

MAKING HISTORY



Lee College 2025 Graduates

Lee College Celebrates First Women Grads

The ECHO is a criminal justice publication produced by the publisher and staff for use by those confined within the TDCJ. Submissions and letters may be sent via regular mail to:

The ECHO
c/o Windham Admin. Bldg.
P.O. Box 40
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040.

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Annual subscriptions to *The ECHO* can be purchased for \$12. Money orders or personal checks must be made out to *The ECHO*/Windham and sent to:

The ECHO
Attn: Subscriptions
P.O. Box 40
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040

ISSN 1530-7298

Find the digital versions of The ECHO online by searching: The ECHO newspaper, and on Windham's website: wsdtx.org.

the echo

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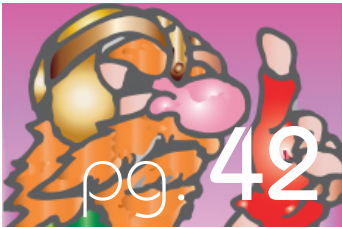


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Dear Darby | Letters to the Darbster

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Dear Darby,

I would like to submit the enclosed poem for consideration to be published in *The ECHO*. I ask only that nothing be changed from the original.

David D. Booth
Diboll Unit

Dear David,

So, you don't want any edits made to your poem? I get it. I don't know of any writer worth their salt who doesn't think their words are perfect as is. However, let me fill you in on our process. First, Will Hill gets hold of your submission and typesets it. If your submission doesn't come out with a reference to the Dallas Cowboys somewhere in it you can count yourself lucky. Then, it goes to Todd Carman who does a preliminary edit for punctuation, spelling and style. From there, it goes to **The ECHO's** managing editor whose motto is, "Edit without mercy." So, will your poem make it into the paper without any edits? If you are some combination of Robert Frost, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and William Shakespeare you might stand a chance, otherwise — well, you know. Thank you for submitting a great poem.

Ours To Do

Submitted by David D. Booth
Diboll Unit

*It was different times in different places,
different reasons, different faces.
But when the call came, we each knew,
we had to go; it was ours to do.
Different branches, different skills,
we had the pride, we had the will.
To do the tough jobs that few men knew,
and we did them; it was ours to do.
Brothers made in times like these,
are men of Honor, Duty and Deeds.
When one is taken, when one is gone.
we say our prayers and we carry on.
We do our duty with our heads held high,
we are men of purpose.
We don't ask why because
I know the price and so did you.
We did it for our country; it was ours to do.
Dedicated to the combat veterans
who throughout history have
proudly stepped forward to
defend our way of life when our country called.
Men and women who ask but one question:
If not us, then who?
It is our country; it is ours to do.*



TDCJ Executive Director Collier Announces Retirement

Press release from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Following a long career of public service, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Executive Director Bryan Collier announced his intention to retire effective Aug. 31, 2025. He assumed the role of Executive Director on Aug. 1, 2016.

In addition to guiding the agency through Hurricane Harvey and COVID-19, Collier's leadership was instrumental in decreasing the recidivism rate to one of the lowest in the country, coordinating with Texas leadership to secure significant pay raises for correctional staff and parole officers, and investing in the rehabilitation and reentry of those living in incarceration.

Under his leadership, the agency embraced innovation — breaking ground on a new state-of-the-art training facility, issuing tablets to a population of more than 130,000, and implementing transformative programs such as the Field Minister and Life Coach approaches to peer support, and the STRIVE self-improvement curriculum.

"Bryan Collier is an outstanding servant leader who has contributed greatly to the advancement of TDCJ and corrections as a whole," Texas Board of Criminal Justice Chairman Eric Nichols said. "His

visionary leadership and unwavering dedication will leave a long-lasting legacy with the agency and our great State of Texas."

With 40 years of service to the agency, Collier has held a wide variety of positions to include clerk, correctional officer, parole officer, section director, parole division director, deputy executive director, and executive director. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in criminology and corrections from Sam Houston State University. Collier is a member of the American Correctional Association (ACA), serving on the Board of Governors and as Vice President and Vice-Chair of the Performance-Based Standards Committee. He has received numerous awards, including ACA's Best in the Business Award, Correctional Leaders Association (CLA) Edward R. Cass Correctional Achievement Award, CLA Michael Francke Career Achievement Award and the Dr. George J. Beto Hall of Honor Award.

The Executive Director is appointed by the nine-member Texas Board of Criminal Justice. Following this announcement, Chairman Nichols said the board would begin the process of appointing a new executive director. €

Windham Success Story



Chase Barrett

*Published with permission from Windham
School District Annual Performance Report
(School Year 2023-2024)*

**“I realized that
I was tired of
living this way, so
I signed up for
every class they
offered me.”**

- Chase Barrett

Education Empowers Career, Life Paths for Chase Barrett

Chase Barrett grew up in a disadvantageous environment that contributed to substance use and homelessness. This path also led to becoming incarcerated as a young man.

“The first time I went into incarceration, I wasn’t really looking to help myself,” Barrett said, a former Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) resident. He said he went home after serving 20 months, unrepentant and unchanged. As a result, he returned once more to TDCJ.

Realizing that thinking and doing the same things brought him the same results, Barrett decided it was time for a new path. This time, he contacted Windham School District staff on his campus.

“I realized that I was tired of living this way, so I signed up for every class they offered me,” Barrett said. “I completed the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Maintenance Technician and Service Technician classes. I also completed Construction Fundamentals, Cognitive Intervention and CHANGES.”

Equipped with new tools for thinking and job training, Barrett thrived. He didn’t just pass his classes; he excelled. “I was top of my class,” Barrett said. “I was the valedictorian for Windham’s Electrical, and HVAC classes. Windham helped me realize that I’m actually smart.”

Upon reentry, Barrett secured his occupational license in Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

through the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) and offered an opportunity to work for an A/C company in Houston. His work garnered the attention of other businessmen who reached out and asked him to join their company. “They told me that they needed somebody to go and do this job, and they offered the work to me, saying, ‘You’ve got it — you’re good,’” Barrett said.

Barrett said that the trades he learned at Windham opened doors for him, and that those skills, combined with a strong work ethic, have kept him employed. “I will work harder than everybody,” Barrett said.

Barrett said he is more successful than ever. He is now co-owner of a business, a homeowner and a provider for his wife and four children. He also volunteers with Windham, speaking confidently and directly with students about his personal journey.

Growing into a sober, professional, successful family man, Barrett is a model of using education to change lives for the better. €



TABLET TIPS

By Michael Ory | Contributing Writer, Pack Unit

Have you ever been in the middle of writing a message on your tablet and needed to go back and re-read the message you were replying to? If you touch the triangle to go back to your inbox, you lose everything you just wrote — unless you copy it to your clipboard so you can paste it back when you are ready.

To do this is rather simple: touch any of the words you have typed and hold your finger there until it is highlighted in blue. Release the screen, and a pop-up menu will appear. Touch the “select all” option. When you release your finger, all of the text you have typed will be highlighted and another pop-up menu will appear. Select the “copy” or “cut” options — either option will copy your text to the tablet’s

clipboard. The only difference is that cut removes the text from the screen.

When you go back to the inbox and read a message you want to reply to, or want to compose another one, touch the text area for a second or two — when you release your finger, you will see “paste” on a menu; touch it and *voila!* Your text reappears.

The clipboard on a computer is just a space in the memory bank that stores data for later use. The data you copy into the clipboard will stay there until you do any of the following: power off the tablet, restart the tablet or copy something else to the clipboard.

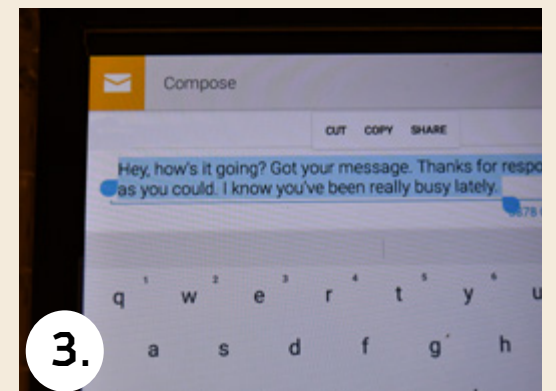
For those of you who like to go back and forth between the message you are writing and the inbox, this should help you a lot. Give it a try! €



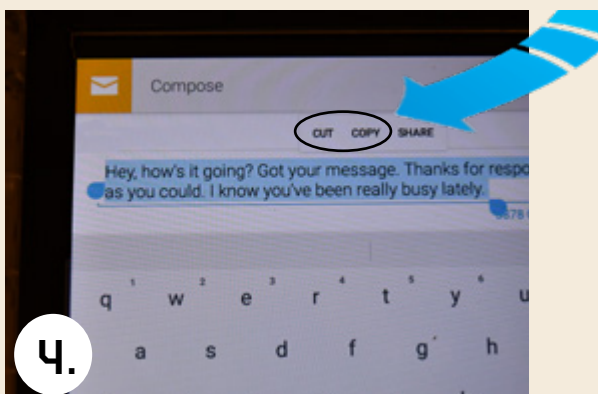
1. Touch any of the words you have typed and hold your finger there until it is highlighted in blue.



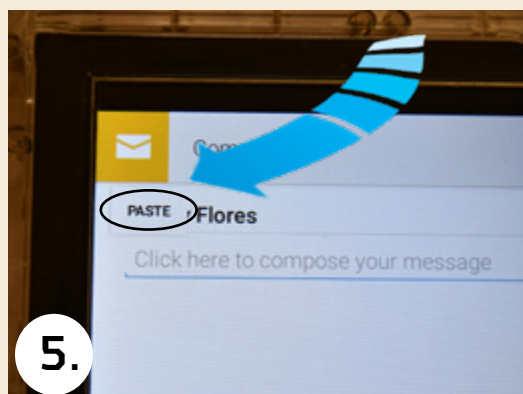
2. Release the screen, and a pop-up menu will appear. Touch the “select all” option.



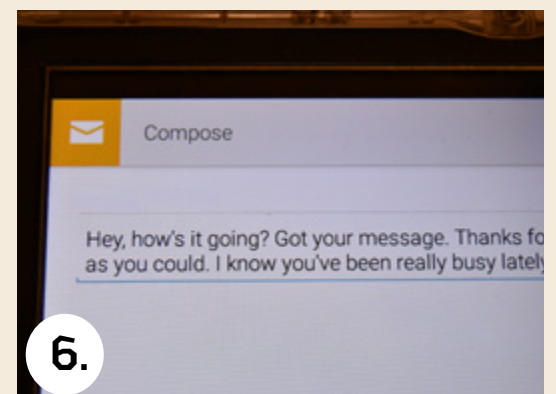
3. When you release your finger, all the text will be highlighted.



4. Another pop-up menu will appear. Select the “copy” or “cut” options.



5. Go back to the inbox and touch the text area for a second or two you will see “paste” on a menu.



6. And voila! Your text reappears.

A Personal Perspective



When Push Comes to Shove

By Vincent Smith | Contributing Writer, Wynne Unit

Sometimes I've wondered why some of us decide to give up the destructive behaviors that led us here, but others don't. Why don't we all see that there's a better way to live our lives than this?

We all know that positive change isn't easy. I've been working at it for 20 years now with mixed results. I've accomplished some of the changes on my list, and others are a work in progress. No one wants to admit that who we are isn't who we should be. Some of us base our identity on the lifestyle we have lived, or even the people we associate with. We are comfortable with who we are, even when it has caused us problems over and over again. We may resist change because of our fear of the unknown, or maybe we just don't know how to change.

Will our life be as much fun if we change? Well, I can tell you this: there are at least as many reasons not to change as there are people that need to change. I resisted positive change for most of my life. Somehow, I convinced myself that my drug and alcohol use was fun, despite the many problems it caused me. I couldn't begin to count how many times my family and friends tried to push me in the direction of positive change. Even less serious encounters with the criminal justice system weren't enough to convince me that there had to be a better way.

It wasn't until something much more tragic happened that I was shoved in the direction of meaningful positive change. For me, it took incarceration. Prison forced me to reevaluate my life, just as it should for all of us. If this hasn't caused you to take a long hard, uncomfortable look at yourself, then I suggest you do it. Matter of fact if you look at those of us that keep coming back to TDCJ, you will see the very same ones who chose not to take that hard look at themselves. They are the ones that

decided it was too hard to change.

If you're still reading this, then you are already on your way. Change begins with a thought. For some of us we've got to reach a point where we are sick and tired of how our life is going. We have no other option. We have held on to the many reasons we all can find to avoid change for as long as we can.

The good news is we have more opportunities for positive change than ever before. If you don't know how to make the changes you need to make, then today is your lucky day. We have many resources available to us now to help us. That excuse is no longer on the table.

Staying out of prison is just one of the many benefits of positive change. Our ultimate goal should be our ability to live a successful life in the outside community. We should want to leave here as contributing members of our families and society. That is how we stay out. We need to recognize that our past lifestyle destroyed many of our families. We taught our children behaviors that could potentially bring them here too.

Our failure to change not only affects us, but also those we love. So, what is it going to take for you to convince yourself that this is your best opportunity to change the path you're on? Another prison sentence? Seeing someone you love follow in your footsteps? Or any of the other negative consequences of your actions. Shouldn't your current situation be more than enough to push you over the edge toward positive change?

