital - Galveston	Vance
Jester III	

## Austin Board Office

4616 W. Howard Lane, Suite 200  
Austin, TX 78728  
Phone: 512-671-2532  
Fax: 512-671-2497  
BM: Ed Robertson  
PC: Richard Aiello  
PC: Mary J. Farley  
PC: Troy Fox

### ▼ Units

Bridgeport	Memorial
Coleman	Middleton
Crain	Mountain View
Halbert SAFPF	Murray
Hamilton	Pack
Hilltop	San Saba
Hobby	Sanders Estes
Hughes	Stevenson
Lockhart PP	Stiles
Luther	Travis County SJ
Marlin	

## Gatesville Board Office

545 State Hwy 36 Bypass N,  
Suite A  
Gatesville, TX 76528  
Phone: (254) 865-8870  
Fax: (254) 865-2629  
BM: David G. Gutiérrez, Chair  
PC: Lee Anne Eck-Massingill  
PC: Roel Tejada

### ▼ Units

Bridgeport	Kyle
Choice Moore	Lindsey SJ
Cole SJ	Memorial
Crain	Mountain View
Havins SJ	Murray
Hilltop	Sayle SAFPF
Hughes	Stiles
Hutchins SJ	Woodman SJ

## Huntsville Board Office

1022 Veterans Memorial Park-  
way, Suite A  
Huntsville, TX 77320  
Phone: (936) 291-2161  
Fax (936) 291-8367  
BM: Carmella Jones  
PC: Michael Adams  
PC: Alfredo Salcido

### ▼ Units

Bell	Goree
Byrd	Holliday
Diboll	Huntsville
Duncan	Kegans SJ
Ellis	Wainwright
Estelle	Wynne
Ferguson	Federal (FCI)

## Palestine Board Office

133 E. Reagan St.  
Palestine, TX 75801  
Phone: (903) 723-1068  
Fax: (903) 723-1441  
BM: Brian Long  
PC: Jacqueline Bishop  
PC: James Paul Kiel

### ▼ Units

Beto
Billy Moore
Boyd
Coffield
East Texas
Gurney
Hodge

## San Antonio Board Office

2902 N. E. Loop 410, Suite 206  
San Antonio, TX 78218  
Phone: (210) 226-3721  
Fax: (210) 564-3726  
BM: Linda Molina  
PC: Ramond Gonzalez  
PC: Anthony Ramirez

### ▼ Units

Briscoe	Lopez SJ
Connally	McConnell
Cotulla	Ney SJ
Dominguez SJ	Segovia
Garza West	Torres
Glossbrenner SAFPF	Willacy County SJ



Please send us descriptions and photos of your events and achievements. Please make sure photos are in color and in the highest resolution possible. Write to: The ECHO, c/o "Lace Up," WSD Admin. Bldg., P.O. Box 40, Huntsville, TX 77342-0040.

## PLANE STATE JAIL

### Plane State Jail Holds Prep to Parent Graduation

The Prep to Parent class is a 20-25 day program teaching participants how to be a better parent to their child. Congratulations to graduates who include J. Castillo, B.

Little, G. Gavina, D. Lopez, K. Schengeli and A. Acosta. Not pictured are C. Sanchez and K. Salas, who also completed the program.



## MCCONNELL UNIT

### McConnell Unit Volleyball Tournament Exhibits Teamwork

*By Brandon Rushing*

Congratulations to the staff, residents and volunteers of the McConnell Unit for proving once again that a healthy dose of teamwork goes a long way. These men and women came together to put on a volleyball tournament, working together

to achieve team goals. It wasn't easy: there was fierce competition on the court. In the end, there can be no doubt that Team Side Out, coached by resident Jesse Rose, managed to go undefeated in the double elimination tournament. Yet the real winners were the men and women who learned the skills of teamwork and communication. This includes the ability to listen, communicate effectively and to act for the betterment of the group.

# MURRAY UNIT

## Patriot Paws Program Conducts Interviews for New Trainers

By Brenda Williams

Interviews to get into the Murray Unit's Patriot Paws Program were conducted by Warden England, Lane Murray Unit Patriot Paws Supervisor Espinoza, Riverside Unit Patriot Paws Supervisor Marling and trainers from the program's headquarters. The interviewers listened intently as applicants answered their questions.

The next phase was to see if the dogs accepted the applicants. Entering the Patriot Paws training area, the applicants were greeted by Senior Trainer Resident Denise Rummel and Resident Trainers Charlotte Redmond, Jacqueline Barnett, Stephanie Barron, Sheila Sanders and Stacey Brittain. The new trainers are being assigned to either the Lane Murray Training Facility or Riverside Training Facility. These women are training working service dogs for disabled veterans and using their time to give back to veterans while gaining new skills for an employable future.



## Murray Unit Recognizes Cognitive Life Skills Graduates

By Brenda Williams

The Murray Unit acknowledges all women who have taken its Cognitive Life Skills class. Graduates include Andrea Barocio, Vanessa Barton, Emily Collins, Adriana Cruz, Vicsy Gonzalez, Jeanie Hanna, Chrissie Harris, Dinesha Jackson, Elisa Losoya, Sandra McNeely, Christen Mitchell, Scheri Oliver, Latoya Palmer, Karen Paroline, Charlotte Redmond, Crystal Vanlandingham and Brenda Williams. These students have learned new methods of handling challenging situations that arise daily. The unit also wishes to give a shout out to the Life Coaches who taught this class.

## Murray Unit Celebrates Latest PFA Graduates

By Rebecca Lee

"This year, I had the privilege and pleasure of attending the graduation for the Prison Fellowship Academy (PFA)," said unit reporter Rebecca Lee. "The graduates' perseverance in completing the year-long program is inspiring. The opportunity to attend a graduation in cap and gown is a major event, especially for someone who did not graduate from high school or college."

The curriculum teaches many skills and tools for participants to apply to their lives. Participants spoke about learning their true value as individuals and learning to trust each other as sisters and friends. They also became a community that encourages one another and holds each other accountable.

The PFA is a life-changing program to those who take it seriously and apply its lessons to their life. The list of graduates include: Euella Cooper, Julia Cormier, Marsela Cortez, Tina Harris, Celeste Johnson, Geneva Leal, America Martinez, Cindy Mendoza, Mishel Montalbo, Mercedes Moza, Noemi Noria, Karen Paroline, Jaclyn Pennington, Evelyn Shires, Jeannie Voisin and Brenda Williams.

## Murray Unit Hosts Bi-Annual Kairos Weekend

By Lovie Denise Smith

Eighteen residents attended the Murray Unit's Kairos Weekend #29. Volunteers brought in good food and even better fellowship. The atmosphere was a warm and welcoming haven for volunteers and the attendees.



## CONNALLY UNIT

### Connally Campus Announces Winners of Poetry Contest

By Michael C. Highfill

The Connally Campus Library hosted an annual poetry competition. This competition is held on Windham campuses system-wide. The rules were defined as no more than 24 lines per poem and no more than five poems per resident. Reyes, who has been the librarian for seven years, said she was impressed with the 24 entries. When asked what she saw as the overall impact of residents writing poetry, Reyes rephrased a quote attributed to Mason Cooley, professor emeritus of the College of Staten Island, to describe the impact of resident poets: "Creativity gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are."

Winners were: First place Brian Hernandez, second place Erasmo Garza and third place Brian Hernandez. Garza said the winning poem stood out "because it was a positive message where opportunity was used [by the participant] to express himself and his thoughts." All poems will be published in a poetry booklet with winners highlighted. Included below is the winning poem:



#### A Thankful Prayer

By Brian Hernandez

God, I'm thankful for the physical ability you have,  
 Given me to open my eyes and see the sun.  
 I'm also thankful for the opportunity to reunite,  
 after all these years with my significant one.  
 I'm thankful we are able to talk at least once a week.  
 I'm thankful our minds are still intact and know  
 who we are and each other as we speak.  
 I'm thankful we are able to communicate in this  
 world and not have to communicate between two.  
 I'm most thankful because all the above would  
 not be possible without thanks from you.



## STEVENSON UNIT

### Kolbe Encourages Participants: 'Look within'

By Landon Brook

We can all relate to doing time, but are you accepting responsibility for the things you've done throughout your life? Have you taken the opportunity to look within yourself as your current situation is a powerful tool for growth? You must cut through all the noise that surrounds you to improve your life. There may be people around you who are telling you what you should and should not do, but only you have the power to realize what your passions are. You must pick the right path to follow to

achieve your dreams.

However, to discern the good advice from the bad, you must listen with love. Through love you will find a life filled with joy and peace. This year's Kolbe Retreat helped participants realize their power to listen from a viewpoint of love. Participants are looking at the experiences of their lives as a learning opportunity to open new doors with positive results. Even when someone is in a bad mood or having a bad day, anyone can stop and look for the lesson to be learned. Constantly ask yourself: is there a way I can improve in this situation?

## FERGUSON UNIT

### Ferguson Unit Employees Participate in Soccer Match

A soccer match took place on the Ferguson Unit's pitch, pitting the Day Shift Lions against the Night Shift Wolves. The game was competitive with the Lions eking out a 6-1 victory. The event was organized by Wardens Amonett, Carter and Touhami. The event planning committee

consisted of Sergeant Beamon, Sergeant Tarawalie, Field Training Officer Flowers and committee Chairman Officer Egwede. The atmosphere within the unit was charged with enthusiasm. Speaking at the gala after the match, Egwede said that the soccer tournament would become an annual event to promote health and fitness as well as to foster unity among the unit's employees. The warden staff presented the organizers and the players with certificates of participation.

## WOODMAN STATE JAIL CAMPUS

### Woodman State Jail Hosts Commencement Ceremony for Graduates

Five Woodman State Jail students recently earned high school diplomas (HSD) from the Jovita González de Mireles High School. The HSD program allows students to earn their diplomas while simultaneously earning college and career and technical education (CTE) credits. Graduates include Jazmine Colorado, T’Nese Davis, Bianca Esquivel, Kerrigan Gentle and Jayla King. Also graduating with a High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate from Windham were Dawn Green, Ashley Hale, Miranda Hammond and Alexis Montgomery.

In addition to the academic graduates, the ceremony recognized Windham’s CTE graduates. Two students, Tina Crump and Barbara Vandiver, earned their Customer Service Specialist certification while Peighton Brookshire, Andrea Delgado and Ruby Nelson earned Construction Technology certifications.

Central Texas College’s Site Director, Tara Lukehart, served as the ceremony’s keynote speaker. After congratulating the graduates on their accomplishments, she spoke about how education is something they would be able to hold on to for life. She also encouraged them to not be satisfied, but to become lifelong learners.

