

# INSIDE *Out*

Parent Info Link

Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall

June, 2008

## *Playing the Game of Chess Develops Academic and Life Skills!*



The chess program started with group counselors Jesse Huerta and Harold Wise facilitating games between minors. Both are avid chess players and were trying to pass on their love of the game to the children. The children became quickly hooked and many play the game during their free activity time.

The focus is not just learning the basics of chess (and realizing all of the academic benefits it brings) but playing chess is used to improve pro-social skills development such as: patience, strategy, problem solving, empathy, persistence, dealing with disappointment, good sportsmanship and etiquette.

While playing chess minors must:

- speak in a respectful manner at all times
- not talk trash or engage in put downs or swearing
- shake hands before and after matches.
- wish each other good luck and congratulate the winner
- learn how to be good winners and losers
- Learn how to resolve any disagreements.

The minors are given specific areas to work on each class. For example in one class, everyone tried not to swear, and we came up with some



Minors first learn how to play using velcro handmade chess pieces and a paper board.

alternate words which would be more appropriate. They actually managed to avoid swearing.

Chess has been found to have incredible benefits across the spectrum of adolescent development.

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# PEOPLE PADDLE

## People Paddle for the Planet - A Fundraiser for Our JH Garden!



Group Counselor Tina Clark, Amy & Catalyst founder Curtis Manzano kayaked on June 14th to raise money for the JH garden program. Proceeds from pledges will go to completing the irrigation system.

### Playing Chess Nets Multiple Benefits (continued from page1)

Research has found that students who play chess regularly showed twice the improvement of non-chess players in reading and mathematics. Six factors help explain the power of chess: 1) Chess accommodates all modality strengths. 2) it provides a great quantity of problems for practice. 3) it offers immediate punishments/rewards for problem solving. 4) creates a pattern or thinking system. 5) Competition fosters interest, mental alertness, challenges and elicits the highest levels of achievement 6) A learning environment organized around games has a positive affect on students' attitudes toward learning.

B5 living unit is sponsoring a tournament for the entire Hall. The top 3 players from each unit will compete in a round-robin competition. Each unit champion will win a prize and the Juvenile Hall champion will also receive a special prize and his or her unit will enjoy a pizza party.



Many minors choose to play chess during their free activity time instead of working out, playing sports, writing letters or watching videos.

### Developments in California's Juvenile Justice System by Lupe Garcia



In 2005 the US Supreme Court, in Roper V. Simmons, ruled that the application of the death penalty for youth offenders, due to both biological and sociological evidence, was prohibited. With the exclusion of the death penalty the maximum sentence allowed young offenders is life without parole (LWOP). In California 227 people are serving LWOP for crimes committed when they were 14-17 years old while only 7 individuals outside of the US are serving such sentences. Out of the 227 convicted, 45% did not actually kill anybody but were accessories and in many of these cases an adult was involved and that adult got a much lighter sentence than the youth offender.

On April 08, 2008 the Senate Committee on Public Safety approved Senate Bill 1199 or the California Juvenile Life Without Parole Reform Act, which seeks to eliminate the maximum sentence of life without parole for youth offenders. The author, Senator Leland Yee declared the following as an argument for his proposal;

"Children have an extraordinary capacity for rehabilitation... the neuroscience is clear; brain maturation continues well through adolescence and thus impulse control, planning and critical thinking skills are still not

yet fully developed. SB 1199 reflects the science and provides the opportunity for compassion and rehabilitation that we should exercise with minors." SB 1199 would cap the maximum sentence allowed youth offenders at 25 to life. The proposed bill takes the restorative justice approach in that it offers reparative and reconciliation opportunities to the victim, the accused and the community by both maintaining accountability for the crime and offering a second chance in the long life of the offender. Despite claims from the Republican Party majority and victim rights groups that the needs of the victims and their families are not considered, one must note that the bill is conservative in nature. The youth

*"Children have an extraordinary capacity for rehabilitation... the neuroscience is clear; brain maturation continues well through adolescence and thus impulse control, planning and critical thinking skills are still not yet fully developed."*

—Senator Leland Yee

offender must serve a minimum of 25 years before being considered for parole and even then the release is not guaranteed.

"Life without parole means absolutely no opportunity for release," said Yee. "It also means minors are of-

ten left without access to programs and rehabilitative services while in prison. This sentence was created for the worst of criminals that have no possibility of reform and it is not a humane way to handle children. While the crimes they committed caused undeniable suffering, these youth offenders are not the worst of the worst."

The California Juvenile Life Without Parole Reform Act/SB 1199 should have been voted on by the full senate on May 24, 2008 but the Crime Victims Action Alliance presented strong opposition and argued that the bill was not necessary. As a result SB 1199 will be considered after a detailed study by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is conducted and turned into the Legislature by January 1, 2010.