Today, all I ask is that you think about it. Has this lifestyle served you well? Are you happy with where you are in life? Can you really change when this is all you've known? The answer is yes. We all can change. We can choose to push ourselves now to make those difficult changes we all know we should, or we can wait for the next shove. €



And I Was Her Dad

By Johnny L. Wooten | Wainwright Unit

For nine months everything we did was planned to the T: no drinking (not even sodas) and eating only healthy foods, along with vitamins and exercise every day. The time it took to bring our first child into the world was planned for optimum output, but you know what they say about the best-laid plans. It all went according to plan, right up until the day our first child was born.

As a young couple trying to become first-time parents, my wife and I were wary

about bringing a child into this world. We not only worried if it was the right thing to do considering the events happening in the world, but also whether we were ready to raise a child, ourselves only a few years out of childhood. We wanted to make sure everything was done right, so we worked together as a well-oiled machine.

Even though she was the one pregnant, I tried to be there every step of the way. I was present at all of the doctor's appointments, parenting classes and bouts of morning sickness. Heck, I even

had sympathy pains with her. When her back hurt, my back hurt; when she ate weird foods, I ate weird foods. Every step, every action was planned around the unborn child growing inside her womb. We monitored the entire pregnancy with precision.

It was Monday, May 18, 1998, and Dr. David Barrett, who also happened to be a good friend of ours, was going to induce labor early in the morning. He saw in his own doctor-type-of-way that our first child was ready to meet the world. We showed up at his office and he performed his normal routine, then nonchalantly stated it was now all a waiting game. We had been told by numerous people the labor and delivery process would last a long time since it was our first pregnancy. We showed up at the hospital prepared for the wait, already having our bags packed: one for her, one for me and one for whoever would be showing up.

You see, we were old-fashioned and never found out the sex of the baby before the birth. I thought for sure it was a boy. A couple of weeks earlier while playing a round of golf with my pastor, I hit a slice into the water hazard. When I went to find my ball, there at the edge of the water was a blue golf ball with “It’s a Boy!” pointing straight up at me. God had let me in on the secret early!

Family and friends had started gathering later in the day. The hospital we were using had birthing rooms where everyone could come and watch the arrival, which made it a family affair. There were around 15 people witnessing all the action. Our cell phones kept ringing throughout the day and into the evening with everyone wanting to be kept apprised of the situation.

I had the task of keeping my wife calm and two sets of nervous grandparents busy during the 13 hours of labor and delivery. Things started moving rapidly somewhere around eight in the evening. After almost 10 hours of waiting, the doctor came in and started to do his routine.

Finally, after 10 p.m., the real work began, and we were told it would not be long. For the next 45 minutes, my wife worked harder than she ever had. I was a great coach, but after taking a peek at the delivery, I wanted no more of it. I stayed at the head of the bed scared to death.

When the time finally came and the last push was made, there was quiet in the room. There was nothing... no crying. The doctor, David, yelled for me to quickly cut the cord, which started a flurry of activity. At 11:57 p.m., almost midnight, I saw our first child and immediately screamed, “It’s a Boy!” and David screamed back, “No, it’s a girl. But, hurry up and cut the cord, she’s not breathing!”

I realized he was right—she was purple and not breathing. The cord had wrapped around her neck and was choking her. Our child had stopped breathing. My wife started screaming, crying and asking why she could not hear any crying. Her mother was trying to console her. I was next to David watching him perform CPR on my daughter. After what seemed like an eternity, I saw some movement and color came flooding into her body. All of a sudden, the most joyful, blood-curdling scream came rushing out of her little lungs. She was alive! Beautiful little girl, meet the world!

After all the ruckus and running about calmed down, the nurses did their check-ups and handed my wife our first child. Pictures were taken, family and friends called, and a lot of hugs, tears and laughs were shared. One of the nurses came in and told us she needed to take the baby for weight and length measurements for the birth certificate, but I was not going to let my child out of my sight. I asked if I would be able to carry her, which the nurse said would not be a problem. It could not have been 50 steps down the hall, but in those 50 steps, all the thoughts of having a boy vanished.

I now had in my arms the most beautiful, little girl in the world.... and I was her dad. €



Lee College Celebrates First Women Grads

By Robert Morgan | Staff Writer

Lee College is better because you are a part of it. Your wisdom, your strength, your refusal to give up — that is the heartbeat of Lee College,” Lee College President Dr. Lynda Villanueva said during her June 14 address to Plane State Jail inaugural graduates.

The monumental ceremony marked Lee College’s first women graduates receiving their Associates of Applied Science, Business Management degrees — from amongst Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) residents.

“This day undoubtedly marks a special occasion for the very best to step forward and be recognized,” Lee College’s Academic Chair Paul Allen said.

With this milestone, the women of Plane State Jail join the more than 180 associate degree recipients that Lee College has honored in TDCJ in 2025. This does not include the dozens of certificates also awarded to graduates across the nine TDCJ units that Lee College also serves.

These recent graduates are sure to provide encouragement to their peers and the communities they will rejoin someday.

“Every time one of you earns a degree, it breaks a stereotype and a generational cycle,” Dr. Villanueva said. “You have children that are watching you become something the world never predicted. You have families, friends and whole communities that now get to look at you and say, ‘If she can do this, then maybe I can, too.’”

Undoubtedly, the road to earning an education while incarcerated is not the easiest, yet these students have persevered through hardships and overcome all obstacles.

“You had to rise up in the face of confinement, judgment, loss and loneliness. And sometimes deep, deep grief,” Dr. Villanueva said. “You made it here. That

takes courage, that takes grit. Overall, that takes a type of brilliance that cannot be measured by grades alone.”

The accomplishment of Plane State’s Class of 2025 highlights the goal of more than 1,200 students in incarceration pursuing associate degrees and program certificates with Lee College. With the assistance of qualified tutors and under the guidance of its professors, Lee College students have achieved an academic success rate of close to 90 percent.

Also in attendance to show support for the graduates was Windham School District’s (Windham) Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman.



The primary contributor to my success is you,” Hartman said. “All we do, the changes we make and all the things we advocate for are done collectively with a collective voice. It takes both of us to make something successful.”

Windham has dedicated itself to equipping students within TDCJ with the skills, tools and knowledge they will need to achieve higher levels of academic success. Its collaboration with Lee College has allowed the two entities to enjoy more than 60 years of academic excellence. €



LEE COLLEGE



“You have children that are watching you become something the world never predicted.”

— Dr. Lynda Villanueva
Lee College President





Postsecondary Success



Jubilant Celebration

The primary contributor to my success is you. All we do, the changes we make and all the things we advocate for are done collectively with a collective voice. It takes both of us to make something successful.”

— *Kristina J. Hartman*
Windham Superintendent



Windham Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman (left) and Lee College President Dr. Lynda Villanueva (right) congratulate a Lee College graduate at Plane State campus.

Lee College and Plane State Jail's Valedictorian Thanks Supporters, Praises Grads

By Sarah Bartram | Plane State Jail

Congratulations graduates. It doesn't even seem real to be standing here in front of everyone!

Nelson Mandela once said, "It always seems impossible until it's done." Boy, did it [graduating] seem impossible more times than not, but we did the impossible, and you know what? I am forever changed because of Lee College and this amazing journey.

I can say without a doubt, I will never be the same again. Nothing seems impossible anymore. It brings me to my knees—the power higher education has. I am filled with humility, gratitude and awe at what Lee College and Windham [School District] have awakened in me—and in so many of my sisters here today.

For the very first time in my life, I am in the right place at the right time. Thank you mentors, professors and staff for this incredible moment. Thank you Dr. S., for without your speech class last semester, I would not be able to stand up here today with the confidence and assurance in my ability to address a room of so many accomplished people. Mr. B., there are no words, it has been such an honor and privilege to learn from you.

Mr. M., I cannot believe you will no longer be an advisor. You have given me direction and life-challenging advice, and I am grateful to you. Ms. W., you inspire and touch so many of us; thank you for always showing kindness, respect and love.

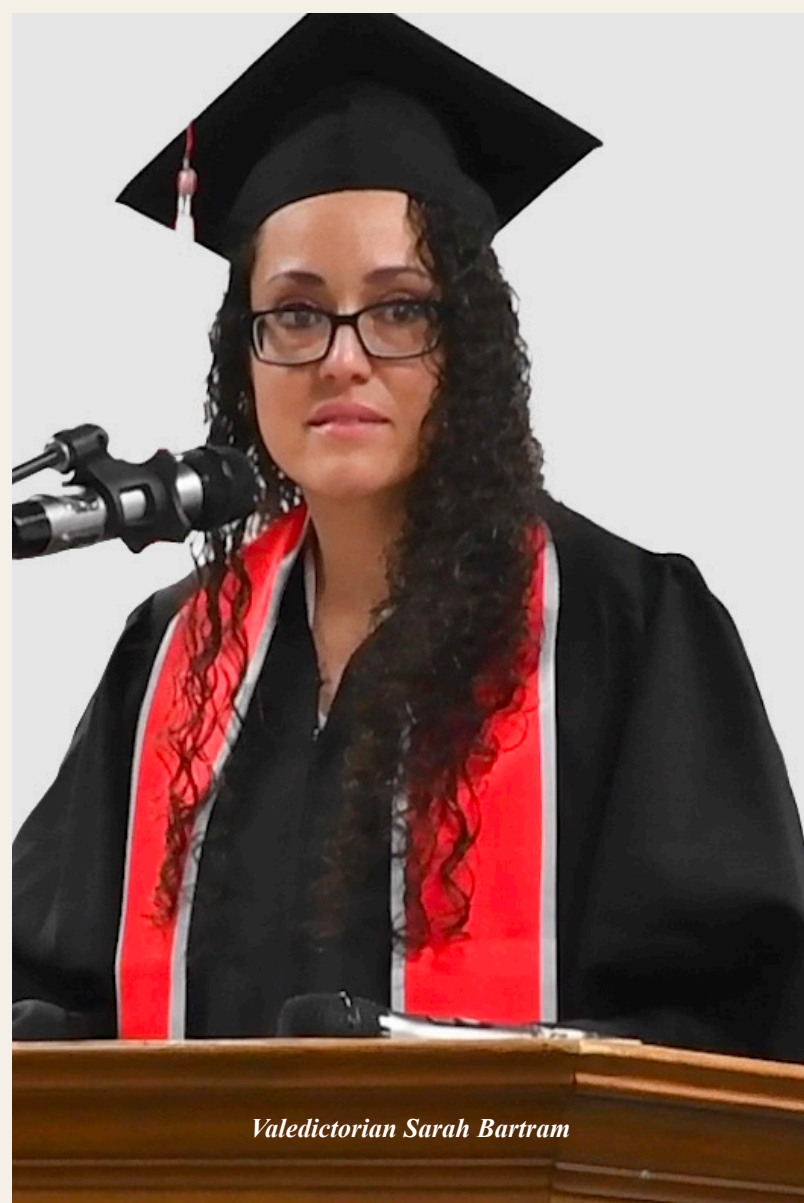
To my mentor Mr. S., who is not here, thank you. The logistics program has forever changed me and has opened so many doors in my life. Dr. W. who is also not here, but I would like to say thank you. You helped me reach new levels in my writing I never would have imagined.

Professor J., you were so hard! Thank you for demanding so much. You allowed me to realize my potential and create in ways I had never before.

Thank you Mrs. B. for always going out of your way to help teach, mentor and love every chance you got. To Mr. B. and Mrs. L., you both are amazing and made all this possible. You answer hundreds of I-60s with such patience—we thank you.

Thank you also to my mother, who has never left my side. I love you. If there's anyone I did not mention, I apologize. This is such an incredible family to be part of, and I am blessed beyond what I deserve to be allowed in this organization. I am excited and eager to see where the future will go.

Thank you to everyone who made this moment possible! €



Valedictorian Sarah Bartram

"Nothing seems impossible anymore. It brings me to my knees the power higher education has and I am filled with humility, gratitude and awe at what Lee College and Windham have awakened in me."

— Sarah Bartram
Plane State Valedictorian



BREAKING THE CYCLE

The Journey From Addiction to Recovery

By J. P. Schnizer | Staff Writer

It was the summer of 1994, the summer of new beginnings, a new town, new friends and a new school. When we moved, all I'd ever known for the first 14 years of my life was left behind, including millions of memories, bright shapes on the walls where pictures once hung and dated lines on the doorframe marking the measure of my growth. The front yard still bore bare spots where countless baseball games had been played. My dad passed away in our home four years prior, and in that brief period, the place had grown too small, too familiar. It seemed like a good time to start running.

I was just shy of 15 years old when I took my first taste of alcohol. That same night, I got black-out drunk and passed out. The following morning, in history class, I experienced my first brain-splitting hangover, an event that would remain my companion through my alcoholism. My behavior the previous night had been reckless, embarrassing and illegal, yet I was fascinated. I had found my first true love and vowed to follow her to my grave. I loved the way she made me feel. There would be no dating phase; I snatched up my betrothed and high-tailed it to the chapel.