## WAINWRIGHT UNIT

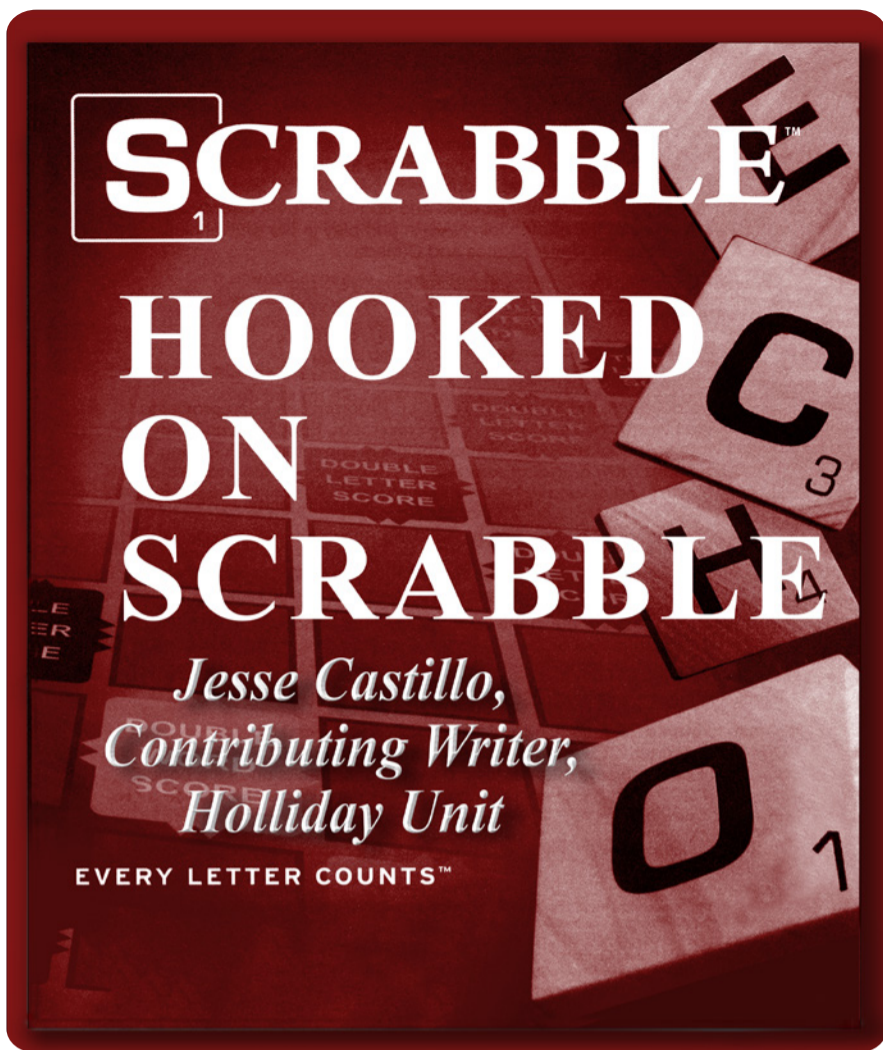
### Wainwright Unit’s G-Line Ministry Hosts Fun Day for Restrictive Housing

*By Johnny Wooten*

The faith-based G-Line Ministry hosted a Fun Day for members of the program. “I believe the teachers and field ministers are an essential part of this program and are extremely helpful,” resident Michael Cole said. “Everyone has come by to share knowledge that has helped me look

at certain situations in another perspective, which has helped me grow stronger spiritually and mentally. They make me feel like family.” G-Line Ministry consists of Richard Vasquez, Joseph Melton, Lance Morrison, Michael Parkinson, Field Minister Dwight Rogers, Field Minister William Jones and Field Minister Ezekiel Bell. Life Coach Ricardo Hernandez joined in the festivities of music, games and fellowship.





## What's Next

**I** I strongly believe that there is a way to play high-level, winning Scrabble. It has been my goal to show pitfalls that novice players should avoid.

Scenario #1: Player A has just dropped a nice seven-letter bingo on his fourth play and is gloating. This reminds me of a boxing match where a fighter lands a nice punch and pauses to admire his work.

Gloating is a recipe for disaster because you do not know how your opponent will counter your play. Will he use your letters to make an eight-letter bingo of his own, or did you leave the triple word score wide open? Draw seven letters out of the bag, shuffle them on your rack and find another bingo using the letters already played on the board. Some boxers are great counterpunchers, and I can remember playing an opponent who would almost always drop an eight-letter bingo behind my play. Basically, after you bingo, do not ease up. You are either the hunter or the hunted. I play my best Scrabble when I'm in the lead.

Scenario #2: After pulling my seven tiles to start the game, what's next? I use the Keep It Simple, Stupid (KISS) method. When it is your turn to start the game, start the game and play a word. There are a couple of exceptions, such as in drawing seven vowels or seven consonants. I remember one game where my starting letters were HRWCHTS. After much shuffling, I played CRWTH, which is an ancient stringed musical instrument. When the Scrabble bag gives you lemons, make lemonade. Whenever possible,

play instead of passing to start the game because the score is always doubled.

Scenario #3: It is late in the game, and the score is even and my opponent is trying to shut down the board. What's my response? I fight fire with fire. I double down, and I shut it down and wait for him to make a mistake and leave me an opening. This is kind of like the showdown at the O.K. Corral, and whoever blinks first loses. I learned this strategy from a formidable player who went by the name of "Doc." It has worked for me and maybe it will work for you also, but you must be patient and not blink first.

I hope these scenarios can provide some guidance, and they help you improve your game.

### Word Pyramid

AN  
 RAN  
 RANG  
 RANGE  
 GRANGE  
 GRANGER  
 GRANGERS  
  
 EX  
 EXPO  
 EXPOS  
 EXPOSE  
 EXPOSER  
 EXPOSERS

### Find all three-letter words in ORGANZA

AGA  
 AGO  
 ANA  
 AZO  
 GAN  
 GAR  
 GOA  
 GOR  
 HAG  
 NOG  
 NOR  
 OAR  
 ORA  
 ORG  
 RAG  
 RAN  
 ZAG  
 ZOA

### Your Rack: EYUPMFR

Your opponent plays: MAH-JONG - a game of Chinese origin.

M  
 A  
 H  
 J  
 O  
 N  
 G

### Your play: PERFUMY - scented

P  
 E  
 R  
 F  
 U  
 M  
 Y

MM - interjection used to express assent of satisfaction

*Good luck and may you always bingo at Scrabble!*





# Eat Up!

## Chapo's Not Yo' Mama's Nachos

Stephanie Garcia — Marlin Unit

### Ingredients:

- ¼ bag Shebangs
- 1 bag small potato chip
- ¼ bag pork skins, semi-crushed
- ¼ bag cheese puffs
- ¼ pickle, diced
- 10 turkey bites, diced
- ½ pk. ranch dressing
- ½ pk. cream cheese

### Directions:

Place chips, pork skins and cheese puffs in a bowl. Cook beans with your choice of seasonings; pour over chip mixture. Sprinkle diced turkey bites over beans, pour ranch and cream cheese on top then sprinkle with diced pickles. Enjoy!

## A Monte Christo

Rosalina Sanchez — Crain Unit

### Ingredients:

- 2 Danishes
- 1 chunk chicken
- 1 cup jalapeño cheese
- 1 cup cheese puffs, crushed
- ½ bag jalapeño chips, sub any chips
- 1 pk. cream cheese
- ½ cup crushed pork skins, optional

### Directions:

First, in a separate cup, mix jalapeño cheese and cream cheese. Next, combine chicken, crushed cheese puffs, crushed pork skins and ½ cheese mixture into a bowl. Then, open Danishes halfway and stuff with mixture. Use the other ½ of the cheese to coat the outside and roll Danishes in your finely crushed chips. Cook in your hot pot for one hour. Enjoy!

## Asian Noodles

Nancy "Ms. Doubtfire" Gelber - Murray Unit

### Ingredients:

- 1 chili soup, uncrushed
- 1 spoonful peanut butter
- 1 spoonful hot sauce
- 1 pkg. peanuts, crushed

### Directions:

Drain almost all the water from noodles. Add peanut butter, chili seasoning, hot sauce to soup and mix well. Top with peanuts. Enjoy!





# HEALTH & FITNESS

## The Cancer Project — Lung Cancer

By Angel “Coach” Rivera III — Wynne Unit

**F**irst let me say again that this project comes not only out of how hard I was hit by the passing of my mother in August of 2022, but also out of a personal desire to spread awareness of how everyone can be proactive in the fight against cancer. Although it’s true that we may not be able to prevent cancer in all instances, we can take measures to catch and identify it at earlier stages to prolong life, and in some cases, defeat it. With new advances in the medical field, we are able to defeat cancer more frequently. One of the biggest challenges we have is our tendency to be stubborn by saying nothing is wrong or, “I’ll take care of it when I get out.” Many new therapies have been approved in recent years to treat lung cancer, improving outcomes for many who have the disease. Early detection and regular checkups, however, remain the best way to defeat cancer!

It frustrates me how we — myself included — pass on taking tests because it’s inconvenient. My mission is to not only educate everyone on this topic, but also to emphasize the importance of getting tested — so when your name is on a lay-in for bloodwork, GO GET IT DONE! It could save your life.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among both men and women. Tobacco is the biggest risk factor for lung cancer, but approximately 20% of people who have received lung cancer diagnosis have never smoked or used any other form of tobacco.

### What is lung cancer?

Lung cancer occurs when cells inside the lungs grow out of control. The cancer can start in the bronchi (the tubes that allow air to move from the trachea into the lung), the bronchioles (the tiny tubes that carry air farther inside the lungs) or alveoli (the air sacs within the lung).