Sources;

<http://dist08.casen.govoffice.com> Article: Committee Approves Bill to Reform Life Sentences for Minors: Adam J. Keigwin: Tuesday April 08, 2008

Report on Human Rights Violations: Michelle Leighton and Professor Connie de la Vega: November 2007

[www.cvactionalliance.org](http://www.cvactionalliance.org) Crime Victims Action Alliance:

**SPOTLIGHT on Senior Group Counselor Jean Rierdon**



Sr. Grp Counselor Jean Riordan

Jean Riordan joined the Probation Department in 1979 while attending graduate school for her second master's degree.

She had earned her B.A. in anthropology at Berkeley and then went on to get an M.A. in Cultural Anthropology. Her interest in different cultures was more than theoretical. Her father was an international contract lawyer and so Jean learned about diversity first hand. Born in Ireland, she graduated high school at age 16 in Hong Kong and spent the interim years living in 9 different countries.

After getting her Master's she was hired by Apple, a then unknown company, to start their Human Resource department. In turn, they paid for her to get a second masters in Finance from Stanford. She synthesized her interests and wrote her the-

sis was on the evolution of monetary values and how they developed in different cultures. At 21 years old she had her security license and worked as a broker with Payne Webber. "You don't know what path you are going on, said Jean in retrospect. "It changes as your interests evolve and your skills develop."

While working as a night attendant at Juvenile Hall allowed her to attend classes and complete her second master's degree, when her marital circumstances changed, she became full time, appreciating the stability and benefits it provided.

She became a counselor in 1981 and worked alongside Kathy Duque in Girls Receiving. Laid off in 1982, she returned in 1984 as a senior group counselor. Since that time Jean has worked every unit at Juvenile Hall and the ranches, as well as the electronic monitoring program and the community release program. And in 1984 she started the men's work furlough in Mountain View and the women's residential program in San Jose in 1996, which closed last year due to budget cuts.

"It was particularly hard to close the Women's Residential program. It was the best program we had for staff and women residents alike," said Jean.

When asked what individual stands out in her long history with the probation department, Jean said Ruth Auten who retired around 2003. "I worked with Ruth Auten at both furloughs and she was a fabulous trainer. When Ruth trained you, you knew why you were doing it that way so you could internalize it. She was the only manager who always did that," said Jean.

"Plus," she added, "Ruth knew your job inside and out. She knew the front line work of any place that she managed. She and Jess Escobar were the only supervisors I knew who worked a job themselves so they would know how to best supervise it."

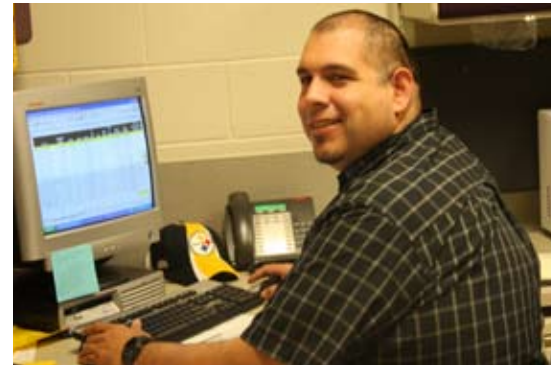
Jean feels that working at JH has kept her young, flexible and always learning.

"You use your people skills to the max regardless of how the kids are feeling or responding," she said. And when I was supervising the electronic monitoring program, my understanding of different cultures helped me behave appropriately in different familial environments.

"As it is I always leave my shift being able to laugh and feeling satisfied about who I am. I also like meeting up minors on the outside." In fact Jean recently met a CHP Officer who she knew as a minor in B1. This man graduated from SJSU, moved away from his gang steeped family and continues to make good choices. He showed Jean a list he created when she had him in an anger management program. It was worn and heavily creased but it listed what he didn't want for his life. He keeps it because it reminds him that he is in charge of what he lives.

**"What has kept me from not burning out is learning how to judge behavior not someone's soul."**

**Ranch Readiness Program Helps Minors Resolve Personal Issues**



Daniel Cortez, Senior Group Counselor and Ranch Readiness Counselor

The purpose of the ranch experience is family reunification. In preparation for leaving the hall and going to the ranch, a minor is required to prepare a family tree and write an autobiography. Ranch Readiness Counselor Daniel Cortez oversees both.

"You learn so much about them from these assignments. It helps us identify whether or not they have issues at home with the family and often when their life took a turn for the worse and why," said Cortez.