It soon became evident that I would do almost anything for what I cherished most. It didn't matter how many times she hurt me or left my pockets empty and my head full of regret. My yearning to relive our magical first date was so powerful that I returned to her again and again. The feeling is best described as the insanity of skydiving without a parachute: you're so captivated by the rush of free-falling that you briefly forget the unavoidable pain waiting to greet you on the ground.

I won't take you down the rabbit hole of misery and misadventure that followed that fateful evening, for those tales could fill volumes yet would serve no purpose other than to illustrate the senseless cycle of chemical dependency. However, it cannot be stated

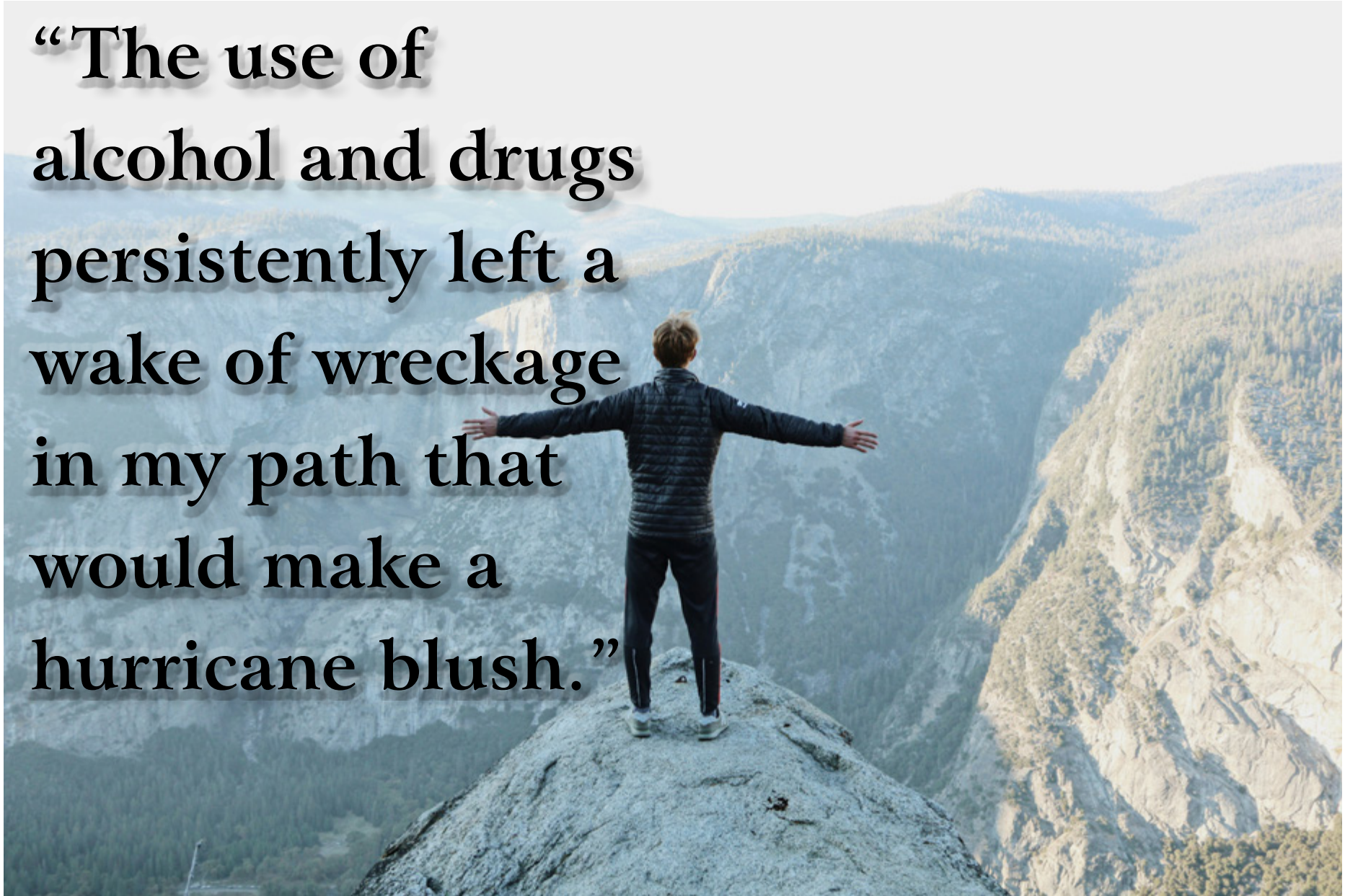
enough that the use of alcohol and drugs persistently left a wake of wreckage in my path that would make a hurricane blush. My dreams, goals and ambitions aside, the many friends and loved ones who stuck with me during that time, no matter how brief, were affected negatively. They experienced the affliction of wanting to love someone who at times seemed capable of conquering the world, only to repeatedly destroy all he worked to build.

Path to Recovery

The essence of chemical dependency is defined by Robert M. McAuliffe and his wife, Mary B. McAuliffe, in their book "The Essentials of Chemical Dependency," as a "committed pathological love relationship of a person to a mood-altering chemical substance in expectation of a rewarding experience." It is this definition that set me on the path to full recovery from addiction after 25 years of substance use and all the heartache it wrought. For me, it was as simple as knowing that chemical dependency was the genesis of a relationship that I had with the gratifying feelings alcohol and drugs offered me and not the result of prior experiences or conditions.

"The most common misconception about alcoholism and the other drug dependencies is that these conditions are results or symptoms caused by some other preexisting problem," Robert McAuliffe said in his book. This statement hit me like a ton of bricks. For years, I tried to pinpoint why I started drinking. I would look for someone or something to blame, hoping this revelation would present me with the key to freedom from my addictions. It is common for the person seeking sobriety to begin their journey by attempting to answer the question, "Why did I ever start drinking in the first place?" The hope is that if they can figure out the cause, they can find the solution. While that is an important question, the answer is not essential for treating this illness.

Believing that chemical dependency is a secondary

A person with their back to the camera, wearing a dark jacket and pants, stands on a rocky mountain peak. Their arms are outstretched to the sides, embracing the view. Below them is a deep, wide valley with steep, rocky slopes and patches of green forest. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall mood is one of vastness and contemplation.

“The use of alcohol and drugs persistently left a wake of wreckage in my path that would make a hurricane blush.”

condition stemming from some psychiatric or psychological, medical, social or behavioral symptom has two primary consequences for the person in recovery. First, when a chemically-dependent person is misdiagnosed, they and their loved ones stand to suffer because they are not receiving proper treatment. Thus, the issue of chemical dependency can go undiagnosed and untreated for a while. Second, those who are enjoying recovery sometimes find that they are the target of loved ones who wish to induce further stress by insinuating there are additional problems that caused the chemical dependency. However, these additional problems are often the result of addition, not the cause. Yet, all potential issues are addressed while the client is in recovery.

Destructive Illness

Chemical dependency is a disease and is recognized as a progressive illness. It has a definite start and a continuing process of development. Over

time, this illness becomes increasingly destructive, and if left untreated, it is fatal. There are four stages commonly associated with chemical dependency: the pleasure stage, the relief stage, the maintenance stage and the escape stage. Each successive stage flows directly into the next through the entirety of the person's illness.

Chemical dependency affects the person in every aspect of their life. It essentially involves the whole human organism — all psychic powers, internal powers, external personal behavior and all personal relationships. The spiritual, mental, emotional, social, volitional and physical pains of our existence are repeatedly littered with debris from the storms of this chronic illness. These things are negatively impacted for no better reason than chasing some pleasurable sensory reward because of an irrational relationship with an addictive substance.

Chemical dependency is no respecter of persons.

Impacted individuals represent a wide spectrum of sociocultural and socioeconomic environments. Chemical dependency does not discriminate. Any gender, age, race or ethnicity can be affected. Despite overlapping qualities and circumstantial elements, each person has a distinctive personality and unique experiences. So, returning to our question as to why people use or don't use addictive substances, the answers can vary immensely.

Looking beyond the cases where someone is prescribed a medication by a physician and begins to misuse it, many of us are aware that mood-altering substances can produce the feeling of a rewarding experience. Why anyone would seek the chemically-induced allusion often mistaken for a rewarding experience can be a difficult answer to pinpoint, as the reasons differ case-by-case. This is not to say that

certain socio-cultural environments surrounding the person, or an internal disposition, cannot influence someone to partake in substance use. However, these are mere susceptibilities and cannot cause chemical dependency as defined here.

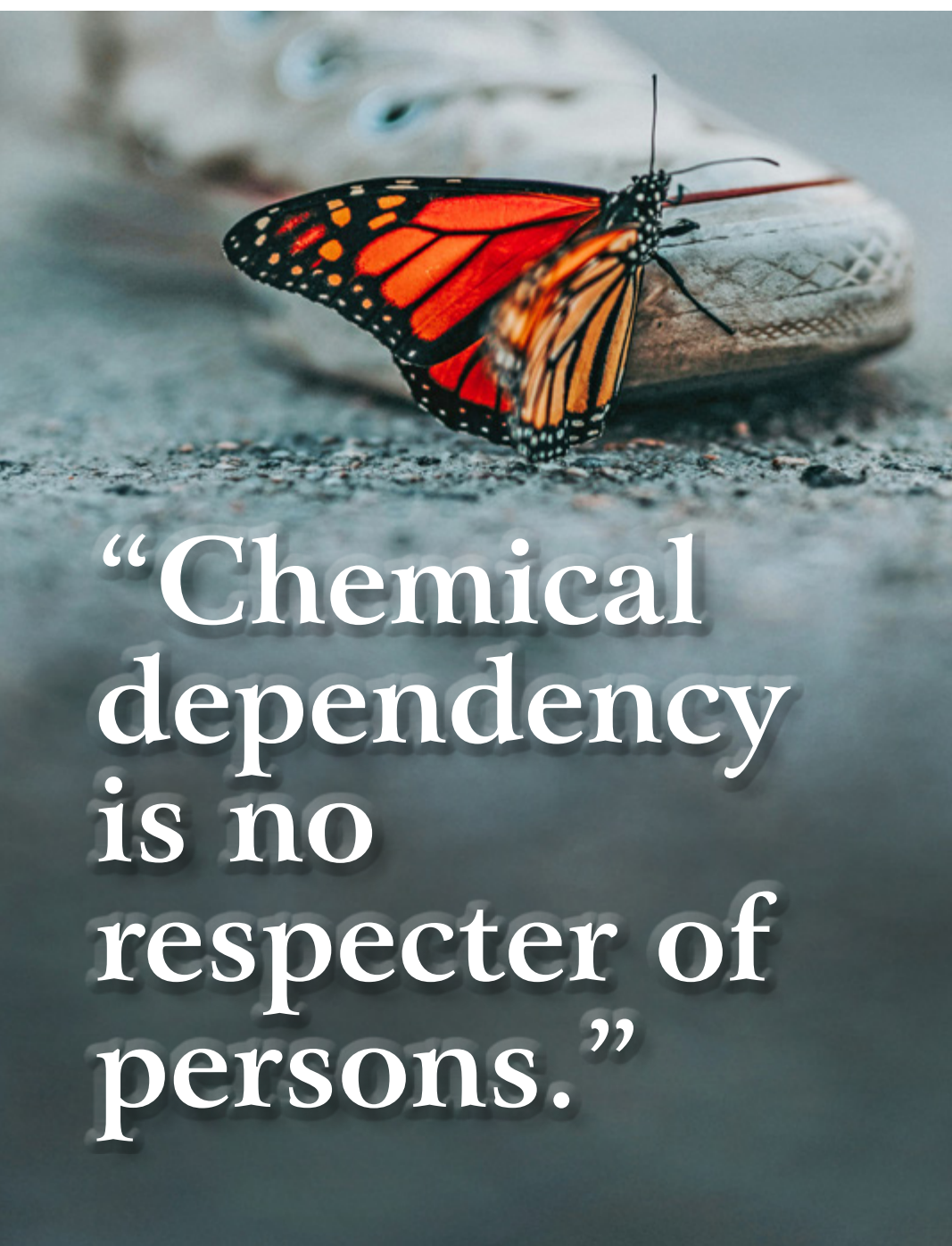
Life-Changing Resources

Thankfully, many professionals are laboring in the field of drug and alcohol prevention, and our hats are off to those courageous folks. However, I am specifically concerned with how to educate and help those suffering from chemical dependency. I want to share a few resources that changed my life and placed me on the path to recovery.

From my experience, there are three essential elements that those bound by chemical dependency (who are sick of being sick) must possess. First is the acknowledgment that there is a problem that needs addressing. Second is an earnest desire to stop using chemical substances. Third is the willingness to do the work necessary to make positive changes in one's life to keep them recovered.

Like 12-step recovery programs, there are many methods and processes that can be implemented to aid a person in their recovery, and each individual is free to personalize a path that works best for them. I recommend that anyone seeking comprehensive information concerning chemical dependency read the book I mentioned above by the McAuliffes.