There are two types of lung cancer: non-small cell and

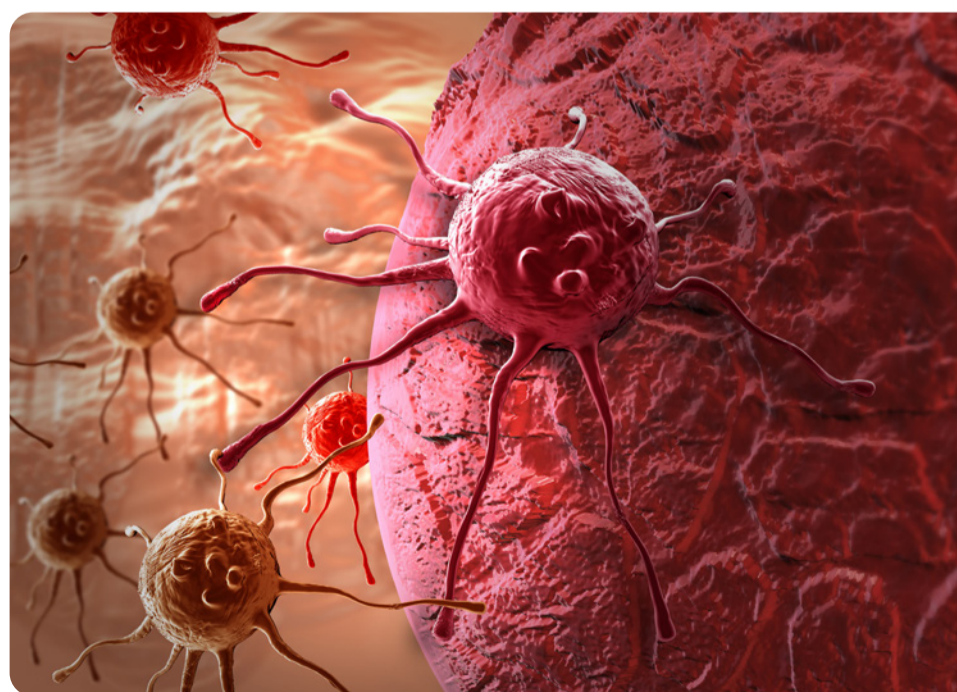
small cell. Non-small cell lung cancer, by far the most common type, is divided into three subtypes:

1. Adenocarcinoma starts in the cells that secrete substances such as mucus. Although it occurs mainly in people who have smoked, it’s also the most common type of lung cancer in people who have never smoked. It is found in the outer part of the lungs and is the most likely to be discovered before it has spread.
2. Squamous cell carcinoma occurs in the center of the lungs in cells that line the inside of the airway and is often linked with a history of smoking.
3. Large cell, or undifferentiated lung cancer, can appear anywhere in the lungs and tends to grow and spread aggressively.

Small cell lung cancer tends to grow and spread faster than non-small cell lung cancer. More treatments are available for non-small cell lung than for small cell lung cancer.

### What are the risk factors?

Smoking is the leading risk factor for lung cancer. Others include secondhand smoke; exposure to radon,



asbestos or other workplace chemicals; radiation therapy to the lungs; air pollution; and a personal or family history of lung cancer.

### **What are the symptoms?**

Lung cancer often causes no symptoms until it has grown past the early stages. Symptoms can include a persistent, worsening cough that may bring up blood; chest pain, especially with deep breathing or when laughing; hoarseness; loss of appetite; shortness of breath fatigue, and wheezing, bronchitis or pneumonia.

Lung cancer that spreads to other parts of the body can cause bone pain, such as in the back or hips; nervous system changes such as headache, dizziness or seizures; yellow skin or eyes, or swollen lymph nodes.

### **How is lung cancer diagnosed and staged?**

Most lung cancers are found because a patient has symptoms, although some are detected through screening. Health insurers will cover periodic screening via low dose CT scans for people with a history of heavy smoking. Screening can reveal lung cancers when they are still too small to cause symptoms and are more likely to be curable. If lung cancer is caught before it spreads, the likelihood of surviving five years increases to 60%.

Although only low dose CT scans are recommended to screen for lung cancer, doctors who suspect lung cancer can use a chest X-ray, MRI, positron emission tomography scan or bone scan, which uses radioactive material to pinpoint abnormal areas.

If any of those tests point to lung cancer, pathologists can look at the cells to determine whether they are cancerous. The cells can be from mucus coughed up from the lungs, fluid removed from the area around the lungs, or a needle or surgical biopsy of lung tissue.

If cancer is present, determining whether it has spread past the lungs can be revealed through several additional tests, such as:

1. Ultrasound of the lymph nodes.
2. Mediastinoscopy or mediastinotomy (which checks between the lungs).
3. Thoracoscopy (which checks between the lungs and chest wall).

Patients with lung cancer should request that their treating physician conduct comprehensive biomarker, or genomic, testing of their tumor tissue, which can help determine which treatments are likely to be most effective. Genomic testing looks for altered genes that drive cancer and can be targeted with therapies.

### **How is lung cancer treated?**

#### *Non-small cell lung cancer*

For early-stage lung cancer, surgical removal of part of the lung may be the only treatment needed. Surgery may also be followed by chemotherapy and/or radiation.

Treatment for stage II non-small cell lung cancer entails surgical removal of part or all of the affected lung and any cancerous lymph nodes, followed by chemotherapy to kill any remaining cancer. The mainstays of stage III treatment are chemotherapy and radiation given together, sometimes followed by surgery if the cancer can be removed, and then more chemotherapy and radiation. If the cancer has grown too much to be completely removed by surgery, chemotherapy and radiation alone may control or even cure it. These treatments may be followed by immunotherapy to help keep the disease stable. Stage IV non-small cell lung cancer has spread extensively and is difficult to cure. The goal of treatment is to prolong life and increase physical comfort. Therapies are selected based on the number of tumors and their location. The same treatment used in early stages, plus targeted therapies and immunotherapies, can be considered depending on the results of tests on the tumor cells. Some of these newer biological therapies can extend lives.

#### *Small cell lung cancer*

Chemotherapy and radiation therapy to the chest are typical treatments; sometimes surgery is performed first, but it is not possible in many cases.

Radiation therapy to the head may be used to help prevent the cancer's spread to the brain. If the cancer is extensive, chemotherapy plus immunotherapy is usually the first treatment. This may be followed with radiation therapy to the chest and brain.

Clinical trials of new treatments can be considered for either limited or extensive small cell lung cancer, which may shrink significantly with standard therapy but have a high likelihood of reoccurring.

### **What are the potential side effects of treatments?**

Side effects of surgery can include pain, cough, fatigue and difficulty breathing. Chemotherapy can cause low blood counts that can lead to infection, nausea, hair loss, fatigue, mouth sores and numbness or tingling in the extremities. Those who receive radiation may experience mild skin reactions, nausea, fatigue or sore throat. Targeted drugs can cause high blood pressure, bleeding, headaches, mouth sores, diarrhea, skin problems, constipation, vision changes and dizziness. Immunotherapy can cause fatigue, nausea, cough, itching, joint pain, constipation and diarrhea. A palliative care specialist can help patients with lung cancer manage side effects at all stages. ●

# HEALTH & FITNESS

## Fitness Profile:

### Michael Overall

**Age:** 36  
**Weight:** 180  
**Height:** 5' 11"  
**Unit:** Wynne

#### Fitness Goals

At this stage in my life, I'm not trying to work out to get big and bulky; I would just like to maintain the muscle mass that I have by doing high intensity exercises and eating right.

#### Motivation

The only person who can truly motivate you is yourself. If you don't like what you see when you walk by a mirror, then you are your own worst enemy.

#### Regimen

With going to work, school and watching movies on my tablet, I've realized I have to get exercise in when I can! I usually do a workout I like to call the "Dirty 30." It's especially good when I am strapped for time. It consists of 30 squats, 30 push-ups and 30 sit-ups. I usually do 10 sets to make it an even 300 reps overall.

#### Favorite exercise

Pull-ups and curls are usually my favorites—or any exercise to get the blood pumping in my arms. There's also any abdominal exercise, i.e., leg lifts, V-Ups or crunches.

#### Least favorite exercise

SQUATS! We have a love-hate relationship. I hate doing them but love to see the results I get

- and feel all the strength that I gain from them. Anyone who bodybuilds knows legs are a staple to getting bigger and stronger.

#### Diet

I eat oatmeal and peanut butter in the morning, and I snack on an energizer mix and peanuts with a Chike or some milk right after a workout. I eat strictly turkey bites in a spread, or maybe with rice. Plus, I eat everything else that I can eat in the chow hall.

#### Advice for beginners

Stay consistent and don't overtrain, but instead progressively build your body up by raising the bar each week with more reps and extra sets.

#### Final advice

Never give up, and don't let others discourage you from achieving your goals. You can do anything that you set your mind to do.

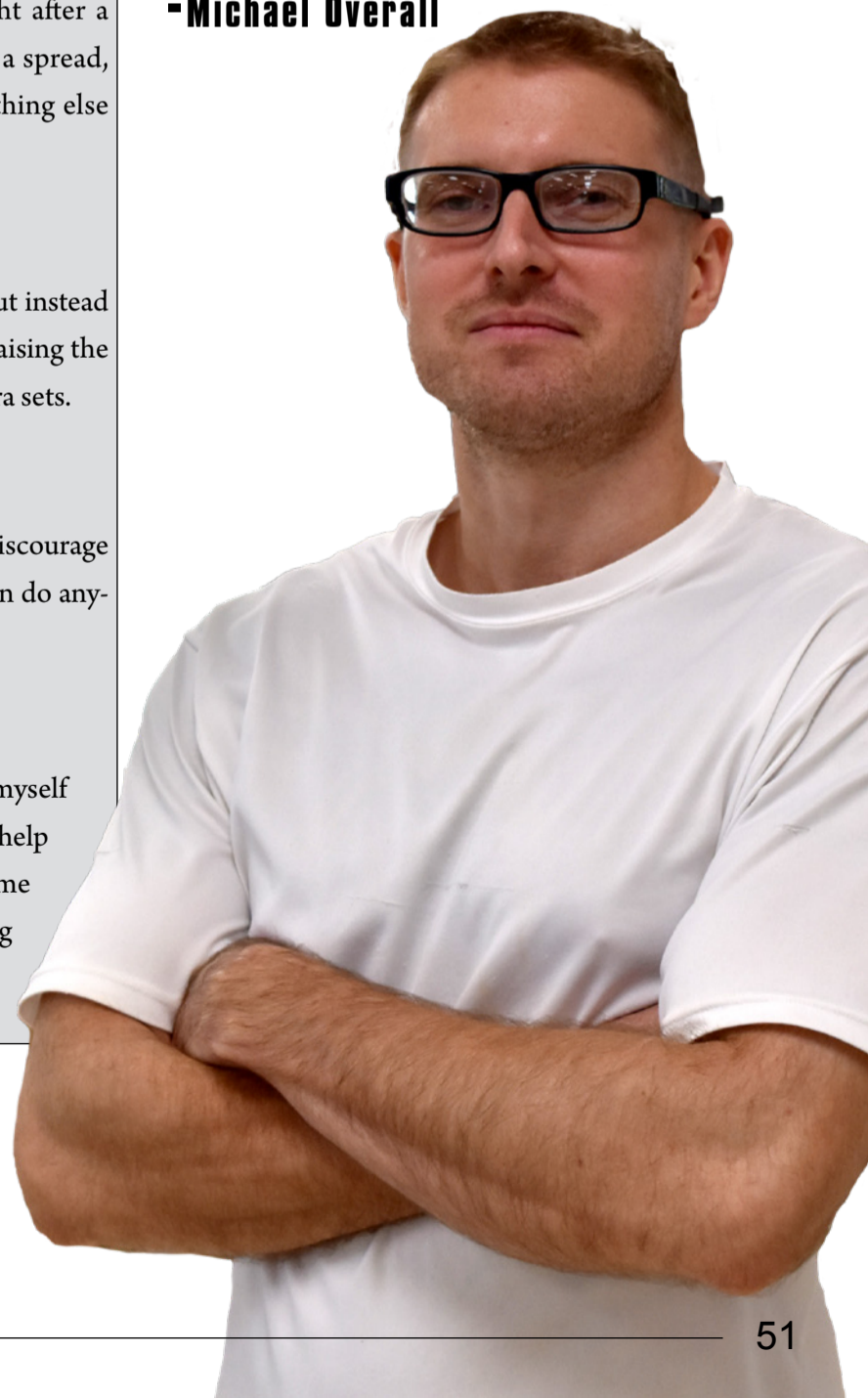
#### Other interests

Besides working out, I try to better myself in any way that I can. Reading self-help books and my Bible helps to keep me in a positive state of mind. Taking educational chapel classes and a vocation also really help. ★

“

Stay consistent and don't overtrain, but instead progressively build your body up by raising the bar each week with more reps and extra sets.

