

The Condition of Probation

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Girls Stepping Up for Change

By Kevin Lynch



“Girls Stepping Up for Change (formerly known as “the Girls Running Group”)” is approaching its fifth anniversary of providing a positive, pro-social alternative for youth and families from under-served populations in Marin County. This program meets every Thursday at the Juvenile Services Center at 5 PM and offers a series of healthy activities, including a personal trainer who leads the group in workouts such as running and interval training. In addition, the group has convened on weekends to take part in group hikes, fun runs such as the “Marin Human Race,” the “San Francisco Color Run” and “Bridge to Bridge,” theater, a karate class, a workshop on financial literacy, and a photography

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Chief's Corner

By Michael Daly



In December of 2015, the Probation Department celebrated the Holiday Season in the Board of Supervisors chambers. It was a big party! Clearly, the greatest gift we received was from a group of adults who have been under the supervision of our staff in the Adult Division. We decided to recognize them for all that they have done to make changes in their lives in the face of difficult

circumstances. Our first annual “Wall of Change” celebration turned out to be one of the best events I have ever been a part of in all my years working for the Probation Department.

As you may recall, we started this Wall of Change program a few years ago ([View Video](#) to refresh your memory). We contacted the original “stars” of this effort and asked them if they would come back and be the featured speakers. Tawnie, Toni and Alfred all agreed to do so and to speak to a full board room about how their lives have changed and how proud they were to be a part of the Wall of Change ceremony. We also had others come up and speak about their life changes and there was not a

dry eye in the house. Michael Pritchard, a former probation officer and nationally recognized motivation speaker who works with at-risk kids, was also a featured speaker.



Chief Mike Daly and three of the wall of change honorees who spoke, Tawnie, Toni and Alfred.

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Marin County Probation Department is to further justice and community safety, and to hold offenders accountable while promoting their rehabilitation.

Chief's Corner (from pg. 1)...

er. Michael spoke about what really matters in life like being compassionate, giving and simply helping others. It was a very simple message but also very poignant. Judge Boren was asked to give every recipient a certificate commemorating their achievement and we took a group picture.

I had people from many departments throughout the county tell me our Holiday Season celebration was an inspiring event and asked us to do more of them. Effecting change in people's lives goes to the core of what we as probation officers strive to do every day. It also fits in nicely with

what Michael Pritchard was saying about the importance of caring. I am committed to having a Wall of Change event every year. I hope to see you there.



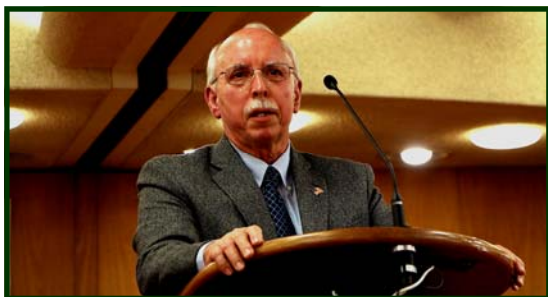
DPO Cole a member of the Wall of Change committee.



Michael Pritchard as a featured speaker.



Two more Wall of Change honorees



Judge Boren congratulates the group.



Recovery Coach Jim Ricci and DPO Davis reviewing the program



Martial Arts Hall of Fame

By Jeff Virzi

On November 14, 2015, William Olson aka Billy “the kid” Olson was nominated unanimously into “The Martial Arts Hall of Fame”. Billy started training in Martial Arts when he was 6 years old. He loved the sport and its challenges, gaining multiple Black belts in Shorin-Ryu, Taekwondo, and a Black Sash Choy li Fut. Billy fought professionally from 1988 to 2004. During his journey in his professional career he held World Champion Belts in Bantamweight & Featherweight Divisions and he was also the #1 Contender for Featherweight Division for many years unchallenged. As a World Champion Fighter he fought in countless matches in the United States and foreign countries including China, Japan, Brazil, Australia, Holland, England, Germany, Ro-

mania, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, and Mexico. He has also been a trainer for a match in Italy. Now at the age of 47 Billy is considered one of the experts in the field of fighting, and is a master in training and strategically setting up matches to promote his fighters. His home and company, “Integrity Sports” is based out of the fight capital, Las Vegas, Nevada. Billy and his company are responsible for training 10 World Champions, many of which are still fighting in popular arenas like the UFC and K1.

In conjunction with all his martial arts duties, Billy has been working for Marin County Juvenile Hall since 1994. Since his inception date at the Juvenile Hall he has worked as a group counselor and also as a Juvenile Electronic Monitoring Of-



ficer. His passion is working with troubled kids and he enjoys the team concept of the shift patterns at the Hall. Billy told me that he attributes a lot of his accomplishments in fighting, professional and personal life to the flexibility that the management team at the Probation Department has afforded him to accomplishing his life goals. Billy’s long term goals will be to continue working at the Hall until he is eligible to retire and on his free time fine tuning his sport management company.



Bay Area Deputy Probation Officer of the Year

By Michael Daly

Once a year, the Chief Probation Officers of California give out awards recognizing outstanding service. In 2015, I nominated Elizabeth Carranza for her work in the upstart Marin Transitional Age Youth (MTAY) program. With declining referrals and number of minors in juvenile hall, the department saw an opportunity to better serve another population that needed help. MTAY targets young persons on probation who are in between the ages of 18-25. Elizabeth Carranza was tapped to take on this difficult task. Many of these youth are persons who lack education, job skills, social skills, have drug and alcohol issues and limited support systems. Some of these folks are

unfortunately graduates of our juvenile system and/or foster care system. Elizabeth is a bilingual and bicultural deputy probation officer and utilizes these strengths with her caseload. She has done an incredible job of serving this population and her heart is in alignment with the mission of probation.