It has been nearly six years since I finally ended my pathological love relationship with mood-altering substance, a reality I once thought was impossible. After nearly 25 years, I stopped running away from pain and the people who love me. I'm now free to build happy, healthy relationships with life, meaningful hobbies, other people and most importantly, myself. For those who suffer from this disease, I hope that you come to experience the adventure of recovery where you may find peace and freedom. €



Poetry Corner

Big-Head Rex

Submitted by David West
Ramsey Unit

Seated on his concrete throne,
in solitary-but not alone.
Surrounded by adoring fans,
who feed him
from their outstretched hands.

Master of this steely realm,
upon his head there is no helm.
Except a crown of battle scars,
won during the feline wars.

About him lay his faithless kin,
all conceived in feline sin.
Jealous of his hard won power,
they patiently await the hour.

Quietly accepting gifts,
his noble chin he always lifts.
When under there
he needs a scratching,
his scruffy coat now needs
some patching.

The twilight hour now is here,
but in his eyes there is no fear.
Looking forward to his rest,
knowing that he did his best.

Prayer Call

Submitted by Lance Flemming
Formby Unit

There is no logical escape plan,
surrounded yet alone
in concrete land.
In the depths of the deepest dark,
Your Spirit speaks to mine—
this was the plan since before the
beginning of time.

Never would I imagine where my
steps would lead,
rain or shine, you're all I need.

Letting go of the past,
including all associations —
in the darkroom I yell "prayer call"
among all the nations.
Witnessing daily, Your word
piercing the soul and spirit,
all not present, yet quiet,
in anticipation to hear it.

A burning flame the evil one
is unable to steal,
we pray for our brothers' hearts,
that only You can heal.

Poetry Corner

Never Forget

Submitted by Courtney Morrissey
Plane State Jail

I can never forget,
all the love shared,
I can never forget,
you were the only one here.

I can never forget,
how big you made me smile,
how all the love I felt could
withstand hardships for miles.

I want to forget,
losing this game.
I want to forget,
all the times you never stayed.

I want to forget,
the stupid piece of glass.
The one that kept us from touching
and the kind we had to have.

I will never forget
all of the good.
I want to forget
all of the bad.

I promised
I wouldn't forget,
and I never have.



Strengthening matrimony

Marriage Seminar Boosts Relationships

By Frederick C. Wilson II | Staff Writer



“If you’re not working on your marriage, then you’re working on divorce,” Pastor Johnny Moffitt said. This is sage advice from an 80-year-old man who has been married for 53 years to Betty Moffitt. He told residents in a Wynne Unit marriage seminar that the divorce rate for incarcerated marriages is 97%.

The Wynne Unit held its three-day marriage seminar for residents and their wives, with the event being sponsored by World Wide Voice in the Wilderness. This was the Moffitt’s 97th marriage seminar, as the couple has coordinated and volunteered at seminars for decades. This event was also organized and hosted by volunteers Michelle and Reggie Hicks, and its focus was on strengthening incarcerated marriages.

The Hicks are an example of a successful post-incarceration marriage. R. Hicks served 30 years in prison and was a resident of the Wynne Unit for 12 years. He and his wife have been married for 15 years, and he’s been home for five years. The Hicks learned to better co-exist in a 2014 Moffitt marriage seminar.





“Volunteer couples [from the community] showing up for incarcerated couples is genuinely moving; that’s not just a seminar — that’s a community,” resident J. Galindo’s wife said. “It’s a circle of lived experience, redemption and love.”

There were 15 volunteer couples and 30 participant couples at the Wynne Unit seminar, including a volunteer couple from Wisconsin.

“Whether we’re spiritual or not, it’s clear this kind of ministry is love in action,” resident T. Horns’ wife said. “It’s grace or mercy showing up through people’s hands, words and hearts. They didn’t come to fix the couples — they came to walk with us. That alone changed everything.”

Expectations were at an all-time high prior to the seminar. The room crackled with nervous anticipation as husbands waited for their spouses to arrive.

“I’ve been incarcerated 16 years and married 15 years,” resident R. Leal said. “This will be the most time I’ve ever spent with my wife.”

As the wives entered the room, the husbands were called one at a time to meet their wives with smiles, hugs and kisses, and all visitation rules were enforced. The volunteers and the still-waiting husbands clapped for the reunited couples as they walked hand-in-hand to their tables.

Emotions shined vibrantly and onlookers were caught up in the moment.

“I felt energized, ignited and relieved to see my husband,” resident F. Wilson II’s wife said.

The event's impact was positive, and the testimonies of the couples were inspiring and reassuring. Attending couples heard about various degrees of drama, struggle and relational conflict the testifying volunteers had endured, and they heard how it was overcome.

"I appreciated how real and raw they [the volunteers] were in their honesty," resident S. Torres' wife said.

Many of the volunteers had been in similar situations

— they weren't just peaking philosophically. They knew what it meant to walk through personal pain, endurance and restoration. The volunteers brought their scars, their healing and their testimonies.

"I enjoyed the small groups," resident J. Galindo's wife said. "Couples helping couples is a great resource."

Seated knee-to-knee, couples spoke on the workbook topics in an honest, transparent manner.

Some disagreements and tears were also shared among the groups, and couples seemed to feel understood. There was no need to explain the heartbreak of prison visits, the loneliness, and the questions or strength it takes to stay committed. Group members already knew these feelings. The 30 couples shared something powerful: vulnerability, honesty, intimacy and the willingness to fight for love.

"You can fight each other or you can fight together," R. Hicks told them.

Story after story painted the picture of imperfect people creating a more perfect marriage with shared principles at the center of their relationship. Participating couples can carry this experience and the lessons with them — in the way they speak to each other, in how they write letters and in how they dream of life together after release.

The participants saw what was possible in marriage, and the volunteers were proof that love and marriages can survive incarceration. €



"Whether we're spiritual or not, it's clear this kind of ministry is love in action. They didn't come to fix the couples — they came to walk with us. That alone changed everything."

— Wife of resident T. Horn

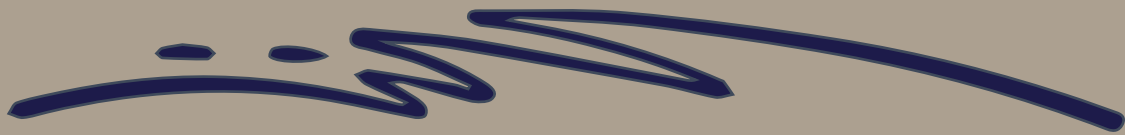
ART EXPO



Rob Zombie | Sean Fox
Water Color on Illustration Board | 15" x20"

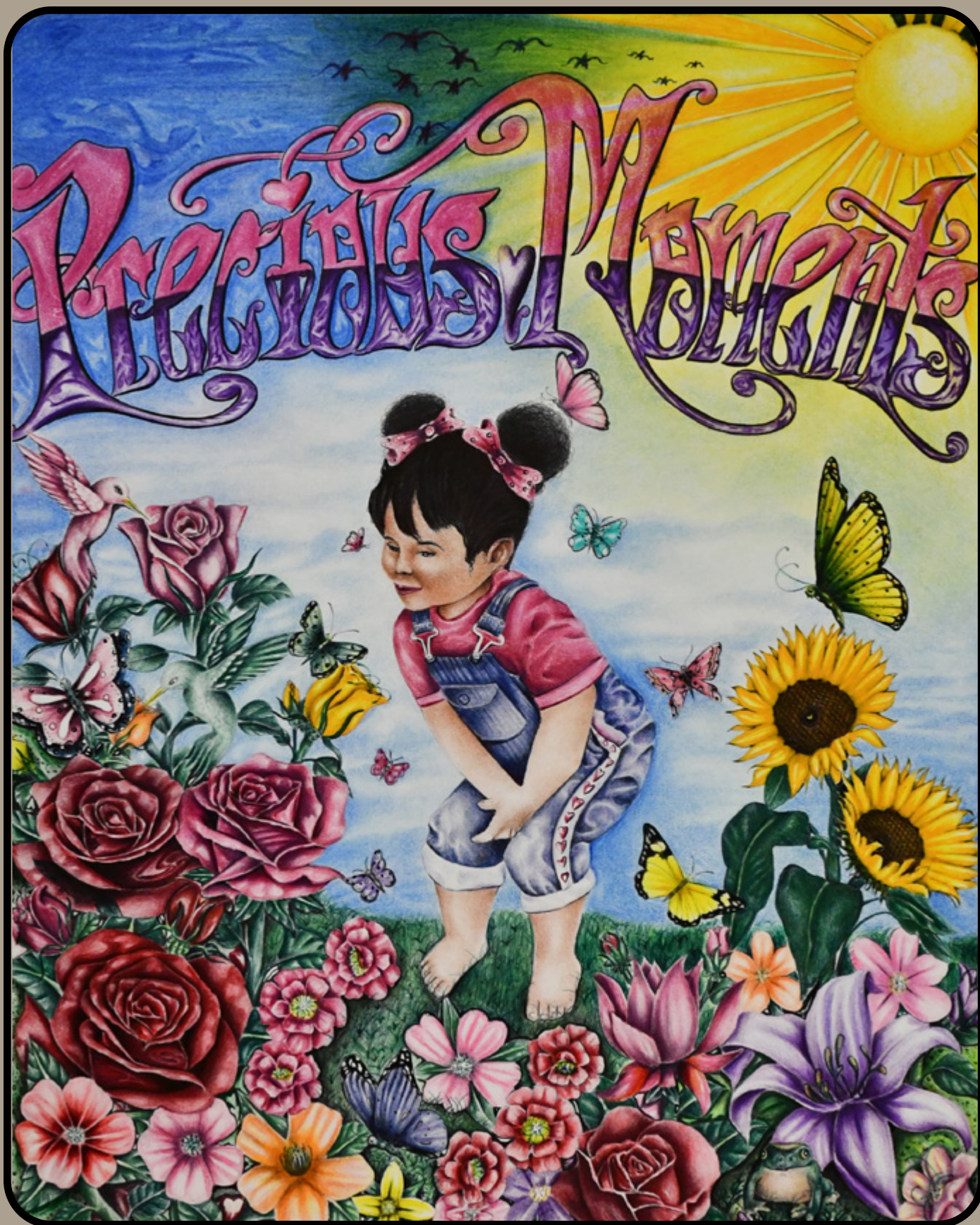


Loving Couple | Daniel Vasquez
Pencil on Illustration Board | 15" x 20"



Want your craft shop goods featured in The ECHO? Request your unit's craft shop supervisor or the campus principal take a digital photo and email it to: Bambi.Kiser@wsdtx.org. For regular artwork, send it to: The ECHO c/o Windham Admin. Bldg., P.O. Box 40, Huntsville, TX 77342-0040. Drawing pads and/or illustration boards preferred. Half and quarter boards welcome. Artwork cannot be returned.

art expo



Precious Moments | Andres Sanchez
Color Pencil & Ink on Illustration Board | 15" x 20"



Dusty Burson, Texas 4 Sixes Ranch | Charles Wasserman
Pencil on Illustration Board | 15" x 20"



Harley Q | Fabian Flores
Color Pencil on Illustration Board | 15" x 20"



Eat Up!

B.R's TDCJ Jambalaya

*Reinaldo Claiborne
Michael Unit*

Ingredients:

1 bag white rice
1 bag pork skins
1 pk. jalapeño tuna
1 Star-Kist Chicken
1 summer sausage
1 pk. chicken bites
1 hot sauce
1 pk. spicy vegetable soup seasoning

Directions:

Crush pork skins and add to bag of rice; fill pot with hot water until ingredients are covered. Cook for 10 minutes. Separately, heat summer sausage in hot pot while rice cooks. Slice sausage and add all ingredients to a bowl, mixing in seasoning until well blended. Add hot sauce to taste. Enjoy!

Robert's Game Time Stack 'Ems

*Robert Constance
Diboll Unit*

Ingredients:

1 summer sausage
1 sleeve golden round crackers
2-3 jalapeño peppers, sliced
1 capful salt-free seasoning
1 pk. cream cheese

Directions:

Cut summer sausage into 18-20 slices. Cut jalapeño peppers into slices (approximately 8-12 per pepper). Apply a small dollop of cream cheese, one sausage disk and jalapeño slice onto a cracker; top with more cream cheese. Repeat until all summer sausage slices are used. Finally, sprinkle each "Stack 'Em" with salt-free seasoning and enjoy!

Yum!

Pineapple Crème Cake

*Justin Owens
Hughes Unit*

Ingredients:

1 pk. creamer
1 Pineapple Fanta
2 pks. powdered milk
1 pk. coconut macaroons
or vanilla wafers
½ sleeve Maria's cookies
10 pieces pineapple-flavored
penny candy
½ pk. lime or orange electrolyte

Directions:

Crust

Crush all cookies into powder and place in large mixing bowl; mix in 8-10 spoonsful of soda and form a crust.

Filling

Place ½ can of soda into a hot pot insert; add candy pieces and heat in hot pot until candy is dissolved. Pour both packages of milk into a bowl, breaking up any clumps. Add creamer and electrolyte mix to milk; stir in soda mixture until smooth. Pour into crust and let set for 12-15 hours for best results.

Snickle

*Amanda Hallam
Crain Unit*

Ingredients:

1 pickle
1 Snickers candy bar
Peanut butter, to taste

Directions:

Cut pickle in half lengthwise; remove pulp. Cut Snickers in half lengthwise; place one half of candy bar in one half of pickle. Top with peanut butter. Enjoy!