-Michael Overall



# SPORTS VIEW

By William E. Hill - Staff Writer



## Plans Made - Plans Changed

### *Baseball*

The most interesting storyline of the 2023 Major League Baseball (MLB) season is not the amazing pennant races or which team wins the World Series. The future of Los Angeles Angels superstar, Shohei Ohtani, has been the talk of the sport all season. The 29-year-old designated hitter/starting pitcher was set to be the most sought-after free agent in recent history.

Ohtani's dominance was put on display during the World Baseball Classic where he struck out his Angels teammate, Mike Trout, for the final out in the title game. For his effort, he was awarded the international tournament's Most Valuable Player (MVP) honors.

When the regular season began, Ohtani was a man on a double mission: to help the Angels get into the postseason for the first time in a very long while and to put his talents on display for teams who might be interested in bidding for his services in the offseason. The two-way superstar is expected to be MLB's first \$500 million player. Then, in late August, the unthinkable happened—Ohtani suffered an injury to his already surgically repaired elbow. Ligament replacement surgery, commonly referred to as Tommy John surgery, has helped to prolong the career of numerous athletes over the decades. John, the New York Yankee pitcher was the first athlete to have this procedure done.

Ohtani's numbers for this season made him the runaway favorite to earn his second regular season MVP award. Even after being shut down in September due to inflammation in his strained oblique muscle, and with 20 or so games left to

be played, Ohtani is still considered the frontrunner for the award. He has 44 home runs, 96 runs batted in, eight triples and 20 stolen bases to go along with a .304 batting average and an incredible 1.066 on-base plus slugging percentage. Those numbers alone would put him in the conversation for the award. When his pitching stats are added into the equation (10-5 won/loss record with a 3.14 earned run average and 167 strikeouts and 55 walks in 132 innings pitched over 23 starts), one sees why he is the most valuable player in the league - whether he wins the award or not.

Some like to compare him to George Herman Ruth, better known as "Babe" Ruth, but there is no comparison. Ohtani is doing things on the diamond that Ruth never dreamt of doing. When Ruth pitched, his best offensive season was 29 home runs in 1919. Yes, Ruth played in the "dead ball era," and there is no question that the baseballs used today are vastly different than the ones used then, but that is the nature of sports and life: things change.

The question now is: how much is the pending surgery, which will limit Ohtani to only batting in 2024, going to cost him? In my opinion, not much. Ohtani is a better hitter than the New York Yankees' Aaron Judge, who signed before the season for a paltry \$360 million.

The other question concerning Ohtani is this: Where is Ohtani going to take his talents in 2024? Obviously the Angels would love to keep him in Anaheim, but are they going to be able to pony up the yen it will require, and can the team convince him that they will be competitive? The answer to the first part of the question is yes. Angels' majority

owner Arte Moreno has deep pockets and is not averse to sharing it with those he believes can help deliver a second Commissioner's Trophy to the organization. The answer to the second part is tricky. The team has tried to fashion a championship-caliber roster the past few seasons, but things haven't worked out.

If Ohtani does decide to leave sunny southern California, I know a team located in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex that is building a contending team, and whose owners do not mind spending mega millions. I wonder how you say "y'all" in Japanese?

## *Football*

The two storylines in football center around two teams — the New York Jets and the University of Colorado Buffaloes; one is snake-bitten, and the other is rolling in a field of golden four-leaf clovers. Consider the phrase Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote, "The best laid plans of mice and men," in his poem "To a Mousie." These words have come to mean that even the most fastidious plans are subject to the whims of fate.

The National Football League's New York Jets did everything right this past offseason to end decades of mediocrity. First, they traded for disgruntled Green Bay Packers' quarterback Aaron Rodgers. Then they surrounded him with players with whom he is familiar. These include former Packers' wide receivers Allen Lazard and Randall Cobb, as well as free agent running back Dalvin Cook, to pair with second-year back Breece Hall. The early analysis of the organization's offseason moves was that they were a play-off contender and possibly a championship caliber team.

Who could have foreseen that Rodgers' inaugural season in Jets green would last all of four plays? On the fourth play of the season opener, the Buffalo Bills' Leonard Floyd sacked the future hall-of-fame signal caller and ended his season.

The injury raises questions for both the player and the organization. First, is the 39-year-old Rodgers going to come back next season? He was adamant after the trade that his season would not be a one and done deal — that he was there for at least two seasons. In his first Instagram post after having surgery, Rodgers wrote, "It is always darkest before the dawn. I will rise again." Does that mean he does plan to come back, or is that a cryptic message that he is moving to Phoenix? With Rodgers, it's hard to tell.

The organization must determine what it is going to do this season. Is it going to stick with backup quarterback, Zach Wilson, who played so badly in 2022 that his teammates wore tee-shirts emblazoned with the image of Mike White,

the team's back up at the position. When your coworkers are openly championing your replacement, that is a problem.

The other option is trading for a veteran or signing a free agent. Who is available that would give the team a better chance of winning than Wilson? The answer: almost everybody. Is Tom Brady available? Kidding! Truthfully, I don't think it matters what the team does; this is just another lost season in the decades of lost seasons for the team.

The University of Colorado made the decision to hire former Jackson State University Head Football Coach Deion Sanders after the team won only one game in 2022. The school gave Sanders carte blanche over the program, and Sanders has taken advantage of that freedom to build a winning team. He released almost the entire team from 2022 and brought in 68 scholarship players through the transfer portal.

The transfer portal is a game changer for college athletes as it empowers the players. In the "bad ol' days," coaches could subvert the NCAA rules, get their school placed on probation, and then leave for a new job without any restrictions while the players had to sleep in the bed that the coach had made. Not anymore. Now players can put their name and resume in the portal and a coach that wants them can sign them. Sanders used the transfer portal to bring almost 70 new players to the team including his two sons, She-deur and Shiloh Sanders, the starting quarterback and cornerback respectively, to Boulder with him. He also brought defensive back/wide receiver Travis Hunter with him.

Those additions to the roster have helped the Colorado Buffaloes to a 3-0 start for the first time in several decades after victories over Texas Christian University, the University of Nebraska and in-state rival Colorado State University. According to ESPN, the Buffaloes game against Colorado State was the network's most watched late-night college football game with 9.3 million viewers. The Buffaloes' schedule got considerably more difficult with games against two highly-ranked opponents. They were the #10 ranked University of Oregon Ducks and the #five ranked University of Southern California Trojans.

While the Buffaloes are vastly improved over last season's team, they are not a threat to crash the College Football Playoff system this season. However, give Coach Prime another recruiting class of his players and they will be in contention. As Sanders said after the loss to Oregon, "You better get us now because this will be as low as we get."

It is true that failing to plan is planning to fail, but we must also remember that whether one chooses to call it destiny, fate, karma or providence, the success of our plans depends on something bigger than ourselves. ●

# Dallas, Houston and San Antonio Team Schedules for 2023-2024

The 2023-2024 National Basketball Association (NBA) season is one of interesting storylines. Can LeBron James continue to defy Father Time in his quest to play with his son, Bronny James? Who is going to challenge the Denver Nuggets for the title? Is Chris Paul's joining the Golden State Warriors the formation of the latest Super Team or simply another aging star chasing that elusive title? To tell the truth, I have no idea. My crystal ball/hot pot combo doesn't work that well with basketball; however, what I can tell you is that I have the season schedules for the three NBA teams that call Texas home: Dallas Mavericks, Houston Rockets and San Antonio Spurs.

## DALLAS MAVERICKS

The Mavericks must determine whose team they are: Luka Doncic's or Kyrie Irving's. After trading for the perpetually disgruntled Irving before the trade deadline in 2022-23, the Mavericks somehow got worse. After making it to the Western Conference Finals in 2021-22, the team failed to even make the playoffs in 2022-23. The rhetoric coming out of the front office after the past season was that the Mavericks were going to get better defensively. That didn't happen. This team has two questions: first, will Irving finally be content, or will he continue to be a malcontent? The second question is how well will the tandem work this season? Even without a crystal ball I can see Irving forcing himself out of the Big D to a team on the West Coast, especially if the team gets off to a slow start.

Oct. 25 @ San Antonio 9:30 p.m. ESPN

Oct. 27 vs Brooklyn 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 30 @ Memphis 8:00 p.m.

Nov. 1 vs Chicago 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 3 @ Denver 10:00 p.m.

Nov. 5 vs Charlotte 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 6 @ Orlando 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 8 vs Toronto 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 10 vs L.A. Clippers 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 12 @ New Orleans 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 14 @ New Orleans 8:00 p.m.

Nov. 15 @ Washington 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 18 @ Milwaukee 8:00 p.m.

Nov. 19 vs Sacramento 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 22 @ L.A. Lakers 10:30 p.m.

Nov. 25 @ L.A. Clippers 10:30 p.m.

Nov. 28 vs Houston 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 1 vs Memphis 7:30 p.m. ESPN

Dec. 2 vs Oklahoma City 9:00 p.m.

Dec. 11 @ Memphis 8:00 p.m.

Dec. 12 vs L.A. Lakers 7:30 p.m. TNT

Dec. 14 vs Minnesota 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 16 @ Portland 9:00 p.m.

Dec. 18 @ Denver 9:00 p.m.

Dec. 20 vs L.A. Clippers 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 22 @ Houston 8:00 p.m.

Dec. 23 vs San Antonio 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 25 @ Phoenix 10:30 p.m. ESPN

Dec. 27 vs Cleveland 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 28 @ Minnesota 8:00 p.m.

Dec. 30 @ Golden St. 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 1, 2024 @ Utah 9:00 p.m.

Jan. 3, 2024 vs Portland 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 5, 2024 vs Portland 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 7, 2024 vs Minnesota 7:30 p.m.

