A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

To quote a famous little blond girl in a scary movie, “They’re back.” It’s been a while since we published our last newsletter and hopefully you won’t have to wait as long for our next one. Believe me, it’s a sin of omission rather than commission. One of the major problems with an organization that is run by an all volunteer board is that you can not hold them to the same standards as a paid employee.

As you will note from this newsletter, there have been some changes in our leadership. Several of our long time board members have decided that retirement is more attractive than working, lucky them, unlucky us. Good luck to Cindy, Marge and Bob. The newsletter will introduce both our newest board members and the new slate of officers.

As we are all aware, recent changes in the government’s approach to involvement in professional organizations has had a serious impact on the way NJACA does its business and provides services to our membership and our colleagues. The old days of annual conferences that attract several hundred people may not be dead, but it is certainly in hibernation. The board began a discussion at our March meeting on what we can do to keep our members interested and provide them with the kinds of activities that make them want to stay involved. If you have any suggestions you can snail mail them to our post office box or send me an email at jhemm@njaconline.org.

We hope to continue some one-day trainings that provide value to our membership and are in preliminary planning to hold some sort of annual meeting that would be held in the Trenton area at the end of our workday so folks could attend. More on that later.

If you are wondering about the blond girl reference think Drew Barrymore at about 5 or 6.

~ Jim Hemm, NJACA President

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**Editor’s Note: American Life in Poetry**

Readers of this issue of the *George Yefchak NJACA Corrections Quarterly* will be introduced to a new standing column entitled *American Life in Poetry*. This special feature is being provided to us by The Poetry Foundation. We will also share with our readers a brief history of this weekly newspaper column, which is celebrating its fourth anniversary this year. Each new issue of the *Quarterly* will generally contain several *American Life in Poetry* features.
Congratulations to the following new Board members...

Ralph Frentz
Corporate Director: Assessment & Research, CEC

Kim Guadagno
Monmouth County Sheriff

Pat McKernan
Chief Operating Officer, Volunteers of America

Mark O'Sullivan
Research Scientist, State Parole Board

Michael Osterman
Research Scientist, State Parole Board

Matthew Sheridan
Executive Assistant, Juvenile Justice Commission

Donald Weinbaum
Executive Director, Council on Compulsive Gambling of NJ

Welcome New NJ-ACA Executive Board Members

President
Jim Hemm

1st Vice President
David Wolfsgruber

2nd Vice President
Richard Marazo

Treasurer
Don Weinbaum

Recording Secretary
Celeste Bettino

Corresponding Secretary
Sherry Sandler

Congratulations to the following members who retained their seats on the Board...

Thomas Flanagan: Director, Juvenile Parole & Transitional Services, JJC
Gary Hilton: President, Paige Plus LLC
Roger Lichtman: Registered Architect, Lichtman Associates, P.C.
Robert Murray: Administrator & Division Chief, Hudson County DOC & JDC
John Piercy: Assistant Social Work Supervisor, NJ DOC
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NJACA: A wealth of Talent, Credentials, and Expertise
About our Board Members...

Thomas Flanagan
Mr. Flanagan was confirmed as Deputy Executive Director of the JJC in July, 2003. Prior to his appointment to this position, Mr. Flanagan served as the Chief of the JJC’s Office of Investigations.
Mr. Flanagan’s career in law enforcement began with the Trenton Police Department as an Identification Officer. In 1977, he joined the New Jersey Attorney General’s Office in the Division of Criminal Justice as the Administrator of Investigations. Throughout his 22 years at the Division of Criminal Justice, Mr. Flanagan was assigned to a number of units including Medical Fraud, Organized Crime, Official Corruption, Environmental Prosecutions, Internal Investigations, and Institutional Child Abuse, where he investigated claims of child abuse in hospitals, day care centers and detention facilities.

While serving in the Institutional Child Abuse Unit, he conducted the first child abuse investigation and prosecution in the State of New Jersey, which resulted in a conviction. Mr. Flanagan is also credited with establishing an Internal Affairs Unit with the Division of Motor Vehicles; developed training courses for Environmental Crime Training for NJ Police Officers, and Correctional Treatment Services. Dr. Fretz is a national and international presenter. His publications include outcome research articles with the most recent publication listed in the March/April 2008 edition of Corrections Compendium. Dr. Fretz has attained the level of Master trainer for the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and the LS/CMJ.

Kim Guadagno, Monmouth County Sheriff
Sheriff Kim Guadagno is the Chief Executive of a 505 member, $60 million agency encompassing a law enforcement division, a 1,528-bed maximum security correctional facility, a youth detention center and a police communications/9-1-1 emergency dispatch center. The Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office achieved the unprecedented, “Grand Slam” achievement of national accreditation in four major areas of operation. It is the only agency across the United States to earn this distinction.

Sheriff Kim Guadagno was a former Assistant United States Attorney and Assistant Attorney General. As Deputy Director of the Division of Criminal Justice, Kim supervised a staff of approximately 300 prosecutors and investigators. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Kim was the Deputy Chief of the Corruption Unit and was twice honored with the U.S. Department Of Justice’s highest award for Superior Performance.