The Cornbread Cuisine

*Jeremy Barrus
Estelle Unit*

Ingredients:

1 bag rice
1 summer sausage,
substitute turkey bites
2 jalapeño peppers, diced
2 pks. cream cheese
1 bag pork skins
2 spoonsful salt-free seasoning
2 spoonsful onion powder
½ spoonful garlic powder
½ spoonful black powder
Water
Tortillas (optional)
Squeeze cheese (optional)

Directions:

Crush half of the bag of pork skins and mix with the two cream cheese in the rice bag. Dice summer sausage or turkey bites and jalapeños and add to pork skins. Combine all of the seasonings and mix well. Add water and cook in hot pot for at least 30 minutes. Enjoy!

Enjoy!



Please send us your recipes. Write to:
The ECHO, c/o "The Chow Hound,"
WSD Admin. Bldg., P.O. Box 40,
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040.



Strawberry Parfait Cake

Amanda Hallam
Crain Unit

Ingredients:

1 pk. vanilla cookies
2 pks. strawberry oatmeal
1 pk. instant milk
½ pk. creamer
1 pk. strawberry Chike
3-4 oatmeal pies, if in stock

Directions:

Make crust with vanilla cookies (with or without cream). Mix creamer and milk; add water until a thick creamy consistency. Add Chike and oatmeal; use more water if needed. Break up oatmeal pies and fold into mixture. Pour into crust and let sit for 30-60 minutes.

Sandy's Sweet Tasty Pickles

Sandra Martiarena
Hobby Unit

Ingredients:

1 pickle, diced
3 pks. sports drink mix
(orange or punch)

Directions:

Cut pickle up into small pieces in a bowl; sprinkle with sports drink mix until fully covered. Dump seasoned pickle pieces into an empty jar; add pickle juice to the mix, shake well and let marinate for three days. Enjoy!

Sandy's Sweet Treats

Sandra Martiarena
Hobby Unit

Ingredients:

1 pk. chocolate cream cookies
1 bag hot chocolate
½ bag French Vanilla Cappuccino
1 pk. Maria cookies
1 pk. cream cheese
1 pk. peanuts, crushed
3 bowls
1 Gatorade bottle lid

Directions:

Separate cream filling from cookies; place cookie pieces into an empty chip bag and crush them. In large bowl, add French vanilla cappuccino along with 2 spoonsful of water, mix until mixture achieves a thick and creamy texture; set aside. Add cream cheese to the mix until smooth then add cream filling from the cookies. Mix well. Add hot water to the cookie pieces in the bag until it looks like brownie mix. Do not overwater the cookies. When the brownie mix is ready pour into chip bag and form into a square. Take the lid from the electrolyte bottle and make disks in the cookie batter. Create small hole in center of disks. Place disks on Maria cookie pieces, then fill center holes with French vanilla cappuccino mixture. Place crushed peanuts around edges of your Maria cookies. In separate bowl, place hot chocolate mix and 3 spoonsful of water mixing until it is smooth. Pour hot chocolate mixture over cookies creating chocolate lines. Let cookies sit for 10 minutes and then fill your mouth with Sandy's Sweet Treats!

B.R.'s Gumbo

Reinaldo Claiborne
Michael Unit

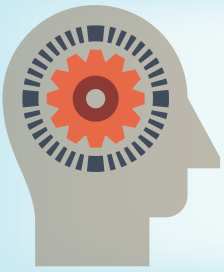
Ingredients:

1 bag white rice
1 pk. siracha mackerel
1 pk. beef tips
1 summer sausage
1 pk. chicken chunk
1 pk. turkey bites
1 hot sauce
1 pk. chili soup seasoning
¾ bag pork skins

Directions:

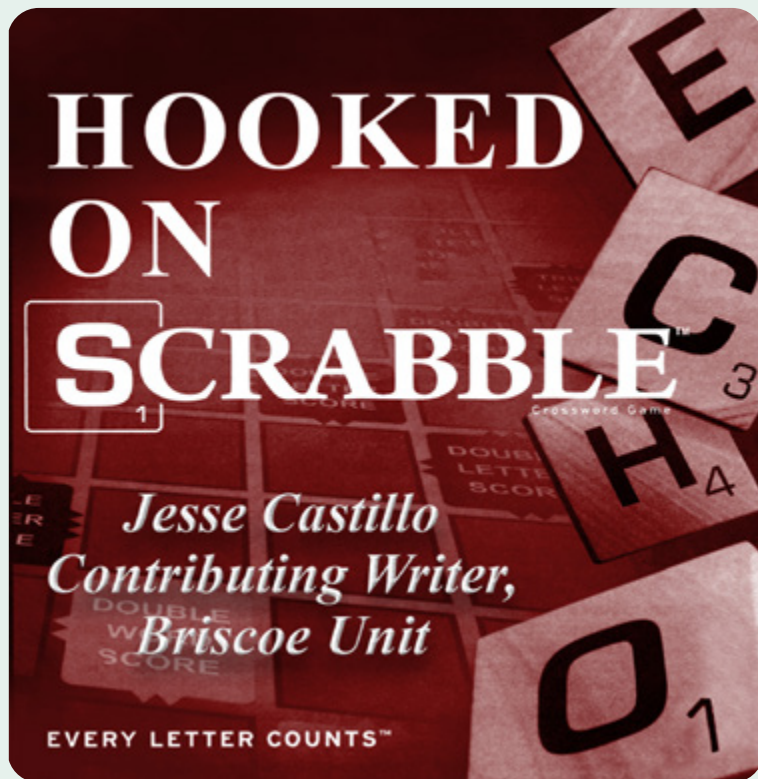
Crush pork skins, add to rice bag. Fill with hot water until covered. Seal bag and let cook for 10-15 minutes. Crush siracha mackerel; then slice summer sausage and turkey bites into small pieces. In a bowl stir ¾ chili soup seasoning into beef tips; add ¼ cup of water, then add the remainder of the seasoning pack plus all the meats into an empty rice bag. Place in hot pot for 15 minutes. Next, pour cooked ingredients into a large bowl, adding as much hot sauce as you like. Enjoy!

Chow Down!



The ECHO

Puzzles & Mind Benders



My Secret Secrets

When I'm on my "A" game, I'm a tough one to beat. It looks like all the stars have aligned and the seven-letter bingos keep magically showing up over and over on my rack. Spectators ask me what my secret is, and I'm sure some believe I've made a deal with the devil. I'd like to say the devil is in the details, though.

So exactly what are my Scrabble secrets? I wish I could point to one special super-secret, but let me instead point out the path to success.

Super-Secret #1: I was never afraid of failure. As a matter of fact, I'd like to say I failed forward to get to where I am at today in Scrabble. I always look to play the best players in my dorm or cell block. Yes, I will lose to them, but I'll learn all of their tricks. I've played high-level Scrabble for over 30 years, and some of my opponents have played since they were children. You could say I've stood on the shoulders of giants to get where I am today.

Super-Secret #2: Don't be afraid of rejection. I sent in Scrabble articles for months not knowing if I would be rejected. I just kept sending them and, lo and behold, my articles got printed. Remember, you'll miss 100% of the shots you don't take. Writing Scrabble articles gives me a sense of purpose.

Super-Secret #3: Believe in the power of saturation. When I first saw residents play Scrabble years ago at Ft. Stockton, I said, "Yes!" and went all-in. I acquired all the books I could about Scrabble, read and reread them, underlined and made word lists and carried those word lists everywhere — to the chow hall, medical and rec yard. Those lists were always on me. There was a time in my life when I made Scrabble my obsession, my love. I honed this craft with thousands of hours of practice.

Super-Secret #4: Stay current. If you are still holding on and relying on the third edition of the Scrabble Dictionary, you are living in the past and will get smoked on the Scrabble board by someone using the eighth edition Scrabble Dictionary. One can't let their game get rusty by not playing. According to coach Bill Belichick, "Games are not won. Rather, they are lost." I think this means don't make unforced errors. If you know a word is no good, then don't play it, because it will get challenged off the board. Yes, the word has a very small chance of being correct or not being challenged, but more than likely you're going to strike out.

In a nutshell, these are my secrets. As always, may you bingo at Scrabble.

On your rack: SPKDAAU

Your opponent plays: SACRUM

You play: PADAUKS: definition — a tropical tree
SACRUMS < def. a bone of the pelvis

SCRABBLE BOARD															
	AB	CD	EF	GH	IJ	KL	MN	O							
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															
7															
8															
9															
10															
11															
12															
13															
14															
15															

Word
Pyramids

PI
PIC
PICA
PICACHO
PICACHOS
HI
CHI
CHILI
CHILIDOG
CHILIDOGS



Symbols

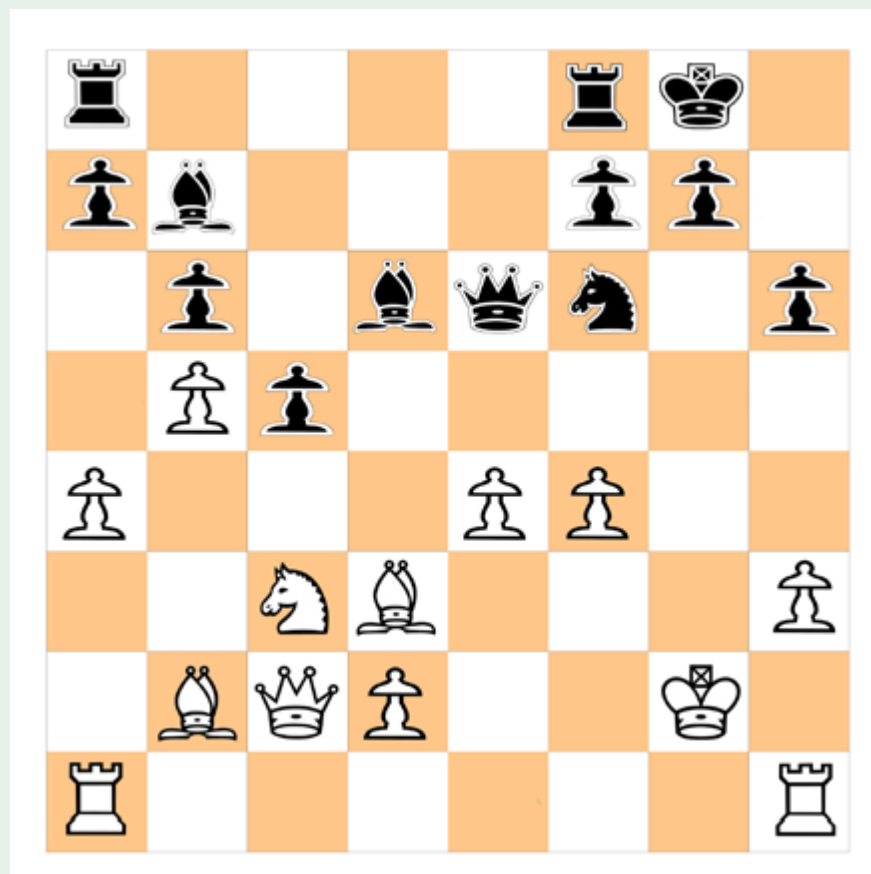
X	capture
+	check
#	checkmate
!	good move
!!	brilliant move
?	bad move
??	blunder
1-0	White wins the game
0-1	Black wins the game

Chess Tactics Exercises
from Tournament
Games
by Sam Cicero 2017
<http://cicerochess.com>.

The goal of this exercise is to find the best first move together with subsequent moves that lead to an advantage for the superior side. There is only one apparent best first move for this exercise. However, there may be several moves for the second and later moves that are equally as good. All of the choices are acceptable as solutions.

The game scores use standard algebraic notation, and the following symbols are also used. The side to move on a diagram is denoted by a white or black circle on the side of the diagram.

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1



A B C D E F G H

Find the winning move for black.

Frequently Asked Chess Questions:

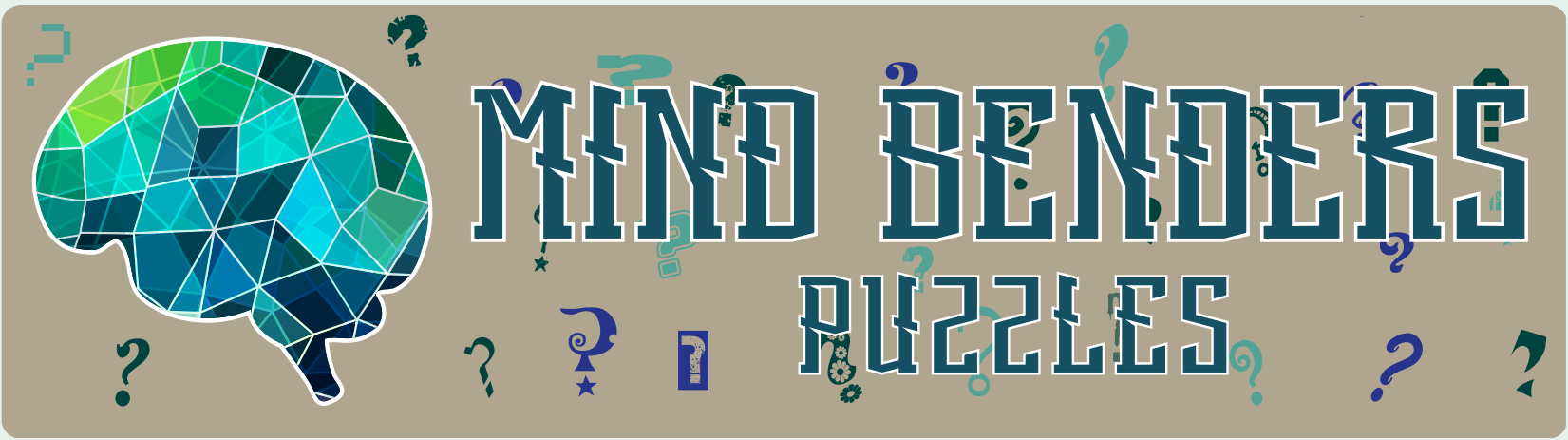
What would be the most competitive opening in chess, and what is the drawback to playing competitively at the start?