Jan. 9, 2024 vs Memphis 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 11, 2024 vs New York 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 13, 2024 vs New Orleans 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 15, 2024 vs New Orleans 2:30 p.m.

Jan. 17, 2024 @ L.A. Lakers 10:00 p.m. ESPN

Jan. 19, 2024 @ Golden St. 10:00 p.m. ESPN

Jan. 22, 2024 vs Boston 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 24, 2024 vs Phoenix 10:00 p.m. ESPN

Jan. 26, 2024 @ Atlanta 7:00 p.m.

Jan. 27, 2024 vs Sacramento 9:00 p.m.

Jan. 29, 2024 vs Orlando 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 31, 2024 @ Minnesota 8:00 p.m.

Feb. 3, 2024 vs Milwaukee 8:30 p.m.

Feb. 5, 2024 @ Philadelphia 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 6, 2024 @ Brooklyn 7:30 p.m. TNT

Feb. 8, 2024 @ New York 7:30 p.m. TNT

Feb. 10, 2024 vs Oklahoma City 3:00 p.m.

Feb. 12, 2024 vs Washington 8:30 p.m.

Feb. 14, 2024 vs San Antonio 8:30 p.m.

Feb. 22, 2024 vs Phoenix 7:30 p.m. TNT

Feb. 25, 2024 @ Indiana 5:00 p.m.

Feb. 27, 2024 @ Cleveland 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 28 @ Toronto 7:30 p.m.

March 1, 2024 @ Boston 7:30 p.m. ESPN

March 3 vs Philadelphia 1:00 p.m. ABC

March 5, 2024 vs Indiana 8:30 p.m.

March 7, 2024 vs Miami 7:30 p.m. TNT

March 9, 2024 @ Detroit 7:00 p.m.

March 11, 2024 @ Chicago 8:00 p.m.

March 13, 2024 vs Golden St. 8:30 p.m.

March 14, 2024 @ Oklahoma City 10:00 p.m. TNT

March 17, 2024 vs Denver 3:30 p.m. ABC

March 19, 2024 @ San Antonio 8:00 p.m.

March 21, 2024 vs Utah 8:30 p.m.

March 25, 2024 @ Utah 9:00 p.m.

March 26, 2024 @ Sacramento 10:00 p.m. TNT

March 29, 2024 @ Sacramento 10:00 p.m.

March 31, 2024 @ Houston 7:00 p.m.

April 2, 2024 vs Golden St. 7:30 p.m. TNT

April 5, 2024 vs Atlanta 8:30 p.m.

April 7, 2024 vs Houston 3:30 p.m.

April 9, 2024 @ Charlotte 7:00 p.m.

April 10, 2024 @ Miami 7:30 p.m. ESPN

April 12, 2024 vs Detroit 8:30 p.m.

April 14, 2024 @ Oklahoma City 3:30 p.m.

## HOUSTON ROCKETS

The Rockets' rebuilding project is progressing quicker than I thought it would after James Harden forced his way out of town a couple of seasons ago. With back-to-back drafts with lottery picks, the team is building a solid roster. The additions of Jabari Smith Jr. in 2022, Aaron Holiday in 2023 and adding Ime Udoka as the head coach makes for an exciting team to watch every night. Remember, I said exciting--not necessarily good.

Oct. 25 @ Orlando 6:00 p.m.

Oct. 27 @ San Antonio 7:00 p.m.

Oct. 29 vs Golden State 6:00 p.m.

Nov. 1 vs Charlotte 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 4 vs Sacramento 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 6 vs Sacramento 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 8 vs Los Angeles 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 10 vs New Orleans 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 12 vs Denver 6:00 p.m.

Nov. 17 @ LA 9:30 p.m.

Nov. 19 @ Los Angeles 8:30 p.m.

Nov. 20 @ Golden State 9:00 p.m.

Nov. 22 vs Memphis 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 24 vs Denver 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 28 @ Dallas 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 29 @ Denver 8:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 2 @ Los Angeles 9:30 p.m.  
 Dec. 11 vs San Antonio 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 13 vs Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 15 @ Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 17 @ Milwaukee 6:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 18 @ Cleveland 6:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 20 vs Atlanta 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 22 vs Dallas 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 23 @ New Orleans 6:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 26 vs Indiana 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 27 vs Phoenix 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 29 vs Philadelphia 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 1, 2024 vs Detroit 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 3, 2024 vs Brooklyn 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 5, 2024 vs Minnesota 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 6, 2024 vs Milwaukee 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 8, 2024 @ Miami 6:30 p.m.  
 Jan. 10, 2024 @ Chicago 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 12, 2024 @ Detroit 6:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Jan. 13, 2024 @ Boston 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 15, 2024 @ Philadelphia 12:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 17, 2024 @ New York 6:30 p.m.  
 Jan. 20, 2024 vs Utah 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 21, 2024 vs Boston 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 24, 2024 vs Portland 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 26, 2024 @ Charlotte 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 27, 2024 @ Brooklyn 5:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 29, 2024 vs Los Angeles 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 31, 2024 vs New Orleans 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 2, 2024 vs Toronto 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 4, 2024 @ Minnesota 6:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 6, 2024 @ Indiana 6:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 9, 2024 @ Toronto 6:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 10, 2024 @ Atlanta 6:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 12, 2024 vs New York 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 14, 2024 @ Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 22, 2024 @ New Orleans 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 23, 2024 vs Phoenix 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 25, 2024 vs Oklahoma City 6:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 27, 2024 @ Oklahoma City 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 29, 2024 @ Phoenix 8:00 p.m.  
 March 2, 2024 @ Phoenix 8:00 p.m.  
 March 5, 2024 vs San Antonio 7:00 p.m.  
 March 6, 2024 vs LA 7:00 p.m.  
 March 8, 2024 @ Portland 9:00 p.m.  
 March 10, 2024 @ Sacramento 5:00 p.m.  
 March 12, 2024 @ San Antonio 7:30 p.m.  
 March 14, 2024 vs Washington 7:00 p.m.  
 March 16, 2024 vs Cleveland 4:00 p.m.  
 March 19, 2024 @ Washington 6:00 p.m.  
 March 21, 2024 vs Chicago 7:00 p.m.  
 March 23, 2024 vs Utah 7:00 p.m.  
 March 25, 2024 vs Portland 7:00 p.m.

March 27, 2024 @ Oklahoma City 7:00 p.m.  
 March 29, 2024 @ Utah 8:30 p.m.  
 March 31, 2024 vs Dallas 6:00 p.m.  
 April 2, 2024 @ Minnesota 7:00 p.m.  
 April 4, 2024 vs Golden State 7:00 p.m.  
 April 5, 2024 vs Miami 7:00 p.m.  
 April 7, 2024 @ Dallas 2:30 p.m.  
 April 9, 2024 vs Orlando 7:00 p.m.  
 April 11, 2024 @ Utah 8:00 p.m.  
 April 12, 2024 @ Portland 9:00 p.m.  
 April 14, 2024 @ LA 2:30 p.m.

## SAN ANTONIO SPURS

The Spurs are must-watch basketball with the drafting of Victor Wembanyama with the first overall pick in the draft. One thing about Spurs Head Coach, Greg Popovich, is that he has a proven track record coaching top draft picks and international players. For example, there is Wembanyama, the seven-foot center, who is projected to be the next big thing in the NBA--if you will pardon the pun. This season will be a learning lesson for the young phenom, but expect the Spurs who know how to build a roster around a dominant player to be competing for a title within the next few years.

Oct. 25 vs Dallas 8:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Oct. 27 vs Houston 7:00 p.m.  
 Oct. 29 @ LA 8:00 p.m.  
 Oct. 31 @ Phoenix 9:00 p.m. TNT  
 Nov. 2 @ Phoenix 9:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 5 vs Toronto 2:30 p.m.  
 Nov. 6 @ Indiana 6:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 8 @ New York 6:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Nov. 10 vs Minnesota 7:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 12 vs Miami 6:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 14 @ Oklahoma City 6:30 p.m. TNT  
 Nov. 17 vs Sacramento 6:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Nov. 18 vs Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 20 vs LA 7:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 22 vs LA 7:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 24 @ Golden State 9:00 p.m. ESPN  
 Nov. 26 @ Denver 7:00 p.m.  
 Nov. 30 vs Atlanta 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 1 @ New Orleans 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 11 @ Houston 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 13 vs Los Angeles 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 15 vs Los Angeles 6:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Dec. 17 vs New Orleans 2:30 p.m.  
 Dec. 19 @ Milwaukee 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 21 @ Chicago 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 23 @ Dallas 7:30 p.m.  
 Dec. 26 vs Utah 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 28 @ Portland 9:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 29 @ Portland 9:00 p.m.

Dec. 31 vs Boston 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 2, 2024 @ Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 4, 2024 vs Milwaukee 6:30 p.m. TNT  
 Jan. 7, 2024 @ Cleveland 12:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 10, 2024 @ Detroit 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 12, 2024 vs Charlotte 9:00 p.m. ESPN  
 Jan. 13, 2024 vs Chicago 7:30 p.m.  
 Jan. 15, 2024 @ Atlanta 2:30 p.m. TNT  
 Jan. 17, 2024 @ Boston 6:30 p.m.  
 Jan. 19, 2024 @ Charlotte 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 20, 2024 @ Washington 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 22, 2024 @ Philadelphia 6:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 24, 2024 vs Oklahoma City 6:30 p.m. ESPN  
 Jan. 26, 2024 vs Portland 8:30 p.m. NBA TV  
 Jan. 27, 2024 vs Minnesota 7:30 p.m.  
 Jan. 29, 2024 vs Washington 7:00 p.m.  
 Jan. 31, 2024 vs Orlando 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 2, 2024 vs New Orleans 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 3, 2024 vs Cleveland 7:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 7, 2024 @ Miami 6:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 8, 2024 @ Orlando 6:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 10, 2024 @ Brooklyn 5:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 12, 2024 @ Toronto 6:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 14, 2024 @ Dallas 7:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 22, 2024 @ Sacramento 9:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 23, 2024 @ Los Angeles 9:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 25, 2024 @ Utah 7:00 p.m.  
 Feb. 27, 2024 @ Minnesota 6:30 p.m.  
 Feb. 29, 2024 vs Oklahoma City 7:30 p.m.  
 March 3, 2024 vs Indiana 6:00 p.m.  
 March 5, 2024 @ Houston 7:00 p.m.  
 March 7, 2024 @ Sacramento 9:00 p.m.  
 March 9, 2024 @ Golden State 7:30 p.m.  
 March 11, 2024 vs Golden State 7:00 p.m.  
 March 12, 2024 vs Houston 7:30 p.m.  
 March 15, 2024 vs Denver \* 7:30 p.m.  
 March 17, 2024 vs Brooklyn \* 6:00 p.m.  
 March 19, 2024 vs Dallas 7:00 p.m.  
 March 22, 2024 vs Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 March 23, 2024 vs Phoenix 7:00 p.m.  
 March 25, 2024 vs Phoenix 7:00 p.m.  
 March 27, 2024 @ Utah 8:00 p.m.  
 March 29, 2024 vs New York 7:00 p.m.  
 March 31, 2024 vs Golden State 6:00 p.m.  
 April 2, 2024 @ Denver 8:00 p.m.  
 April 5, 2024 @ New Orleans 7:00 p.m.  
 April 7, 2024 vs Philadelphia 6:00 p.m.  
 April 9, 2024 @ Memphis 7:00 p.m.  
 April 10, 2024 @ Oklahoma City 7:00 p.m.  
 April 12, 2024 vs Denver 7:00 p.m.  
 April 14, 2024 vs Detroit 2:30 p.m. ●



