



California Correctional
Peace Officers Association

Front Street

Fronting the Facts, Watching Your Back

December 2005

Message from Louie Adame **Vice President, CYA**

In October, Chuck Helton, CDC Vice President and I attended the Association of Black Correctional Workers (ABCW) annual awards banquet. It was an honor to attend the event and receive a recognition award on behalf of CCPOA for positive contributions to the corrections profession. It was a great opportunity to reconnect with staff I've known and worked with over the years. I would like to thank everyone who helped make this event a success.

As CCPOA's representative at this meeting, proper decorum dictated that I not use my few moments at the podium as a soapbox from which to chastise Department Secretary Hickman for his dangerous failings as the head of CDCR.

But to my dismay, Hickman and his managers thought nothing of it when they provided a power-point presentation to highlight the goals of the new CDCR. They spoke about hopes, aspirations and intentions without ever identifying anything initiated, implemented or corrected. It's the same dialogue his team has been preaching for more than 24 months now.

I was ready for a nap until he exploited the video of the Chad incident where correctional counselors were savagely attacked by two wards, and four officers were consequently accused of excessive force in handcuffing the violent wards. Hickman did not mention one word about how an Administrative Law Judge and the full SPB Board had exonerated these dedicated officers of any misconduct.

Coincidentally, the managers sharing the stage with Hickman had no line experience, yet they were doing their "textbook" best to explain how we can do our jobs better. Thanks.

Imagine how you would feel if you had to watch two former CYA Directors and a brand-new Juvenile Justice Director give a presentation on improvement plans for the new YA.

These are the same ex-CYA Directors who failed miserably when challenged with stopping the violence at Chad, YTS, Preston and other facilities under their administration.

The new Director may be another well-meaning administrator, but he knows even less than past directors about the degree of dysfunction and danger in California's youth correctional system. I wish him luck!



DOES THE MOU STATE WHEN WE SHOULD RECEIVE MONTHLY PAYCHECKS? IS IT PRIOR TO THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH?

The CCPOA MOU states in Article XXVI Section 26.01-H that each department will establish a date by which its PIEs shall receive their regular pay. Hence there is no closing date established through negotiations. The department currently tries to process PIE payroll so that it is available within the earliest window possible — and by the 15th at the latest. The calculations of the pay period are based upon the hourly figures of a work period, which in most cases ends well into the following month.

WARD POPULATION AND VIOLENCE

Ward population is down 762 from August 2004 (3,845) to December 2005 (3,063). On the other hand, now that the new director has closed Chaderjian to transfers, the assaults on staff and wards are on the rise.



Protesting at Governor's Downtown Fundraiser



Mark Valdez & Cynthia Williams (CDC San Diego Paroles) Golden Badge Awards

This is causing major disruptions at all facilities. These violent wards are now being detained at Preston in the intensive treatment programs, which have single rooms. They are banging on doors and yelling obscene words to the medicated wards and to staff. The wards are continuing their disruptive behavior by spitting on everyone.

Since Tamarack Lock-up unit was closed, a 300% increase in assaults has occurred, according to an Amador County Grand Jury 2005 report earlier this year. This increase is higher than when Senator Romero, Hickman and Allen called it a “dungeon” and closed the unit.

It's decisions like these that take away treatment services and put staff and wards in an increasingly unsafe work environment. Because the youth counselors are occupied with violent, disruptive wards, there is no time for treatment. Isn't this contrary to the new department's goal to reach out and teach wards?

Other facilities that have either little or no lock-up, like DeWitt and OH Close, have it even worse. There are many dark days for staff as they try to meet court and department mandates. And the Inspector General says 70-30 post & bid is a detriment to the treatment programs.



CYA PERMANENT INTERMITTENT EMPLOYEES

CCPOA agreed to lift the maximum PIE hourly cap for all CYA institutions due to an extreme amount of forced overtime and staff shortages caused by ward assaults. The new department followed ex-director Harper's direction and based on its own correctional "experts," grossly underestimated the function of custody staff and savings. Early in the process, CCPOA informed the managers of future problems, but they said they knew better. The department's same correctional "experts" predict that only 51 line staff will retire in January 2006, despite the fact that the new CCPOA contract opens up the 3.0 retirement benefit next year. Brilliant.