James A. Hemm
James A. Hemm has worked for the New Jersey Association on Correction since June of 1968. The Association provides services to people impacted by the criminal justice system which includes offenders, people living with HIV/AIDS and victims of Domestic Violence. Jim has held several positions at the Association and became Executive Director in January 1984. Jim holds both a BA and EdM from Rutgers University.

Jim has been involved with several professional organizations including having served as a Regional Vice President and President, 1958-87 of the International Halfway House Association, a founding member and of the Coalition of Community Correction Providers New Jersey, board member and past Treasurer of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Correctional Association, and Treasurer of the New Jersey Community Action Association. In addition, he serves on the Board of Haynacht Foundation and Volunteers of American Delaware Valley.

Ralph Fretz, Ph.D.
Ralph Fretz, Ph.D., is a Licensed Psychologist who is employed as the Corporate Director of Assessment and Research for Community Education Centers. Dr. Fretz’s earned a Ph.D. from Seton Hall School of Professional Psychology.

Dr. Fretz’s professional experience includes State Hospitals, Mental Health Clinics, Child Study Teams, and Correctional Treatment Services. Dr. Fretz is a national and international presenter. His publications include outcome research articles with the most recent publication listed in the March/April 2008 edition of Corrections Compendium. Dr. Fretz has attained the level of Master trainer for the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) and the LS/CMJ.

Gary J. Hilton
Mr. Hilton’s distinguished career in Corrections has spanned over 37 years. He is a proven leader, with strong operations and executive management skills. Mr. Hilton has served as an expert witness, trainer, lecturer and consultant to a wide range of public, judicial and private entities, both nationally and abroad. He has also provided technical consultation and training services on behalf of the National Institute of Corrections.

In April of 1998, Mr. Hilton concluded a 33-year career with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, having served as Warden of the State’s maximum security prison, Superintendent of the adult prison for women, and for over 17 years as Assistant Commissioner for Operations, Chief of Staff and Acting Commissioner.

Prior to his retirement from public service in July 2002, Mr. Hilton was Director of Corrections and Youth Services for Monmouth County, New Jersey. During his tenure, he spearheaded the successful national accreditation of the central facility. Mr. Hilton is a charter member of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Correctional Association and served as the organization’s President for several years.
He has overseen more than $850 million in facility construction and renovations. He has also been the recipient of numerous awards and commendations from various professional and governmental organizations. Currently, Mr. Hilton is founder and president of Paige Plus LLC, a comprehensive correctional service and consulting company.

Roger Lichtman
Mr. Lichtman, a registered architect, is no stranger to the criminal justice design process. Prior to establishing The Lichtman Associates, P.C. in Princeton, New Jersey in 1992, Mr. Lichtman was associated with three nationally known design firms. His professional experience, in over twenty-five years of dedication to the criminal justice design field, encompasses all aspects of correctional facility planning and design, on both new construction and renovation/rehabilitation projects.

Mr. Lichtman has presented over thirty lectures and has authored numerous articles on secure design and construction. In addition to working throughout the country, most recently, Mr. Lichtman directed a team that worked on Saipan, CNMI to assist in the development of a criminal justice system. This included the planning, design and construction of a jail, prison, juvenile facility and immigration facility as well as police holding facilities on several outlying islands.

In addition to being a registered architect in numerous states, Mr. Lichtman is also NCARB Certified and has served as chairman of the American Institute of Architects, Committee on Architecture for Justice. He has also served on the Board of NJACA and is a member of the American Jail Association.

Pat McKernan
Pat McKernan is a Charter Operating Officer for Volunteers of America Delaware Valley. Pat has been with Volunteers of America since 1996 and supervises all correctional and domestic violence programs. Pat has been a social worker for 17 years in the City of Camden. She is President of the Coalition of Community Corrections Providers of New Jersey. Pat is a licensed Social Worker who received her Bachelor of Arts from Trenton State College and her Masters in Social Work from Rutgers University.
Mark earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology, and has completed doctoral coursework in Psychology and Organizational Systems. He is licensed as a Professional Counselor in the State of New Jersey and as a Psychologist in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Michael Ostermann

Mr. Ostermann is currently a research scientist in the Office of Policy and Planning at the New Jersey State Parole Board. He began working at the Board in 2005. Michael leads the Board’s research efforts and acts as the Board’s data and evaluation coordinator for both the Governor’s Another Chance Initiative under the Safe Streets and Neighborhoods Anti-Crime Plan as well as the Government Efficiency and Reform Committee. He also acts as a part time faculty member at The College of New Jersey where he teaches a research methods and statistics course within the Department of Criminology. Michael recently completed an evaluation of the efficacy of the State Parole Board’s Day Reporting and Halfway Back Programs, the fruits of which have been accepted for publication in a peer reviewed academic journal.