**HOUSTON TEXANS**

L	@ Baltimore	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Indianapolis	12:00	FOX
W	@ Jacksonville	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
L	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	FOX
OCT. 22	<b>BYE</b>		
OCT. 29	@ Carolina	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	CBS
NOV. 12	@ Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
NOV. 19	Vs. Arizona	12:00	CBS
NOV. 26	Vs. Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
DEC. 3	Vs. Denver	3:05	CBS
DEC. 10	@ N.Y. Jets	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	@ Tennessee	12:00	CBS
DEC. 24	Vs. Cleveland	12:00	CBS
DEC. 31	Vs. Tennessee	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	@ Indianapolis	TBD	

**DALLAS COWBOYS**

W	@ N.Y. Giants	7:20	NBC
W	Vs. N.Y. Jets	3:25	CBS
L	@ Arizona	3:25	FOX
W	Vs. New England	3:25	FOX
L	@ San Francisco	7:20	NBC
W	@ L.A. Chargers	7:15	ESPN
OCT. 22	<b>BYE</b>		
OCT. 29	Vs. L.A. Rams	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	@ Philadelphia	3:25	FOX
NOV. 12	Vs. N.Y. Giants	3:25	FOX
NOV. 19	@ Carolina	12:00	FOX
NOV. 23	Vs. Washington	3:30	CBS
NOV. 30	Vs. Seattle	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 10	Vs. Philadelphia	7:20	NBC
DEC. 17	@ Buffalo	3:25	FOX
DEC. 24	@ Miami	3:25	FOX
DEC. 30	Vs. Detroit	7:15	ESPN
JAN. 7	@ Washington	TBD	

**ARIZONA CARDINALS**

L	@ Washington	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. N.Y. Giants	3:05	FOX
W	Vs. Dallas	3:25	FOX
L	@ S.F. 49ers	3:25	FOX
L	Vs. Cincinnati	3:05	FOX
L	@ L.A. Rams	3:25	FOX
L	@ Seattle	3:05	FOX
OCT. 29	Vs. Baltimore	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	@ Cleveland	12:00	FOX
NOV. 12	Vs. Atlanta	3:05	CBS
NOV. 19	@ Houston	12:00	CBS
NOV. 26	Vs. L.A. Rams	3:05	FOX
DEC. 3	@ Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
DEC. 10	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 17	Vs. S.F. 49ers	3:05	CBS
DEC. 24	@ Chicago	3:25	FOX
DEC. 31	@ Philadelphia	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	Vs. Seattle	TBD	

**ATLANTA FALCONS**

L	Vs. Carolina	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Green Bay	12:00	FOX
L	@ Detroit	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Jacksonville	8:30	ESPN+
W	Vs. Houston	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Washington	12:00	CBS
W	@ Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
OCT. 29	@ Tennessee	12:00	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Minnesota	12:00	FOX
NOV. 12	@ Arizona	3:05	CBS
NOV. 19	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 26	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	FOX
DEC. 3	@ N.Y. Jets	12:00	FOX
DEC. 10	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	@ Carolina	TBD	
DEC. 24	Vs. Indianapolis	12:00	FOX
DEC. 31	@ Chicago	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	@ New Orleans	TBD	

**BALTIMORE RAVENS**

W	Vs. Houston	12:00	CBS
W	@ Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Indianapolis	12:00	CBS
W	@ Cleveland	12:00	CBS
L	@ Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. Tennessee	8:30	NFLN
W	Vs. Detroit	12:00	FOX
OCT. 29	@ Arizona	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Seattle	12:00	CBS
NOV. 12	Vs. Cleveland	12:00	FOX
NOV. 16	Vs. Cincinnati	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 26	@ L.A. Chargers	7:20	NBC
DEC. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 10	Vs. L.A. Rams	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	@ Jacksonville	7:20	NBC
DEC. 25	@ S.F. 49ers	7:15	ABC
DEC. 31	Vs. Miami	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Pittsburgh	TBD	

**BUFFALO BILLS**

L	@ N.Y. Jets	7:15	ESPN
W	Vs. Las Vegas	12:00	CBS
W	@ Washington	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. Miami	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Jacksonville	8:30	NFLN
W	Vs. N.Y. Giants	7:20	NBC
L	@ New England	12:00	CBS
OCT. 26	Vs. Tampa Bay	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 5	@ Cincinnati	7:20	NBC
NOV. 13	Vs. Denver	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 19	Vs. N.Y. Jets	3:25	CBS
NOV. 26	@ Philadelphia	3:25	CBS
DEC. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 10	@ Kansas City	3:25	CBS
DEC. 17	Vs. Dallas	3:25	FOX
DEC. 23	@ L.A. Chargers	7:00	Peacock
DEC. 31	Vs. New England	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	@ Miami	TBD	

**CAROLINA PANTHERS**

L	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. New Orleans	6:15	ESPN
L	@ Seattle	3:05	CBS
L	Vs. Minnesota	12:00	FOX
L	@ Detroit	12:00	FOX
L	@ Miami	12:00	CBS
OCT. 22	<b>BYE</b>		
OCT. 29	Vs. Houston	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. Indianapolis	3:05	CBS
NOV. 9	@ Chicago	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 19	Vs. Dallas	12:00	FOX
NOV. 26	@ Tennessee	12:00	FOX
DEC. 3	@ Tampa Bay	12:00	CBS
DEC. 10	@ New Orleans	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	Vs. Atlanta	TBD	
DEC. 24	Vs. Green Bay	12:00	FOX
DEC. 31	@ Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Tampa Bay	TBD	

**CHICAGO BEARS**

L	Vs. Green Bay	3:25	FOX
L	@ Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
L	@ Kansas City	3:25	FOX
L	Vs. Denver	12:00	CBS
W	@ Washington	7:15	PRIME
L	Vs. Minnesota	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Las Vegas	12:00	FOX
OCT. 29	@ L.A. Chargers	7:20	NBC
NOV. 5	@ New Orleans	12:00	CBS
NOV. 9	Vs. Carolina	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 19	@ Detroit	12:00	FOX
NOV. 27	@ Minnesota	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 3	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 10	Vs. Detroit	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	@ Cleveland	TBD	
DEC. 24	Vs. Arizona	3:25	FOX
DEC. 28	Vs. Atlanta	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	@ Green Bay	TBD	

**CINCINNATI BENGALS**

L	@ Cleveland	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Baltimore	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. L.A. Rams	7:15	ESPN
L	@ Tennessee	12:00	FOX
W	@ Arizona	3:05	FOX
W	Vs. Seattle	12:00	CBS
OCT. 22	<b>BYE</b>		
OCT. 29	@ S.F. 49ers	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Buffalo	7:20	NBC
NOV. 12	Vs. Houston	12:00	CBS
NOV. 16	@ Baltimore	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 26	Vs. Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
DEC. 4	@ Jacksonville	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 10	Vs. Indianapolis	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	Vs. Minnesota	TBD	
DEC. 23	@ Pittsburgh	3:30	NBC
DEC. 31	@ Kansas City	3:25	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Cleveland	TBD	

**CLEVELAND BROWNS**

W	Vs. Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
L	@ Pittsburgh	7:15	ABC
W	Vs. Tennessee	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Baltimore	12:00	CBS
OCT. 8	<b>BYE</b>		
W	Vs. S.F. 49ers	12:00	FOX
W	@ Indianapolis	12:00	CBS
OCT. 29	@ Seattle	3:05	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. Arizona	12:00	CBS
NOV. 12	@ Baltimore	12:00	FOX
NOV. 19	Vs. Pittsburgh	12:00	FOX
NOV. 26	@ Denver	3:05	FOX
DEC. 3	@ L.A. Rams	3:25	FOX
DEC. 10	Vs. Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	Vs. Chicago	TBD	
DEC. 24	@ Houston	12:00	CBS
DEC. 28	Vs. N.Y. Jets	7:15	PRIME
JAN. 7	@ Cincinnati	TBD	

**DENVER BRONCOS**

L	Vs. Las Vegas	3:25	CBS
L	Vs. Washington	3:25	CBS
L	@ Miami	12:00	CBS
W	@ Chicago	7:15	CBS
L	Vs. N.Y. Jets	3:25	CBS
L	@ Kansas City	7:15	PRIME
W	Vs. Green Bay	3:25	CBS
OCT. 29	Vs. Kansas City	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 13	@ Buffalo	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 19	Vs. Minnesota	7:20	NBC
NOV. 26	Vs. Cleveland	3:05	FOX
DEC. 3	@ Houston	3:05	CBS
DEC. 10	@ L.A. Chargers	3:25	CBS
DEC. 17	@ Detroit	TBD	
DEC. 24	Vs. New England	7:15	NFLN
DEC. 31	Vs. L.A. Chargers	3:25	CBS
JAN. 7	@ Las Vegas	TBD	

**DETROIT LIONS**

W	@ Kansas City	7:20	NBC
L	Vs. Seattle	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Atlanta	12:00	FOX
W	@ Green Bay	7:15	PRIME
W	Vs. Carolina	12:00	FOX
W	@ Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
L	@ Baltimore	12:00	FOX
OCT. 30	Vs. Las Vegas	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 12	@ L.A. Chargers	3:05	CBS
NOV. 19	Vs. Chicago	12:00	FOX
NOV. 23	Vs. Green Bay	11:30	FOX
DEC. 3	@ New Orleans	12:00	FOX
DEC. 10	@ Chicago	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	Vs. Denver	TBD	
DEC. 24	@ Minnesota	12:00	FOX
DEC. 30	@ Dallas	7:15	ESPN
JAN. 7	Vs. Minnesota	TBD	