In December of 2015, the Chief Probation Officers of California named Elizabeth Carranza the Bay Area Deputy Probation Officer of the year.

She represented our department very well! We are all very proud of her accomplishment.



Chief Daly and Bay Area Deputy Probation Officer of the Year, Elizabeth Carranza

Recipe of the Quarter: **Mississippi Pot Roast**

Ingredients:

- 1 chuck roast (4-5 pounds)
- 1 packet ranch dressing mix
- 1 packet au jus gravy mix
- 1 stick of butter
- 10 pepperoncini peppers
- 1 slow cooker / crock pot



Directions:

- Throw your roast into the slow cooker
- Sprinkle the ranch dressing mix and the au jus gravy mix on top of the roast
- Place the butter on top
- Surround the butter with pepperoncinis
- Cook on low for 8-10 hours

Girls Stepping Up for Change (from pg. 1)...

project. They also perform community service, such as volunteering at food banks and at local running events. On average, about 10-12 girls, ranging in age from as young as 11 to as old as 18, take part each week. In addition, several of the girls' mothers have also been attending regularly, which has been an added benefit of this program. One recent event that was particularly noteworthy was when the girls convened at Dominican University in San Rafael and got the opportunity to meet with a group of women college athletes. The women shared their stories of how they achieved success both in their sport and in academics. The girls not only met excellent role models, they also got first hand exposure to the college which sits in their backyard and could provide a vision for what they can achieve.

Angela Arenas, Mental Health Practitioner with the Juvenile Division of the Probation Department, originally conceived the idea of

Girls Stepping Up for Change, and both Michele Boyer and Jeana Reynolds, Supervisors from the Juvenile Division, provide regular support to the program. They are all very grateful to the numerous other staff from the County who have periodically participated, particularly Dr. Marisol Muñoz-Kiehne from Health and Human Services. Although primarily set up for girls, the program is open to having other members of the family to participate, and at times entire families come to take part. Participants are not limited to families from the Probation Department, and referrals have come from other systems besides juvenile justice. If you want to learn more about it, and/or would like to participate or refer someone, please contact Angela directly at aarenas@marincounty.org.

It is clear that many of the girls who regularly attend the program are seeking connection as much as physical exercise. Too often, the

juvenile justice system is very adept at telling youth the things they cannot do (use drugs and alcohol, engage in delinquency, hang out with negative peers, etc.), but not as good at providing alternatives for that sort of behavior and activity. Girls Stepping Up for Change is one of the ways in which the Probation Department provides healthy alternatives to youth and families in need of support and/or seeking to make changes in their lives. The Juvenile Division believes strongly that our task for youth who are referred should not be limited only to ensuring they are held accountable for their actions. In order to assist youth and families to be truly successful over a long period of time, we need to offer opportunities for making substantial change in their lives, and programs such as Girls Stepping Up for Change is one example of that effort.



Today's Draw: Michelle Pitts

By My Tran

Michelle Pitts, Juvenile Correctional Officer III is our lucky draw for this newsletter to be the special employee that has an article that features everything about her. Michelle was born and raised in Oakland, California by her two loving parents. She is an only child and has a strong bond and love for her parents. Her mother is her best friend and they share a special relationship.

Michelle attended various private schools and graduated high school at Saint Joseph Notre Dame. After high school, she decided to venture out on her own and attended Fresno State University where she received a dual major in Physical Therapy and Sociology with a minor in Latin Studies. Michelle has been working for the Marin County Probation Department for 18 years in the Juvenile Correctional facility. She has enjoyed her position as a Correctional Officer because it has provided her with an opportunity to experience the highs and lows of the minors. She stated, "It forces you to fix difficult times and smile through happy times." What Michelle loves most about her job

is seeing the minors she has served turn their lives around. That is the most rewarding part of her job and purpose in life.

Apart of her job, she has volunteered to run a Girl's Circle Group, Art Group, a Boy's Group, and teaches cognitive behavioral program called, "Thinking for Change" to the minors serving time in Juvenile Hall. Michelle is seen as a mentor to these young juveniles and receives great respect from the juveniles and her colleagues.

In her spare time, she is an avid Oakland Raider's fan as well as an Oakland A's and Warriors fan. She loves to make fun of the San Francisco 49ers while watching their games. Michelle is a wonderful cook of various Asian cuisines. She is always fixing her specialties for the staff at juvenile hall. Besides watching sports and cooking, Michelle has an addiction to shopping for shoes, jewelry, and cars. Her dream is to own a car dealership of exotic and luxury cars. If she has any extra spare time, she loves to read books.



Michelle's career goal is to become Chief of Probation. This is a hint for Chief Daly to hurry up and retire so there is a vacant spot. Whether Michelle moves up the ladder to be Chief or remain as a Juvenile Correctional Officer, she is a very hard working and dedicated employee to the County and we are blessed to have her as a part of our Probation family.

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Marin County Probation Department Newsletter Editorial Policy

The Condition of Probation is published quarterly by the Marin County Probation Department. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for communication and the sharing of information. *The Condition of Probation* publishes articles and information related to Mission and Departmental operations & activity. Articles submitted may be edited for content, clarity, or length.

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