Cortez now ensures that the 737 W/I Code Ranch Review Report Matrix gets completed and sent to the Judges every two weeks. At a hearing the minors find out where they are on the waiting list and let the judge know how they are progressing in their living unit. A minor can earn days of credit against time served for participating in the hall's many programs and staying on level A or B for good behavior and attitude. Two days at the hall equals one day at the ranch.

"The judges provide feedback on what they like about the minor's progress and what changes they want. Then I see the kids everyday and do daily counseling groups and one on one sessions so each one can talk about problems and move toward resolution." Before they created this position, the minor's PO wrote the review even though their contact with them was minimal. Now with Cortez at the helm, the minors get the help they need to be successful at the ranch.



EMQ Children & Family Services is nationally recognized for innovation in family-centered programs that help children recover from issues such as severe depression, thoughts of suicide, or drug abuse – and keep families together. The private nonprofit annually helps almost 7,000 children and their family members every year through programs like Family Finding, Wraparound, support and educational services.

EMQ programs are offered to the minors and their families by a Probation Officer (PO). The PO sends in a referral and services are coordinated through the PO and EMQ Program Managers after discussing which program would best fit the minor upon release.

Our Systems of Care program, for example, provides services tailored to the unique strength, values, and norms of each child and family. We serve adolescents who are at risk for becoming further involved with the Juvenile Justice system. Our array of services to each child and family may include assessment; individual, family and group counseling; rehabilitation services; parenting skills training; medication evaluation; 24-hour on call response; crisis intervention; support to caregivers, behavioral support plans and advocacy in educational settings; linkage to community resources; and referrals to other EMQ programs.

We also reach youth through our Addiction Prevention Services that provides drug and alcohol awareness, education, and prevention in schools, after school programs, and the Celebrating Families Initiative.

For more information go to <http://www.emq.org> or call Carly Mitchell, EMQ Community Development Coordinator at (408) 876-4161



Tahoe, a pitbull who visits as part of the Furry Friends program is a favorite among the minors.

Care Behind Bars—Health Education a Priority by Chia Chen continued from March InsideOut



Teen Pregnancy Committee Chair: Eve, Pharmacist: Zoe, Nurse Mgr: Chia, Sleep Disorder and skin problem Committee Chair: Kerry

It is an amazing experience to share our knowledge of health and healthy practices with the minors and hear their stories. We could never understand why a girl would stay in an abusive relationship unless we listened to her story about how she struggled with her low self-esteem and the craving for love and attention even when the relationship turned bad. The results are often bruises and black eyes and the girl usually doesn't have any support system to verbalize her concerns. What's dating violence? What's wrong when a boyfriend punches you? When you're growing up in an environment where your father hits your mother almost everyday, how can we expect her to understand dating violence?

How do we teach a gang affiliated boy not to use dirty needles, when all his male relatives have multiple tattoos and share needles for IV heroin? How can a 15 year old pregnant girl understand the risk of teen pregnancy when her mother and grandmothers all had children during their teens? How can a diabetic girl go home, bake a chocolate

cake and finished the whole cake by herself? She just knows that when she is alone eating is the only way she feels she is in total control.

Seeing how the young people can apply what we teach them is rewarding. When a child is able to self inject insulin correctly, an asthmatic minor is able to demonstrate a correct method of using an inhaler, a pregnant girl shows you the various foods which are rich in folic acid, a teenager tells of the importance of eating high calcium food, a boy with tattoos advises his peers how to avoid IV drugs in preventing HIV/hepatitis C, or a diabetic boy loses 32 lbs., we jump up and down with joy for the kids. We celebrate their success in learning-there is no a better reward.

We lead them with various games that are not only educational, but also fun. There was a touching moment when a girl tells how she got into prostitution because of drug addiction. Another told her life story of bouncing between 23 foster homes in five years. What is the definition of home for one who never experienced Christmas in her life? Her beautiful innocent eyes were seeking for approval when she asked if she could come back to Juvenile Hall next year to assist with decorating the clinic for the holidays! "I know how to come back to Juvenile Hall, it is so easy." It is sad to learn that many of the kids have asked if they could stay in the Juvenile Hall even though they have served their time because they feel a sense of

belonging here than on the out.

Kids growing up in the world of advertizing often believe that any medical problem can be resolved with a pill. Compounded with their low self esteem, they easily get hooked on medication. Juvenile Hall's pill call carts even have a poster which reads, "Do you have a dream, ask your nurse." This is where the self-esteem committee would cater to those curious little ones and help them set up short-term and long-term goals. A Bear to Dream project was born with the assistance of a VMC foundation grant. Each child who sets up their goal for life was given a "build a bear" kits to keep their life goal message inside of the stuffed animal. The bear was given to them upon release. They can either open the bear at home or open it later in life. Some of the message simply read, "What lesson did I learn when I was a troubled teen?" We hope a simple message like this will put their life in perspective.