**GREEN BAY PACKERS**

W	@ Chicago	3:25	FOX
L	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Detroit	7:15	PRIME
L	@ Las Vegas	7:15	ESPN
OCT. 15	<b>BYE</b>		
L	@ Denver	3:25	CBS
OCT. 29	Vs. Minnesota	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. L.A. Rams	12:00	FOX
NOV. 12	@ Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
NOV. 19	Vs. L.A. Chargers	12:00	FOX
NOV. 23	@ Detroit	11:30	FOX
DEC. 3	Vs. Kansas City	7:20	NBC
DEC. 11	@ N.Y. Giants	7:15	ABC
DEC. 17	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
DEC. 24	@ Carolina	12:00	FOX
DEC. 31	@ Minnesota	7:20	NBC
JAN. 7	Vs. Chicago	TBD	

**INDIANAPOLIS COLTS**

L	Vs. Jacksonville	12:00	FOX
W	@ Houston	12:00	FOX
W	@ Baltimore	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. L.A. Rams	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Tennessee	12:00	CBS
L	@ Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Cleveland	12:00	CBS
OCT. 29	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	@ Carolina	3:05	CBS
NOV. 12	Vs. New England	8:30	NFL
NOV. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 26	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	CBS
DEC. 3	@ Tennessee	12:00	CBS
DEC. 10	@ Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	Vs. Pittsburgh	TBD	
DEC. 24	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
DEC. 31	Vs. Las Vegas	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Houston	TBD	

**JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS**

W	@ Indianapolis	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Kansas City	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Houston	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Atlanta	8:30	ESPN+
W	Vs. Buffalo	8:30	NFLN
W	Vs. Indianapolis	12:00	CBS
W	@ New Orleans	7:15	PRIME
OCT. 29	@ Pittsburgh	12:00	CBS
NOV. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 12	Vs. S.F. 49ers	12:00	FOX
NOV. 19	Vs. Tennessee	12:00	CBS
NOV. 26	@ Houston	12:00	CBS
DEC. 4	Vs. Cincinnati	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 10	@ Cleveland	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	Vs. Baltimore	7:20	NBC
DEC. 24	@ Tampa Bay	3:05	CBS
DEC. 31	Vs. Carolina	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	@ Tennessee	TBD	

**KANSAS CITY CHIEFS**

L	Vs. Detroit	7:20	NBC
W	@ Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. Chicago	3:25	FOX
W	@ N.Y. Jets	7:20	NBC
W	@ Minnesota	3:25	CBS
W	Vs. Denver	7:15	PRIME
W	Vs. L.A. Chargers	3:25	CBS
OCT. 29	@ Denver	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Miami	8:30	NFLN
NOV. 12	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 20	Vs. Philadelphia	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 26	@ Las Vegas	3:25	CBS
DEC. 3	@ Green Bay	7:20	NBC
DEC. 10	Vs. Buffalo	3:25	CBS
DEC. 18	@ New England	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 25	Vs. Las Vegas	12:00	CBS
DEC. 31	Vs. Cincinnati	3:25	CBS
JAN. 7	@ L.A. Chargers	TBD	

**LAS VEGAS RAIDERS**

W	@ Denver	3:25	CBS
L	@ Buffalo	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Pittsburgh	7:20	NBC
L	@ L.A. Chargers	3:05	CBS
W	Vs. Green Bay	7:15	ESPN
W	Vs. New England	3:05	CBS
L	@ Chicago	12:00	FOX
OCT. 30	@ Detroit	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 5	Vs. N.Y. Giants	3:25	FOX
NOV. 12	Vs. N.Y. Jets	7:20	NBC
NOV. 19	@ Miami	12:00	CBS
NOV. 26	Vs. Kansas City	3:25	CBS
DEC. 3	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 10	Vs. Minnesota	3:05	FOX
DEC. 14	Vs. L.A. Chargers	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 25	@ Kansas City	12:00	CBS
DEC. 31	@ Indianapolis	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Denver	TBD	

**LOS ANGELES CHARGERS**

L	Vs. Miami	3:25	CBS
L	@ Tennessee	12:00	CBS
L	@ Minnesota	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Las Vegas	3:05	CBS
OCT. 8	<b>BYE</b>		
L	Vs. Dallas	7:15	ESPN
L	@ Kansas City	3:25	CBS
OCT. 29	Vs. Chicago	7:20	NBC
NOV. 6	@ N.Y. Jets	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 12	Vs. Detroit	3:05	CBS
NOV. 19	@ Green Bay	12:00	FOX
NOV. 26	Vs. Baltimore	7:20	NBC
DEC. 3	@ New England	12:00	CBS
DEC. 10	Vs. Denver	3:25	CBS
DEC. 14	@ Las Vegas	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 23	Vs. Buffalo	7:00	PEACOCK
DEC. 31	@ Denver	3:25	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Kansas City	TBD	

**LOS ANGELES RAMS**

W	@ Seattle	3:25	FOX
L	Vs. S.F. 49ers	3:05	FOX
L	@ Cincinnati	7:15	ESPN
W	@ Indianapolis	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Philadelphia	3:05	FOX
W	Vs. Arizona	3:25	FOX
L	Vs. Pittsburgh	3:05	FOX
OCT. 29	@ Dallas	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	@ Green Bay	12:00	FOX
NOV. 10	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 19	Vs. Seattle	3:25	CBS
NOV. 26	@ Arizona	3:05	FOX
DEC. 3	Vs. Cleveland	3:25	FOX
DEC. 10	@ Baltimore	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	Vs. Washington	3:05	CBS
DEC. 21	Vs. New Orleans	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 31	@ N.Y. Giants	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	@ S.F. 49ers	TBD	

**MIAMI DOLPHINS**

W	@ L.A. Chargers	3:25	CBS
W	@ New England	7:20	NBC
W	Vs. Denver	12:00	CBS
L	@ Buffalo	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. N.Y. Giants	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Carolina	12:00	CBS
L	@ Philadelphia	7:20	NBC
OCT. 29	Vs. New England	12:00	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Kansas City	8:30	NFLN
NOV. 10	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 19	Vs. Las Vegas	12:00	CBS
NOV. 24	@ N.Y. Jets	2:00	PRIME
DEC. 3	@ Washington	12:00	FOX
DEC. 11	Vs. Tennessee	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 17	Vs. N.Y. Jets	12:00	CBS
DEC. 24	Vs. Dallas	3:25	FOX
DEC. 31	@ Baltimore	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. Buffalo	TBD	

**MINNESOTA VIKINGS**

L	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	CBS
L	@ Philadelphia	7:15	PRIME
L	Vs. L.A. Chargers	12:00	FOX
W	@ Carolina	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Kansas City	3:25	CBS
W	@ Chicago	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. S.F. 49ers	7:15	ESPN
OCT. 29	@ Green Bay	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
NOV. 12	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	FOX
NOV. 19	@ Denver	7:20	NBC
NOV. 27	Vs. Chicago	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 3	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 10	@ Las Vegas	3:05	FOX
DEC. 17	@ Cincinnati	TBD	ESPN
DEC. 24	Vs. Detroit	12:00	FOX
DEC. 31	Vs. Green Bay	7:20	NBC
JAN. 7	@ Detroit	TBD	

**NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS**

L	Vs. Philadelphia	3:25	CBS
L	Vs. Miami	7:20	NBC
W	@ N.Y. Jets	12:00	CBS
L	@ Dallas	3:25	FOX
L	Vs. New Orleans	12:00	CBS
L	@ Las Vegas	3:05	CBS
W	Vs. Buffalo	12:00	CBS
OCT. 29	@ Miami	12:00	CBS
NOV. 5	Vs. Washington	12:00	FOX
NOV. 12	Vs. Indianapolis	8:30	FOX
NOV. 19	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 26	@ N.Y. Giants	12:00	FOX
DEC. 3	Vs. L.A. Chargers	12:00	CBS
DEC. 7	@ Pittsburgh	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 18	Vs. Kansas City	7:15	ESPN
DEC. 24	@ Denver	7:15	NFL
DEC. 31	@ Buffalo	12:00	CBS
JAN. 7	Vs. N.Y. Jets	TBD	

**NEW ORLEANS SAINTS**

W	Vs. Tennessee	12:00	CBS
W	@ Carolina	6:15	ESPN
L	@ Green Bay	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
W	@ New England	12:00	CBS
L	@ Houston	12:00	FOX
L	Vs. Jacksonville	7:15	PRIME
OCT. 29	@ Indianapolis	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. Chicago	12:00	CBS
NOV. 12	@ Minnesota	12:00	FOX
NOV. 19	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 26	@ Atlanta	12:00	FOX
DEC. 3	Vs. Detroit	12:00	FOX
DEC. 10	@ Carolina	12:00	FOX
DEC. 17	Vs. N.Y. Giants	12:00	FOX
DEC. 21	@ L.A. Rams	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 28	@ Tampa Bay	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	Vs. Atlanta	TBD	

**NEW YORK GIANTS**

L	Vs. Dallas	7:20	NBC
W	@ Arizona	3:05	FOX
L	@ S.F. 49ers	7:15	PRIME
L	Vs. Seattle	7:15	ESPN
L	@ Miami	12:00	FOX
L	@ Buffalo	7:20	NBC
W	Vs. Washington	12:00	CBS
OCT. 29	Vs. N.Y. Jets	12:00	CBS
NOV. 5	@ Las Vegas	3:25	FOX
NOV. 12	@ Dallas	3:25	FOX
NOV. 19	@ Washington	12:00	FOX
NOV. 26	Vs. New England	12:00	FOX
DEC. 3	<b>BYE</b>		
DEC. 11	@ Green Bay	7:15	ABC
DEC. 17	@ New Orleans	12:00	FOX
DEC. 25	@ Philadelphia	3:30	FOX
DEC. 31	Vs. L.A. Rams	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	Vs. Philadelphia	TBD	

**NEW YORK JETS**

L	Vs. Buffalo	7:15	ESPN
L	@ Dallas	3:25	PRIME
L	Vs. New England	12:00	CBS
L	Vs. Kansas City	7:20	NBC
W	@ Denver	3:25	FOX
W	Vs. Philadelphia	3:25	FOX
OCT. 22	<b>BYE</b>		
OCT. 29	@ N.Y. Giants	12:00	FOX
NOV. 6	Vs. L.A. Chargers	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 12	@ Las Vegas	7:20	NBC
NOV. 19	@ Buffalo	3:25	CBS
NOV. 24	Vs. Miami	2:00	PRIME
DEC. 3	Vs. Atlanta	12:00	FOX
DEC. 10	Vs. Houston	12:00	CBS
DEC. 17	@ Miami	12:00	CBS
DEC. 24	Vs. Washington	12:00	CBS
DEC. 28	@ Cleveland	7:15	PRIME
JAN. 7	@ New England	TBD	