The most competitive openings are typically gambits, where a player sacrifices some material, generally a pawn or two, to obtain either a lead in development or a positional advantage. It's generally thought that two or three tempos are worth a pawn. If a player has to expend 2 or 3 moves (which might have otherwise been used for development in order to capture a pawn), this should be considered roughly even.

Another general principle is that you can prevent your opponent from castling by forcing him to make a king

move before he's castled. This, too, is probably worth a pawn. The drawback is that against an experienced player, even a one pawn deficit can lead to a lost position. If he can fend off the attack and trade down to an endgame, the extra pawn will loom large and probably lead to a win for that player.





Your Highness

The answer to each clue is a name, title, or phrase, that contains the royal title KING or QUEEN.

- 1. Tennis great.

- 2. A brand of flour.

- 3. 1951 movie starring Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn

- 4. The second-largest state in Australia.

- 5. Moniker for Benny Goodman.

WORD TOWER

Build a tower of words that begins with the letters TO by increasing the number of letters in each consecutive word by one (example for the letters NO: NOT, NOON, NORTH and so on). You cannot just add an S to a word already used, and no proper nouns are allowed. If you come up with words longer than eight letters, you're a Word Tower pro!

This game is a better brain booster if you put a one- or two- minute time limit on it.

- 1. TO
- 2. TO _
- 3. TO _ _
- 4. TO _ _ _
- 5. TO _ _ _ _
- 6. TO _ _ _ _ _
- 7. TO _ _ _ _ _ _
- 8. TO _ _ _ _ _ _ _



How many one-word answers can you come up with in one minute that complete the phrase *Over the*_____? We found thirteen of them, including *Over the hill*.

- Over the hill Over the _____ Over the _____
- Over the _____ Over the _____ Over the _____
- Over the _____ Over the _____ Over the _____
- Over the _____ Over the _____ Over the _____
- Over the _____

SAY WHAT?

Saul loves sayings and proverbs, but he can never remember them correctly. Can you fix his mistakes to reveal the correct saying? For example, Saul might say: “Humans who reside in clear, vitreous residences ought not to hurl small rocks.” But the correct saying is: “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.”

A. “The rotating circle with the high-pitched sound receives the lubricant.”

B. “Every beneficial entity has to reach a conclusion.”

C. “One image has the value of 10 times 100 spoken units of language.”

D. “The passage of minutes and hours equals bills and coins.”

E. “Red body fluid is more viscous than H₂O.”



Puzzle Solutions

Word Tower

(Other correct answers are possible.)

- 1. To
- 2. Top
- 3. Tofu
- 4. Toast
- 5. Toffee
- 6. Tobacco
- 7. Together
- 8. Toothache

Over the Hill

(Other correct answers are possible):

Hill, air, barrel, border, counter, edge, head, hump, limit, line, ocean, rainbow, top

SAY WHAT?

- 1. The squeaky wheel gets the grease.
- 2. All good things must come to an end.
- 3. A picture is worth a thousand words.
- 4. Time is money.
- 5. Blood is thicker than water.

Your Highness

- 1. Billie Jean King.
- 2. King Arthur.
- 3. The African Queen.
- 4. Queensland.
- 5. The King of Swing.

CHESS Solution

Answer: 1. ... c4!.

1. ... c4! 2.Bf1?–1

White had to give up the bishop with 2.Bxc4 Qxc4-+.

Now, White doesn’t have a satisfactory defence after 2 ... N xe4. For example:

1) 3.Nd5 Bxd5-+.

2) 3.Nxe4 Bxe4+ 4.Kf2 Bxc2-+.

3) 3.Kg1 Qg6+ 4.Bg2 (4.Kh2 Bxf4#) 4 ... Bc5+ 5.Kf1 (Black also mates after 5.d4) 5 ... Ng3+ 6.Kel Qxc2 7.Bxb7 Rfe8+ 8.Be4 Qxb2 9.Kdl Nxe4 10.Nxe4 Rxe4 11.Rcl Ba3 12.Rc2 Qbl+ 13.Rcl Qxcl#.

Game reference: Glaeser (1746) — Quintero Perdomo (1743), Tenerife, 2016.

SPORTS VIEW

MLB Reinstates 'Shoeless' Joe Jackson, Pete Rose: Second Chances Make Sports History

By Will Hill | Staff Writer

This sports column represents the viewpoints of sports fan and sportswriter Will Hill, reflecting his opinions and observations. These opinions do not represent official opinions of TDCJ or of *The ECHO*. Enjoy them; respond to them. *The ECHO* welcomes your letters and input!

Major League Baseball (MLB) has a problem: too many of the sport's all-time greats achievements are not being celebrated in its Hall of Fame. Barry Lamar Bonds, the game's all-time leading home run hitter, failed to get elected by the Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWA) because of suspicions he used performance-enhancing drugs. Ditto for Roger Clemens, one of the all-time great pitchers. While Bonds and Clemens were bypassed because of the qualms of sports pundits, two of the game's greatest pure hitters — "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and Pete Rose — were banned by the League for gambling-related transgressions.

I covered the life and career of Pete Rose in the January 2025 issue of *The ECHO*, so I will not rehash it again here, except to repeat that he is MLB's all-time hits leader with 4,256, and that gambling on MLB games led to his ban from the sport he loved. Although Rose initially denied that he ever bet on baseball, he finally admitted that he gambled on the Cincinnati Reds to win while he was the team's manager.

Jackson's Story

Jackson's story has been immortalized both in writing

and on the silver screen in movies such as "Eight Men Out" and "Field of Dreams." Since he played more than a century ago, not everyone may be familiar with him other than what was portrayed in the movies. Here is a brief summary of his career.

Jackson enjoyed a successful, 12-year career in the MLB with three different teams. He began his career with the Philadelphia Athletics in 1908 before signing with the Cleveland Naps, which eventually became the Cleveland Indians in 1910. He signed with the Chicago White Sox in 1915 and helped lead them to the 1917 World Series title. Jackson had a career batting average of .356.

In a series that everyone says that the White Sox intentionally lost, Jackson batted .375 with one home run, scored five runs with six RBIs and committed zero errors defensively. If Jackson truly was trying to throw the World Series, then he did a really good job of not showing it. Jackson, and the other White Sox players, were never convicted of any crime. Basically, the entire incident boils down to a case of he said/he said. For his part, Jackson always maintained his innocence in the Black Sox Scandal until his death in 1951 in Greenville, S.C.



"Shoeless" Joe Jackson at bat

Ted Williams, one of the greatest hitters in the game, was also one of Jackson's most vocal supporters. He even made a petition for Jackson to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame during his own induction speech.

The Hall of Fame has stated that any player removed from the permanently ineligible list will become eligible for *consideration* for selection. Simply being removed from the permanently ineligible list does not guarantee the person of getting into the Hall of Fame.

In April 2025, MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred announced that Rose, the eight members of the 1919 Chicago White Sox (including their star outfielder "Shoeless" Joe Jackson) will be removed from the permanently ineligible list. What does this mean for the possibility of these players making it into the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum? The short answer is that it means there's a chance. The full answer is a little more complicated.

Different Process

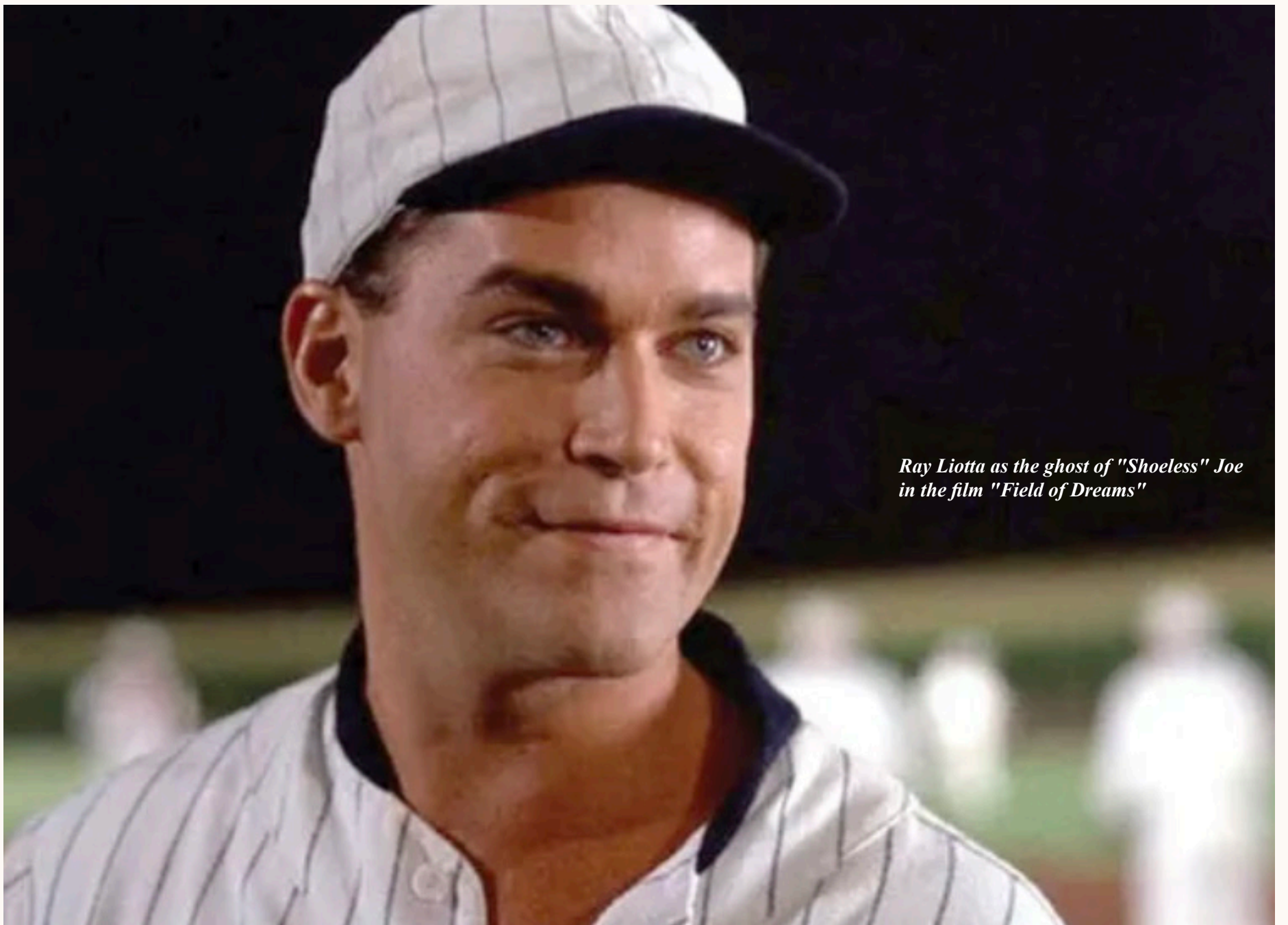
The process for Jackson and Rose to get into the Hall of Fame is distinctly different than the one most players go through. Normally, after a player retires, he

must wait the requisite five years to be placed on the Hall of Fame ballot to be voted on by the members of the BBWA. To be elected, a player has to receive 75% of the votes. Players stay on the ballot for 10 years before being removed if they never reach the three quarters benchmark.

However, Jackson and Rose's path to the hall is different. They must rely on the Classic Baseball Era Committee (CBEC), which is composed of 16 members chosen from a pool of former players, sportswriters and baseball executives. To get into the Hall of Fame, Jackson and Rose must be selected by 12 members.

Not all of the players that the committee will consider were suspended or banned they just did not receive the required number of votes for election. When the CBEC last met it was in December 2024, and the pool of players they chose from included Tommy John, Dick Allen, Dave Parker, Luis Tiant and Steve Garvey. Only Allen and Parker were elected into the Hall of Fame; it will not meet again until December 2027. Sadly, Parker will be enshrined posthumously in the summer of 2025.

As expected, the reactions to Manfred's decision to reinstate Jackson and Rose has been varied.