WARDENS TURNED SUPERINTENDENTS

Latest rumor: Are California's wardens trading places with CYA superintendents? I hope not, as these poor managers can't even safely run their own prisons, much less know the Juvenile Welfare Codes.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ...

Whatever happened to second-in-command Sylvia Huerta Garcia? I guess she didn't make the grade for the new department. Although some thought she didn't know what she was doing, I say her hands were tied. Either way she is gone and now working at Mule Creek.

THUMBS UP!

The CCPOA Thumbs Up! team continues to butt heads with the new department to keep conducting events for the sake of our children's safety. The department continues to limit the amount of staff being released on RTB — further restricting our availability to provide these free services to the public.



Asian Garden Mall Thumbs Up! Event

All staff members involved in the Thumbs Up! team donate their own time to ensure the program's success. Since the department has no control or access to the program, they are doing their best to disrupt these events. This could seriously limit our future activities. Despite the hurdles by the DORC management, the Thumbs Up! team held an event at the Asian Garden Mall in Westminster, successfully fingerprinting 800 children. Special thanks to officer Kurt Stoetzel's team from Madera, YCC Victor Hawkins of Preston and YCC Sheryl Straub of OH Close. Extended thanks to SCWF Officer Laurie St. Louis and Christine Manni for recruiting four co-workers, all on their R-Days to assist in this event.

Without their help, the Thumbs Up! team would have been very short-handed. This was a total team effort and an outstanding job, despite the department's failure to realize this extraordinary pro-kids program.

ASSAULTS

Aug. 17, 2005; Preston Staff Assault — An SYCC supervisor informed a ward that he needed to comply with grooming standards and therefore needed to shave. The ward left, only to return and assault the officer who sustained injuries to his back, right arm/shoulder, and suffered a laceration and swelling to his right eye. The SYCC was treated and released for further treatment from his physician.

Aug. 29, 2005; Preston Staff Assault — A YCC was assaulted in the night dorm program. On his way to the restroom, a ward started striking the officer in the head and body. A responding staff member assisted in subduing and placing the ward in cuffs, but was also injured. Both were treated and referred to their personal physicians.

Aug. 31, 2005; DeWitt Nelson Staff Assault — A YCO was struck in the face by a ward. The YCO was treated at the infirmary.

Oct. 15, 2005; HGSYCF Staff Sexual Assault — At the conclusion of a dayroom program, a ward walked up and brushed behind a YCC (female), grabbing her left buttock. The ward disregarded instructions from the YCC, at which point the SYC intervened and cuffed the ward.

Oct. 18, 2005; OH Close Group Disturbance — More than 25 Northern and Southern Hispanic gang members were involved in a group disturbance in the school area. Chemical agents were dispersed and physical force was used to regain control. Four staff members were injured — two have returned to work and two are in physical therapy.

Oct. 21, 2005; Preston Cedar Lodge Group Disturbance — There was a group disturbance involving 24 Northern and Southern gang members. Chemical agents were used and responding security regained control of the unit. This was the second day of group violence involving these two gang-affiliated wards.

Oct. 21, 2005; DeWitt Nelson Gang Disturbances — Violence erupted at DeWitt and all wards involved were gang affiliated. This was a serious problem as the institution has no lock-up program. Security and staff did regain control with chemical agents.

Oct. 24, 2005; Preston Hawthorne Lodge — The living unit had just been released from modified program when the wards began fighting again. The living unit remains on modified program due to continuing ward violence.

Oct. 25, 2005; Chaderjian Staff Assault — A YCC was assaulted as he handcuffed a ward. The staff member was referred to his personal physician.

Oct. 31, 2005; OH Close Group Disturbance — Nine Northern Hispanics and eight African American wards started fighting in the dayroom. Chemical agents were used to regain control of the wards. One staff member was injured.

Nov. 1, 2005; DeWitt Nelson Group Disturbance — What started out as a one-on-one fight quickly grew to involve 22 Northern vs. Southern gang members. The wards refused to follow instructions to stop and staff deployed two sting ball rounds from the 37mm. Order was restored.

Nov. 4, 2005; HGSYCF Staff Assault — A ward that was instructed to go to his room proceeded to spit on a YCC. The staff member was treated at the infirmary and referred to the U.S. Healthworks Medical Group.