The JH nurses always make it a priority that each child who goes through the clinic leaves with a better understanding of how to care for themselves and their health. Whether it is a high protein diet, a correct way of wearing a condom, a needle exchange program, safe sex education, a relaxation techniques, some safe dating tips, changing diapers for a new born, a smoke cessation class, a proper way to control blood sugar or a correct way of using inhalers, we are committed to make a difference because we really care.

SCC Probation Department's Volunteer Programs in JH

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** Group meetings for minors with alcohol abuse problems.

**Alateen Alannon:** Group meetings for minors who are related to people with alcohol abuse issues.

**The Beat Within:** A weekly publication of writings and artworks by minors in local JHs.

**Catalyst for Youth Garden:** A horticulture therapy program that revolves around planting and tending a garden within the compound of buildings that comprise the Juvenile Hall Facility.

**Fashion Design:** A design and sewing class for female minors implemented by Catalyst for Youth volunteers.

**Flower and Feast Programs:** Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Thanksgiving volunteers under the direction of Megan Williams come into assist minors with making flower arrangement for family members. On Xmas, again under Ms. Williams program, volunteers create and serve a buffet dinner in every living unit.

**Foster Grandparent Programs:** Volunteers over the age of 60 who provide supportive care, training, companionship and social contact with minors.

**Furry Friends:** Pet assisted therapy services where volunteers bring in animals for minors to interact with.

**Girl Scouts:** Program that targets gang prevention for females.

**Hair Care:** Hair cut services are provided for all minors on a rotating schedule.

**Health Realization (HR):** a teaching model that is used in prevention, intervention and treatment. HR teaches about how the human mind works, how an individual's experience of life is created and how much each person uses or misuses his/her ability to think. HR is taught on a weekly basis to designated living units.

**Heart of Chaos Expressive Arts Program:** Teaches a variety of mediums to several living units.

**Narcotics Anonymous:** Group meetings for minors with drug abuse problems.

**Next Door Solutions:** Program that raises awareness about domestic violence and dating violence.

**Planned Parenthood:** Program that targets teens who are at risk for teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and violence. Week long workshop educates minors about family life and issues surrounding intercourse.

**Religious Services:** An assigned Chaplain oversees all religious services provided for minors.

**Santa:** During the Christmas holiday, Mr. Wallau assisted by several volunteer elves pass out Christmas presents to all the minors in custody.

**Zohar Dance Company:** Internationally acclaimed dancer/teacher Ehud Krauss instructs minors on various forms of high energy dance.

**Contacts** (all numbers are in the 408 area code)

- Asian American Recovery Services 271-3900
- Asian-American for Com. Involvement 975-2730
- CYO: California Youth Outreach 280-0203
- Catalyst for Youth/Heart of Chaos 269-3356
- FLY: Fresh Lifelines for Youth 299-7789
- Friends Outside 295-6033
- Gardner Family Care Corp. 287-6200
- MACSA 928-5820
- Next Door Solutions 279-2962
- Juvenile Hall Visiting 278-5810
- Juvenile Hall Main 278-5820

**Living Unit Supervisors**

B2, B3	Omar Ventura	278-5869
B4	William Moore	278-5877
B5, B6	Jim Tarshis	278-5863
B7	Dwight Richardson	278-5860
B8, B9	Alicia Garcia	278-5861
G1, G2	Kris Leisten	278-5862
B11, B12	Elsa Jennings	278-5859

**Inside Out** Newsletter

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## Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall Mission Statement

*The Mission of Juvenile Hall as a detention facility is to provide an environment where the safety and security of the minors is our highest priority. We ensure that our youth receive the nutritional, educational, medical and mental health services as mandated by the state. While upholding the orders of the Court, we thereby contribute to the common effort of protecting the community. Further, we are committed to a standard of excellence in humane treatment.*

### *Goals and Aspirations—With Dedication We Pledge to Strive For:*

*Professionalism – We act with fairness, consistency and without bias, while facing the daily challenges of working with delinquent behavior.*

*Positive Role Modeling – We believe it is through our actions and guidance that we make the greatest impact.*

*Integrity – We strive to maintain honest, ethical and moral behavior within and outside of our profession of working with delinquent behavior.*

*Individual Worth – We value the importance of the individual while respecting cultural diversity.*

*Professional Development – We recognize that continuous education and training create the most effective staff.*

*Enrichment in Programming – We extend our positive influence throughout the community and within our institution through the development of socially beneficial programs.*

*Community Involvement – We recognize the value of and utilize the community resources to side in our effort to effect positive change in our youth.*



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