Ray Liotta as the ghost of "Shoeless" Joe in the film "Field of Dreams"

One of the most common objections is that the MLB's decision undermines the integrity of the game and sends the wrong message about gambling. A few years ago, that may have been true, but considering MLB's embrace of sponsorship deals from gambling sites such as Draft Kings and FanDuel, that objection rings a bit hollow.

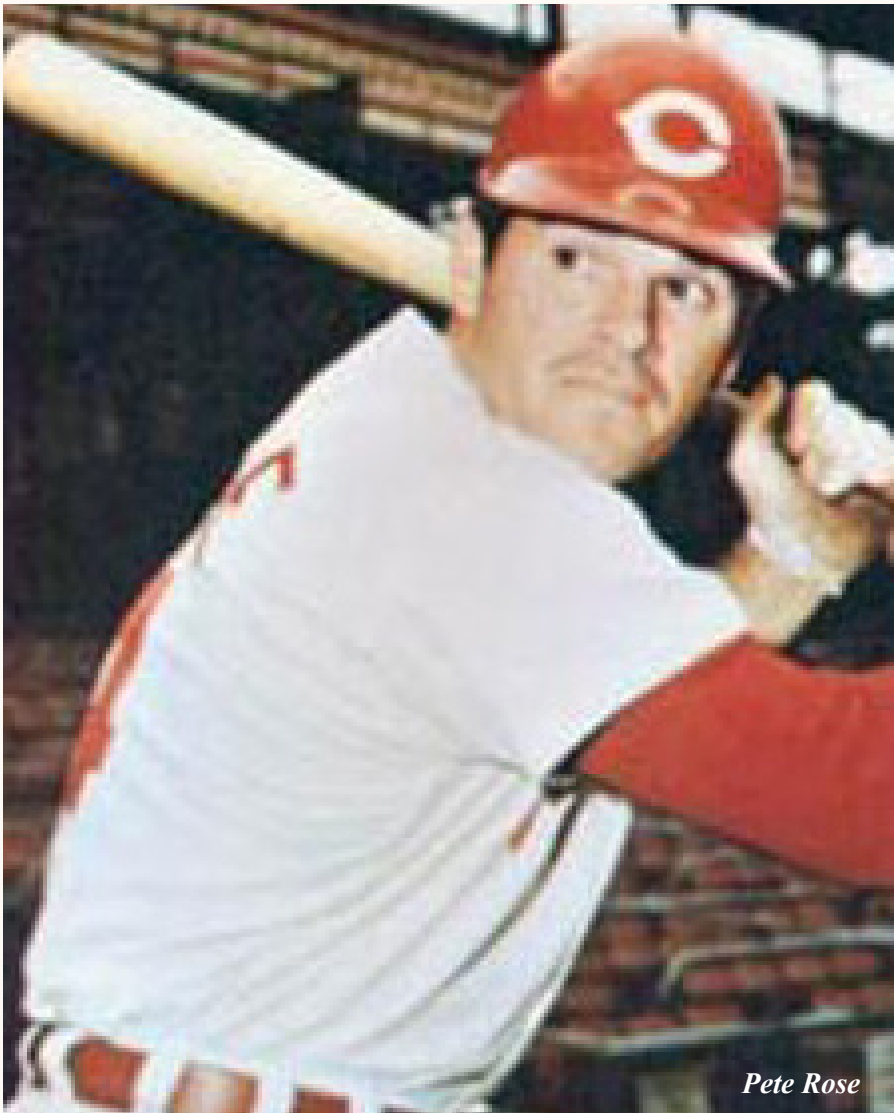
"Just because someone is dead does not at all change the facts nor the behavior. Permanent means permanent," said Marcus Giamatti, the son of the late former MLB Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti the man who banned Rose. "I am incredibly disappointed in the Commissioner's decision. I am also disappointed that my family was not consulted prior to this decision."

I understand a son's desire to defend his father's legacy, but Giamatti's son's expectation that MLB owed his family a heads up seems a bit presumptuous at the least and absolute delusional at worst.

More Objections

The other objection to the reinstatement is that it diminishes the significance of the Hall of Fame's standards for induction.

"I do not believe that I would be writing this article if Rose were still alive because MLB would not have made the decision to reinstate him."



Legendary St. Louis Cardinals Pitcher Bob Gibson used to always say (in his deep, gravelly voice), “The Hall of Fame is for the great, not the very good.” However, I do not believe that anyone who knows baseball can honestly quibble that Jackson and Rose were not great players in their era.

Alternately, the decision has been praised by others for MLB’s readiness to finally recognize these players greatness on the field. Whatever one thinks of Jackson and Rose’s personal peccadillos, there is no denying their on-field achievements.

What is the purpose of extending bans on players past their deaths? Manfred is quoted as saying, “Obviously, a person no longer with us cannot pose a threat to the integrity of the game. It is hard to conceive of a penalty with more deterrent effect than one that lasts a person’s lifetime with no reprieve.” In light of this decision, perhaps MLB should consider changing the verbiage of the ban from “permanently ineligible” to “lifetime ineligibility.”

I do not believe that I would be writing this article if Rose were still alive because MLB would not have made the decision to reinstate him. Johnny Bench, the Hall of Fame catcher and former teammate of Rose, believes that part of the reason that MLB denied Rose’s appeal for reinstatement in the past was an attempt to keep him from getting back into the game.

“MLB had concerns about Rose trying to get back into the game either as a manager or in some other role, and they were determined to not let that happen,” Bench said. “I believe this is the right decision, and most of all, I am extremely happy for the Rose family and that this is all somewhat behind them.”

In addition, Rose has the support of other former players including Mike Schmidt and current Texas Rangers manager, Bruce Bochy.

“It’s a great day for baseball as Commissioner Manfred has reinstated Rose, making him eligible for the National Baseball Hall of Fame,” said Mike Schmidt, the Hall of Fame third baseman. “The ongoing question of whether Rose should or shouldn’t be in the hall will be answered by a secret panel in the next Classic Baseball Era Committee. Congratulations to Pete’s family, his teammates, and his supporters who have waited many years for this opportunity for consideration.”

Playing Hard

Nobody played the game harder or with more passion than Rose, and that is what Bochy appreciates about him.

“Nobody played the game harder. Nobody,” Bochy said. “He was all-out, full throttle. That was Pete. Charlie Hustle — that’s how you get that name. He was just a complete ballplayer. He played all over the field — outfield, infield. First base, third base. He was a winner. His team won. And I think that’s a credit to him, how he played, how he set the tone. Amazing player.”

The Hall of Fame is primarily a museum whose job is to tell the history of baseball. How can that story be told accurately with the absence of any mention of the 1919 Chicago “Black Sox” Scandal or of the league’s career all-time hits leader?

Jackson and Rose have spent enough time in baseball’s purgatory for their sins, whether actual or alleged. If/when these two great players are ultimately selected to take their rightful place in the Hall of Fame, as I personally hope they will, I can imagine Jackson’s spirit repeating Ray Liotta’s iconic line from the movie “Field of Dreams”: “Is this heaven?” For true baseball fans everywhere, the answer is a resounding, “Yes, ‘Shoeless’ Joe and Charlie Hustle. Yes, it is.” €

HOUSTON ★ ASTROS. 2025 SCHEDULE

MARCH-APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				27 3:10 NY	28 7:10 NY	29 6:15 NY
30	31 7:10 SF	1 7:10 SF	2 3:10 SF	3 3:10 TC	4	5 1:10 TC
6 1:10 TC	7 8:40 S	8 8:40 S	9 3:10 S	10	11 7:10 A	12 6:10 A
13 1:10 A	14 6:45 SF	15 6:45 SF	16 12:15 SF	17	18 7:10 SD	19 6:10 SD
20 6:10 SD	21 7:10 W	22 7:10 W	23 6:40 W	24	25 6:40 KC	26 6:10 KC
27 1:10 KC	28 7:10 D	29 7:10 D	30 1:10 D			

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2 6:40 S	3 1:10 S
4 1:10 S	5 6:40 P	6 6:40 P	7 12:10 P	8	9 7:10 C	10 6:10 C
11 1:10 C	12 7:10 KC	13 7:10 KC	14 7:10 KC	15 7:05 T	16 7:05 T	17 6:05 T
18 1:35 T	19 6:05 TB	20 6:05 TB	21 12:10 TB	22 7:10 S	23 7:10 S	24 3:10 S
25 1:10 S	26	27 7:10 A's	28 1:10 A's	29 7:10 TB	30 7:10 TB	31 3:10 TB

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 1:10 TB	2	3 5:40 P	4 5:40 P	5 5:40 P	6 6:10 C	7 3:10 C
8 12:40 C	9 12:40	10 7:10 S	11 7:10 S	12 7:10 S	13 7:10 TC	14 3:10 TC
15 1:10 TC	16 9:05 A's	17 9:05 A's	18 9:05 A's	19 9:05 A's	20 8:38 A	21 8:38 A
22 3:07 A	23	24 7:10 P	25 7:10 P	26 1:10 P	27 7:10 C	28 6:15 C
29 1:10 C	30					

JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 7:40 GR	2 7:40 GR	3 2:10 GR	4 8:10 LA	5 6:15 LA
6 3:10 LA	7 7:10 C	8 7:10 C	9 7:10 C	10	11 7:10 T	12 6:35 T
13 1:10 T	14	15	16	17	18 9:10 S	19 8:40 S
20 3:10 S	21 8:40 A	22 8:40 A	23 2:40 A	24 7:10 A's	25 7:10 A's	26 6:10 A's
27 1:10 A's	28 7:10 W	29 7:10 W	30 1:10 W	31		

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 6:10 B	2 3:10 B
3 12:35 B	4 5:40 M	5 5:40 M	6 3:40 M	7	8 6:05 NY	9 TBD NY
10 TBD NY	11 7:10 B	12 7:10 B	13 6:10 B	14	15 7:10 E	16 6:10 E
17 1:10 E	18 5:40 D	19 5:40 D	20 12:10 D	21 6:15 E	22 6:05 E	23 6:05 E
24 12:35 E	25	26 7:10 GR	27 7:10 GR	28 1:10 GR	29 7:10 A	30 6:10 A
31 1:10 A						

SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 1:10 A	2 7:10 NY	3 7:10 NY	4 6:40 NY	5 7:05 T	6 6:15 T
7 1:35 T	8	9 6:07 W	10 6:07 W	11 2:07 W	12 6:15 A	13 6:15 A
14 12:35 A	15 7:10 T	16 7:10 T	17 7:10 T	18	19 7:10 S	20 6:10 S
21 1:10 S	22	23 9:05 A's	24 9:05 A's	25 2:35 A's	26 8:38 A	27 8:38 A
28 2:07 A	29	30				

SCHEDULE AS OF 01-15-2025
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

HOME FRIDAY NIGHT FIREWORKS AWAY



2025 SCHEDULE



MARCH/APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
23	24 KC 7:05	25 KC 1:35	26	27 BOS 3:05	28 BOS 7:05	29 BOS 6:05
30 BOS 1:35	31 CIN 5:40	1 CIN 5:40	2 CIN 11:40 AM	3	4 TB 7:05	5 TB 6:05
6 TB 1:35	7 CHC 6:40	8 CHC 6:40	9 CHC 1:20	10	11 SEA 8:40	12 SEA 8:40
13 SEA 3:30	14	15 LAA 7:05	16 LAA 7:05	17 LAA 7:05	18 LAD 7:05	19 LAD 3:05
20 LAD 1:35	21	22 ATH 9:05	23 ATH 9:05	24 ATH 9:05	25 SF 8:15	26 SF 3:05
27 SF 3:05	28 ATH 7:05	29 ATH 7:05	30 ATH 7:05			

JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 BAL 7:05	2 BAL 7:05	3	4 SD 5:40	5 SD 8:40
6 SD 8:30	7 LAA 8:38	8 LAA 8:38	9 LAA 8:38	10 LAA 8:38	11 HOU 7:10	12 HOU 6:35
13 HOU 1:30	14	15 ALL-STAR GAME	16	17	18 DET 7:05	19 DET 6:05
20 DET 1:35	21 ATH 7:05	22 ATH 7:05	23 ATH 7:05	24	25 ATL 7:05	26 ATL 6:05
27 ATL 1:35	28 LAA 8:38	29 LAA 8:38	30 LAA 8:38	31 SEA 8:40		

AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 SEA 9:30	2 SEA 3:30
3 SEA 3:30	4 NYN 7:05	5 NYN 7:05	6 NYN 1:35	7	8 PHI 7:05	9 PHI 6:15
10 PHI 1:35	11 AZ 7:05	12 AZ 7:05	13 AZ 1:35	14	15 TOR 6:07	16 TOR 2:07
17 TOR 12:37	18 KC 6:40	19 KC 6:40	20 KC 6:40	21 KC 1:10	22 CLE 7:05	23 CLE 6:05
24 CLE 1:35	25 LAA 7:05	26 LAA 7:05	27 LAA 7:05	28	29 ATH 9:05	30 ATH 9:05
31 ATH 3:05						

JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 STL 12:05	2	3 TB 6:35	4 TB 6:35	5 TB 6:35	6 WSH 5:45	7 WSH 3:05
8 WSH 12:35	9	10 MIN 6:40	11 MIN 6:40	12 MIN 12:30	13 CWS 7:05	14 CWS 3:05
15 CWS 1:35	16	17 KC 7:05	18 KC 7:05	19 KC 1:35	20 PIT 5:40	21 PIT 3:05
22 PIT 12:35	23 BAL 5:35	24 BAL 5:35	25 BAL 5:35	26	27 SEA 7:05	28 SEA 3:05
29 SEA 1:35	30 BAL 7:05					

Schedule subject to change.