**PHILADELPHIA EAGLES**

W	@ New England	3:25	CBS
W	Vs. Minnesota	7:15	PRIME
W	@ Tampa Bay	6:15	ABC
W	Vs. Washington	12:00	FOX
W	@ L.A. Rams	3:05	FOX
L	@ N.Y. Jets	3:25	FOX
W	Vs. Miami	7:20	NBC
OCT. 29	@ Washington	12:00	FOX
NOV. 5	Vs. Dallas	3:25	FOX
NOV. 12	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 20	@ Kansas City	7:15	ESPN
NOV. 26	Vs. Buffalo	3:25	CBS
DEC. 3	Vs. S.F. 49ers	3:25	FOX
DEC. 10	@ Dallas	7:20	NBC
DEC. 17	@ Seattle	3:25	FOX
DEC. 25	Vs. N.Y. Giants	3:30	FOX
DEC. 31	Vs. Arizona	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	@ N.Y. Giants	TBD	

**PITTSBURGH STEELERS**

L	Vs. S.F. 49ers	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Cleveland	7:15	ABC
W	@ Las Vegas	7:20	NBC
L	@ Houston	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. Baltimore	12:00	CBS
OCT. 15	<b>BYE</b>		
W	@ L.A. Rams	3:05	FOX
OCT. 29	Vs. Jacksonville	12:00	CBS
NOV. 2	Vs. Tennessee	7:15	PRIME
NOV. 12	Vs. Green Bay	12:00	CBS
NOV. 19	@ Cleveland	12:00	CBS
NOV. 26	@ Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
DEC. 3	Vs. Arizona	12:00	CBS
DEC. 7	Vs. New England	7:15	PRIME
DEC. 17	@ Indianapolis	TBD	
DEC. 23	Vs. Cincinnati	3:30	NBC
DEC. 31	@ Seattle	3:05	FOX
JAN. 7	@ Baltimore	TBD	

**SAN FRANCISCO 49ers**

W	@ Pittsburgh	12:00	FOX
W	@ L.A. Rams	3:05	FOX
W	Vs. N.Y. Giants	7:15	PRIME
W	@ N.Y. Jets	3:25	FOX
W	Vs. Dallas	7:20	NBC
L	@ Cleveland	12:00	FOX
L	@ Minnesota	7:15	ESPN
OCT. 29	Vs. Cincinnati	3:25	CBS
NOV. 5	<b>BYE</b>		
NOV. 12	@ Jacksonville	12:00	FOX
NOV. 19	Vs. Tampa Bay	3:05	FOX
NOV. 23	@ Seattle	7:20	NBC
DEC. 3	@ Philadelphia	3:25	FOX
DEC. 10	Vs. Seattle	3:05	FOX
DEC. 17	@ Arizona	3:05	CBS
DEC. 25	Vs. Baltimore	7:15	ABC
DEC. 31	@ Washington	12:00	FOX
JAN. 7	Vs. L.A. Rams	TBD	

**SEATTLE SEAHAWKS**

L	Vs. L.A. Rams	3:25	FOX
W	@ Detroit	12:00	FOX
W	Vs. Carolina	3:05	CBS
W	@ N.Y. Giants	7:15	ESPN
OCT. 8	<b>BYE</b>		
L	@ Cincinnati	12:00	CBS
W	Vs. Arizona	3:05	FOX
OCT. 29	Vs. Cleveland	3:05	FOX
NOV. 5	@ Baltimore	12:00	CBS
NOV. 12	Vs. Washington	3:25	FOX
NOV. 19	@ L.A. Rams	3:25	CBS
NOV. 23	Vs. S.F. 49ers	7:20	NBC

# CHECK MATE

Competition  
Challenges Chess  
Champs, Captures  
Connally Unit  
Camaraderie

By Michael Highfill — Connally Unit

# T

The Connally Unit saw a fierce competition of wits at the unit's first chess tournament. The Health and Wellness event was sponsored by Recreation Supervisor S. Solis and Recreation Clerk Christopher Birkigt, while peer educators facilitated the event.

"Chess includes structured rules involving strategy of the mind, challenging wit instead of physical abilities," Peer Educator Kevin Cellard said.

"Being late spring, we also wanted to bring something seasonal, and there have been long-standing requests for a chess tournament," Birkigt said.

The tournament was single elimination with a best-two-out-of-three-games format. The first matches were determined by blind draw. Good sportsmanship was displayed each day as all the men stayed to observe ongoing games and enjoy refreshments provided by Kitchen Major Ashfaq.

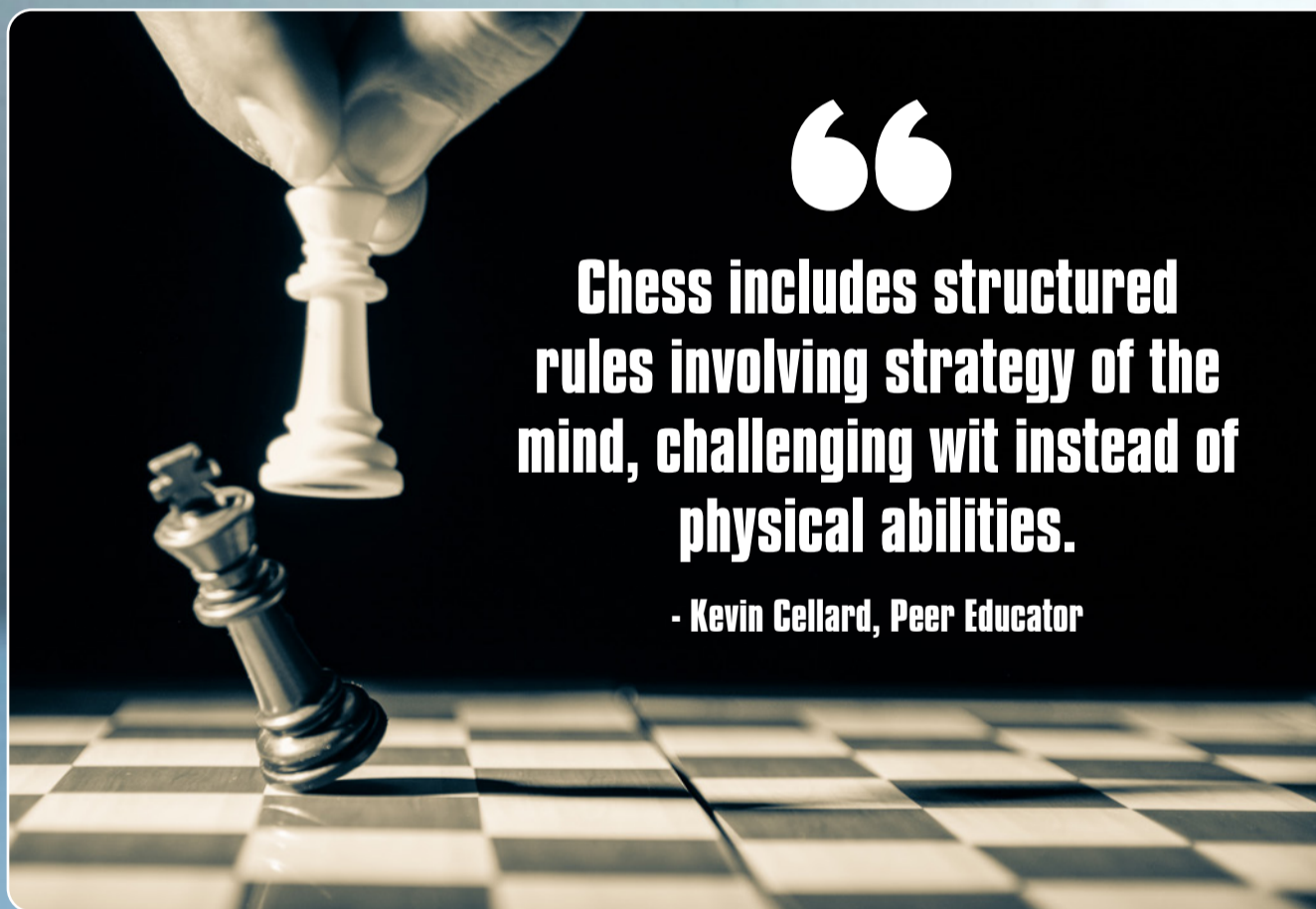
To liven up the atmosphere, music was provided by the chapel, with resident Michael Tucker acting as deejay.

Three Building hosted 10 competitors, and the atmosphere remained tense until mid-afternoon when David Hoffpaur won the final match, securing the title of Three Building Winner. Four Building provided the most competitors with 14 residents participating. As players left patting

each other on the back, Supervisor Solis shared her enthusiasm: "I'm happy and excited to do something different for these men."

She noted the intense participation of the residents.

"It's so interesting to watch the concentration of each player. Some are stroking their beard, others tapping their



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**Chess includes structured rules involving strategy of the mind, challenging wit instead of physical abilities.**

**- Kevin Cellard, Peer Educator**

temple, one even has beads of sweat on his forehead," she said. At the end of a long day, the Four Building winner was Dayshun Hubbard, who checkmated his opponent and celebrated by jumping into the air and clicking his heels together.

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**When the final match was on, the players eyed each other with anticipation of checkmate.**

Twelve Building had five players, and an odd number of players required a wild card pick. Despite losing his first match, Jerry Starling was selected as the “wild card” and succeeded in making it to the final round. However, Daniel McFarland ended Starling’s run and emerged as the Twelve Building champion.

After waiting all week and honing their skills, the men of Nineteen Dorm were the last to compete. With only seven players competing this required wild card, Eric Galarza gained a second chance to play. With fierce determination and strategic moves, Kevin Cellard wiped out the competition, ending the day as the Nineteen Dorm winner.

Friday was the final day of competition, an opportunity for all four champions to compete. The players confidently entered the gym, and each had checkmate moves shadowing in their eyes. After a time of shared camaraderie, Peer Educator (P.E.) Sherrard Williams gathered everyone together, drawing names to see who would play whom. As each name was drawn, the men gravitated to their tables with trepidation on their faces. P.E. Williams commenced the day’s matches by asking all to stand, shake hands across the table.

“Welcome to the challenge. Respect the challenge,” he said.

The four competitors sat down and began their matches. After the first games were played with carefully-calculated moves, early afternoon found the final pairing between Cellard and Hoffpaur.

The first game went quickly, with Hoff-

paur emerging as winner. Everyone took a break, as the two remaining competitors reviewed moves and renewed strategies.

When the final match was on, the players eyed each other with anticipation of checkmate. Cellard moved first using his pawn as all gathered to watch. Each move was a deliberate calculation and intensely observed.

After a long and challenging game, Hoffpaur sacrificed his rook to promote a pawn, winning the advantage and a checkmate.

Participants thank the Connally Unit Administration, the Health and Wellness/Recreation Department, peer educators, the Chapel staff and the unit kitchen staff. ●



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It always  
seems  
impossible  
until it's  
done.

— Nelson Mandela