Nov. 4, 2005; HGSYCF Upper Kitchen Disturbance — Twenty-three Hispanic and African American wards started fighting in the kitchen. Chemical agents were used to gain control. One YCC sustained a shoulder injury and was transported to the hospital.

Nov. 5, 2005; HGSYCF M Company Disturbance — A racial disturbance occurred in the dayroom when two white wards attacked an African American ward. At the same time, 11 Southern Hispanic gang members started attacking the remaining African American wards. Chemical agents were used to regain control.

Nov. 6, 2005; HGSYCF Staff Assault — A ward assaulted a YCC by striking him in the face and eye area. The ward subsequently spat on the YCC and YCO officers. The assault appeared to be over the ward's refusal to close his food tray slot.

Nov. 7, 2005; Preston Staff Assault — A ward assaulted a YCC, beating him unconscious with repeated blows to the head. Staff assisted in handcuffing the ward with the assistance of chemical agents. The staff member was transported to an outside hospital, treated and released.

Nov. 15, 2005; OH Close provided emergency security housing for a San Joaquin County ward. The Stockton Police Department was able to obtain reliable information about an attempted escape of the ward and his co-defender with help from their Tiny Rascals gang during the upcoming holiday season.

Nov. 16, 2005; OH Close Del Norte Hall Disturbance — A disturbance involving 13 Blacks, 10 Northern Hispanics, 12 Southern Hispanics and one Bulldog occurred in Del Norte Hall when the Blacks aligned with the Northern Hispanics. There were no weapons used, no staff injuries and minor abrasions to wards involved.

Nov. 16, 2005; OH Close Calaveras Hall Disturbance — A group disturbance involving 15 Southern Hispanics and three Northern Hispanics was reported. One weapon was found. Four wards suffered minor injuries and were sent to the Outpatient Housing Unit for treatment. All involved wards were placed on Temporary Detention pending investigation. Del Norte and Calaveras Halls were placed on modified program at this time.

Nov. 19, 2005; El Paso de Robles Youth Correctional Facility Assault — A ward scaled the recreation yard fence and ran toward a group of Pismo lodge wards, where he and another ward engaged in a fight. No staff injuries.

WARD EDUCATION

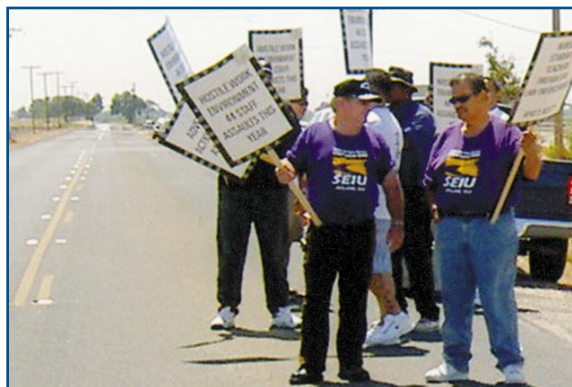
Thanks to the new department's goal to reach out to wards and teach them life skills, the wards are now learning how to exploit the use of computers for their own criminal activities.

And the wards have been very receptive to this new program, as they've learned how to use the CD drivers to make TAC guns for tattoos and bypass passwords to obtain personal information on anyone.

CCPOA'S PEACEFUL PICKET VS. DEPARTMENT'S DISTURBANCE

On August 18, 2005, CCPOA's picket on behalf of all Chaderjian staff with the support of DeWitt Nelson and OH Close members was successful thanks to over 50 members of CCPOA, CTA, SEIU Local 1000, nurses, cooks, etc. who stood together opposite the main gate of the NCYC Complex in Stockton holding signs protesting the unsafe working conditions. Our issues are simple: do something to stop the staff assaults and fill the vacant positions. Thanks to everyone who honked and stood with us.

But in September, the new YA Director allowed a "Books Not Bars" protest at the NCYC main gate in Stockton. Protesters blocked staff from entering and exiting the institution, banged on staff vehicles with signs, videotaped staff vehicles and called them murderers — all with the blessing of the new director. In contrast, CCPOA, SEIU Local 1000 and CTA peacefully protested weeks earlier and were ordered to stand on the opposite side of the street by management.



Volunteers picket working conditions at NCYC