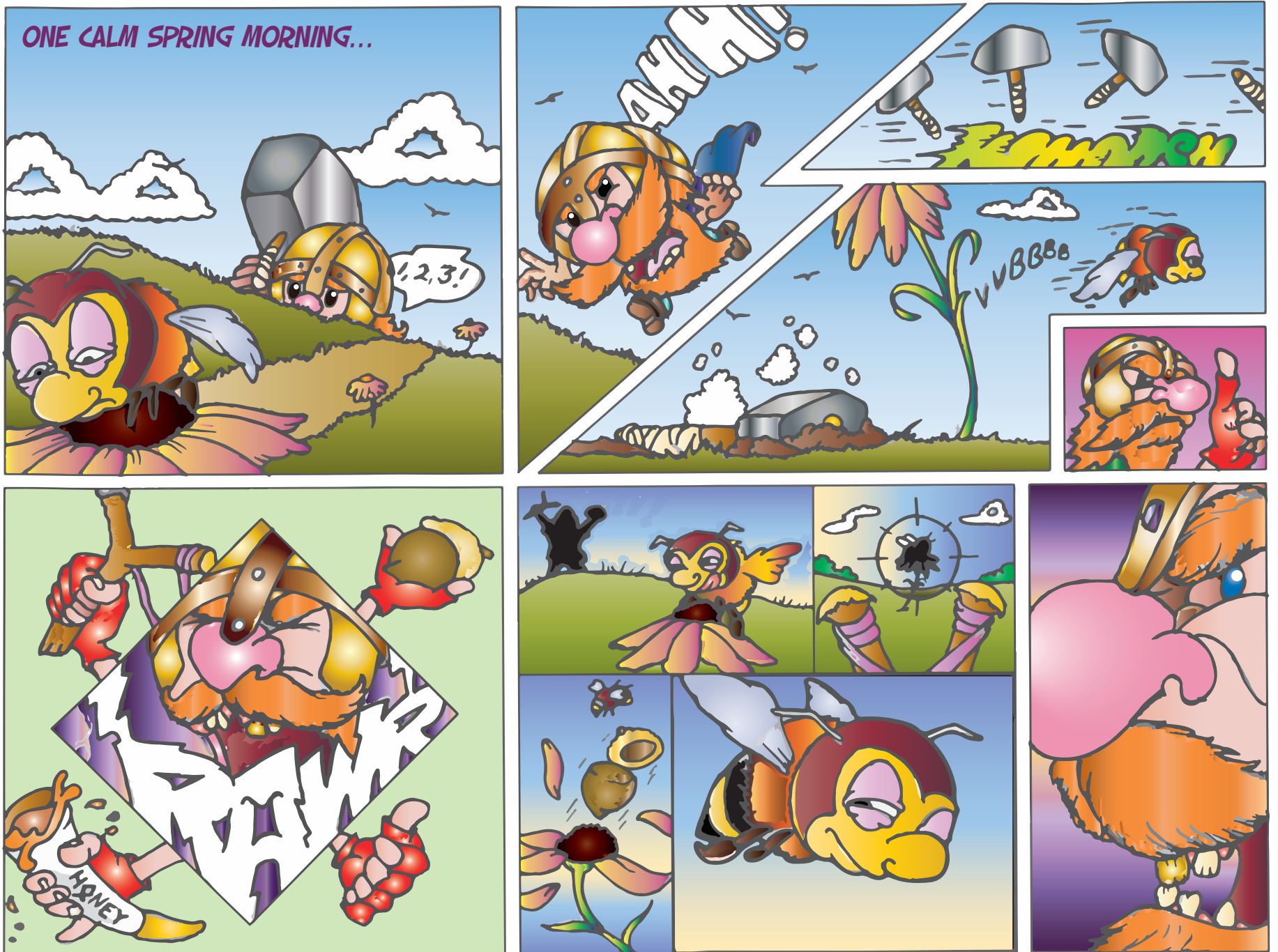
SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 AZ 7:10	2 AZ 8:40	3 AZ 2:40	4	5 HOU 7:05	6 HOU 6:15
7 HOU 1:35	8 MIL 7:05	9 MIL 7:05	10 MIL 1:35	11	12 NYM 6:10	13 NYM 3:10
14 NYM 12:40	15 HOU 7:10	16 HOU 7:30	17 HOU 7:30	18	19 MIA 7:05	20 MIA 6:05
21 MIA 1:35	22	23 MIN 7:05	24 MIN 7:05	25 MIN 1:35	26 CLE 6:30	27 CLE 5:30
28 CLE 2:30	29	30				

EXHIBITION GAMES HOME GAMES

THE ADVENTURES OF TINY THOR

BY J.P. SCHNIZER



Do you want to be part of The ECHO? There are several ways of getting involved.

HELP SHAPE THE ECHO CONTENT

1. Showcase your artistic talent! Send in examples of your artwork to be shared and highlighted in the Art Expo issues.
2. Send in a delicious recipe for the Chow Hound section.
3. Need advice or want to give out some? Write advice columnist Dear Darby who is ready and willing to help with questions about relationships, daily concerns, general life and prison etiquette.

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE:

Have you learned something in a class that you want to share with the rest of the readers? Are you getting closer to your reentry date and want to leave some parting words of wisdom? Send a copy of your submission to:

The ECHO
c/o Windham Admin. Bldg.
P.O. Box 40
Huntsville, TX 77342-0400

ATTENTION STAFF:

Do you spend your day repeatedly answering the same question? If there was something you wished the resident population understood better? Are you a facilitator of a graduating program or class? Contact Bambi.Kiser@wsdtx.org and share your idea or information with *The ECHO* readers throughout Texas.



HELP WANTED

Unit List: Statewide

Workers for the following positions:

Wastewater & Water Attendant

Skills & Qualifications Needed To Apply

> Must be able to understand written and verbal instructions; have basic math skills (add, subtract, multiply, and divide).

- Knowledge of mechanical repairs
- Wastewater/Water experience preferred but not required
- Ability to use or learn to use testing equipment such as P.H., DO, chlorine, and ammonia
- Work in inclement weather may be required
- No prohibitive work restrictions

> G1 status is required

> No work/medical restrictions

Send I-60 with all experience to:

Water/Wastewater Operations

P.O. Box 4011

Huntsville, TX 77342

HELP WANTED

Facilities Division Maintenance - Asbestos Operations

**Unit List: Statewide
Workers for the following position:**

Asbestos Workers

Skills & Qualifications Needed To Apply

> Must be able to understand written instructions and also write.

1. Must be able to pass physical, pulmonary and X-ray tests
2. Must be able to pass a written exam at the end of 32 hours of training
3. Extensive travel is involved
4. Workers will learn to do a job that they can also do when they leave TDCJ to make a good living

Training will provided by an outside instructor.

> G1 status is required

> No work/medical restrictions

Applicants: An I-60 should be mailed to:

Asbestos Operations

P.O. Box 4011

Huntsville, TX 77342



Tips for prevention and recognition of heat illness

Due to the high temperature, residents and staff are encouraged to be aware of the types of heat illnesses.

Higher risk conditions for heat illness include:

- Being newly assigned to a job
- Receiving psychiatric medications or certain other medications, or having certain medical conditions
- Being elderly
- High temperatures and humidity
- No significant breeze

Prevention of heat illness includes:

- Increasing frequency of fluid intake when working in hot environments
- Supplemental water will be made available
- Taking a break every 30-60 minutes
- Decreasing intensity of work under extreme conditions
- Access to cold water showers
- Access to respite areas

- Allowed fans for all residents
- Following preventive measures on heat posters

Types of heat illness:

Heat Cramps: Can be painful and intermittent, involving involuntary muscle spasms following hard physical work or exercise in a hot environment. Cramps usually occur after heavy perspiration and typically occur after heavy perspiration and typically occur in the abdomen, arms and legs. The cause is inadequate replacement of electrolytes (sodium and potassium).

Heat Exhaustion: The most common form of heat illness is caused by depletion of water and salt. Symptoms include weakness, anxiety, fatigue, dizziness, headache and nausea. Signs include profuse perspiration and rapid pulse and breathing. Confusion or loss of coordination may also be present. Heat exhaustion, if not treated, may lead to heat stroke.

Heat Stroke: While it may be preceded by signs of heat exhaustion, the onset of heat stroke is often sudden. Symptoms include diminished or absent perspiration, and hot, dry and flushed skin. Other

conditions that may be present include increased body temperatures, delirium, convulsions, seizures, rapid pulse, weakness, headache, mental confusion, dizziness, extreme fatigue, nausea/vomiting and incoherent speech progressing to coma. Medical care is urgently needed. Death may result if left untreated.

Treatment: Seek medical attention as soon as possible. Move the person out of direct sunlight into an air conditioned environment if possible, remove clothing while maintaining modesty, and provide water to drink if conscious. Liberally apply cold water on them, and if possible, fan them if there is no breeze.

Access to Respite Areas: During times of extreme temperatures, offenders must be allowed access to respite areas. Employees and offenders will be trained to be compliant with heat precaution procedures including knowledge of respite area locations and resident access. The location of each respite area is also posted in resident housing areas and other common areas on the unit. Please consult unit staff regarding directions to the respite areas if needed.

Report all incidents of heat-related illness to a staff member immediately!



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Are you a resident returning to the community and looking for men's clothing that you'll feel good in?

We've got you!



We curate a set of clothes just for you, with your style and needs in mind. **Clothing is FREE and will be delivered to you** after your call or application is received. Beyond clothing we will connect you to more resources to help you prosper!

(A clothing set = short + long-sleeve shirts, pants, jeans, shoes, jacket + tie, and new underwear + socks)



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Clothing that makes a difference



To apply ask your TDCJ reentry case manager, chaplain or call 1-888-433-9826 for an application.

We serve Dallas, Collin, Rockwall, Denton, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, Ellis, Van Zandt, Bowie, Henderson, Wood, Smith, Fort Worth, Gregg, and Tarrant counties.

Please call for specific cities. This list can change depending on volunteer availability.

Indigent Fan Program

The Indigent Fan Program will supply indigent TDCJ residents with a registered property fan for FREE from the commissary. The program runs from January 1 to August 31 each year, and you must submit your request within this time period.

To qualify for a FREE fan from this program, you must meet ALL eligibility requirements listed below:

1. Have less than a \$5 balance in your Trust Fund account.
2. Be classified with an indigent status for more than 180 days.
3. Have never received a fan through the TDCJ Indigent Fan Program.

You must submit request on an I-60 and send through truck mail or regular mail to:

**Commissary & Trust Fund /
Indigent Fan Program
P.O. Box 629
Huntsville, TX 77342**



Information provided must include:

I would like to request a fan from the Indigent Fan Program.

Name: _____

TDCJ# _____

Unit: _____

Note From The Editor:

*Thank you for your many great comments concerning
The ECHO's new digital magazine format on the tablets!*

FYI: Traditional newsprint issues are still being printed and delivered in smaller quantities to the units and to other interested stakeholders. For readers outside of TDCJ, such as family members, friends and others, *The ECHO* is now offered as a worldwide publication, available for free on the internet via the Windham School District and TDCJ websites: (at wsdtx.org and tdcj.texas.gov). Readers who search for "The ECHO Newspaper" will be treated to the latest edition and recent back issues. Please let your loved ones know this is where they will find news of your accomplishments and success stories, along with creative efforts, opportunities for growth, and agency updates. They can see it at the same time as you!

The ECHO has been serving readers since 1928, bringing news and tools needed to change futures. We appreciate the unique opportunity to write and publish for the men and women of TDCJ — along with those who care about them.

Please keep writing! Your input is awaited, valued and enjoyed!

*Best regards always,
Bambi Kiser
Managing Editor
The ECHO*

Regular Mail:

*The ECHO
P.O. Box 40
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040*

Truck Mail:

*The ECHO
c/o Windham School District
Windham Administration Building
Huntsville, TX 77342-0040*

*Looking for a job
that can become
a career?*

*Wynne
Computer
Recovery
wants you!*

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING INCLUDES:

- Civil Drafter
- Computer Programmer
- Computer Specialist
- Graphic Designer
- Quality Assurance Technician
- Warehouseman

To apply, send an I-60 with a complete resume to:

*Plant Manager Toby Powell
Wynne Computer Recovery
810 FM 2821
Huntsville, TX 77349-0001*



APPLICANTS MUST MEET CERTAIN CRITERIA:

- No disciplinary cases related to contraband electronic devices
- No major cases in the past two years
- G2 custody level
- Prior completion of college or Windham career and technical education programs
- Computer experience is preferred, but not required

Be prepared for a phone interview and to offer references to previously held TDCJ positions. You will be notified if you have been accepted.



Courage is rightly
esteemed the first
of human qualities
because it
is the quality
which guarantees
all others.

—Winston Churchill