Michael obtained his Master of Arts degree from the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University in 2005, for which he was awarded the title of Richard J. Hughes Scholar. This award recognizes the graduating Master of Arts student who holds the highest academic standing. Michael is continuing his education at Rutgers and expects to complete his Doctorate in May of 2009.

John W. Pierry, III. CCO

Mr. Pierry has been in the profession of Corrections for the past eight years. He began his career as a Corrections Officer at the Riverside Regional Jail in Hopewell, VA, graduating first in his Academy class. Within two years, he was promoted to the title of Work Release Coordinator, responsible for the overall management and operations of the Work, Education, and Rehabilitative Release Program. He held this position for three years, until he was promoted to the Training and Accreditation Department, responsible for scheduling and coordinating training activities for all jail staff. Mr. Pierry earned his Certified Corrections Professional certification through the American Correctional Association in 2002. While at Riverside, he was a member of the Riverside Regional Jail Industries and Expansion Committees, and Accreditation Team, and was also a 2003 Superintendents’ Outstanding Achievement Recognition Recipient.

In 2006, Mr. Pierry relocated to the New Jersey Department of Corrections as a Social Worker 2 at the Garden State Youth Correctional Facility in Yardville, NJ. That year, he received the New Jersey American Correctional Association Best in the Business Award. A year later, he was promoted to the title of Assistant Social Work Supervisor, responsible for the coordination of the Successful Transition and Reentry Series (S.T.A.R.S.) program.

Mr. Pierry is a member of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Correctional Association, having been elected to this post in 2006. He is also a member of the American Correctional Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, Willingboro Lodge #38, and the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated. Mr. Pierry has also been recognized in the 2006 edition of the Empire Who’s Who of Executives and Professionals, the 2001 edition of the International Who’s Who of Public Service, the 1998 edition of the International Who’s Who of Professional Management, and the 1998 edition of the Outstanding Young Men of America.

Mr. Pierry earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, and is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice from Ashworth University.

William Planter

Mr. Planter began his career as a Social Worker in 1973 at the then Railway State Prison. After running the Outpatient Department at Menlo Park Diagnostic, he left to take a position at the Adult Diagnostic and Treatment Center when it opened in 1976. He rose through the ranks there, making Assistant Superintendent in 1984 and Administrator in 1990, a position he held for ten years. In 2000, he was appointed to the position as Director in the Division of Operations for the NJ Department of Corrections. William is currently the North East Regional Director for Community Education Centers.

Matthew J. Sheridan, Ed.D.

Dr. Sheridan has over 37 years of progressively responsible experience in the criminal justice field. Core areas of expertise include administration in Juvenile Justice, corrections, correctional education, the courts, parole and probation. Management experience includes institutions, community residential and day treatment, and private providers. He has designed training curriculum that prepares staff for tasks related to direct service and that respond to identified need when improvement is warranted. He has shown expertise in improving operational proficiency by bringing systems into compliance with state and federal standards. Matt emphasizes staff continuing education for personal growth and better job performance and utilizing evidence based research on risk assessment to improve correctional effectiveness and successful re-entry.

Awards:
1991 Recipient of the Alfred Vucodola Award in Juvenile Justice, New Jersey Chapter- American Correctional Association
Inducted into the Academy of Child and Youth Care Professionals

Membership in professional organizations includes:
1986 - Present New Jersey Association on Corrections; Vice President Board of Directors
1990 - Present American Correctional Association
1990 – Present New Jersey Chapter - American Correctional Association, Editor of newsletter
1991 - Present Brookdale Community College Criminal Justice Advisory Committee
1994 - Present New Jersey Association of Criminal Justice Educators, Board of Directors
1995 - Present Inter-Association Child Care Conference, Board of Directors
1998 – Present International Community Corrections Association

Christine Simone-Dill

Ms. Simone-Dill currently holds the position of Executive Assistant/Supervisor of the Litigation Unit, Department of Corrections. She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of NJACA for over 18 years. Ms. Dill has been involved in numerous NJACA activities including the Annual Conference and the Annual Forum. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Middle
When Prison, Ignorance and Higher Education Converge as a re-entry issue

While researching higher education for criminal justice staff, the following lead from Yahoo! ANSWERS caught my attention.

Can you earn a Ph.D. degree in prison?

Someone told me that you can get a free Ph.D. degree while serving time in prison. I find this hard to believe because an armed robber gets a 10 year sentence, he gets an all expense paid trip to earn a doctorate? Doesn’t seem right. Anyone know any details?

Hello Nic. I can only speak for the state of Ohio, where I work. We had a program of Pell grants that ended in 1996 that allowed certain inmates to get up to a 4 year degree only in several different fields. That ended and we currently have a max of a 2 year (bachelors degree) available with a selection list that has been highly modified and is very selective. In the state of Ohio (and to the best of my personal knowledge no other state either) ever offered full Doctorates to any inmates while incarcerated. The philosophy at the time period was that if a man bettied himself with an education, it would help reduce the recidivism rate, but it proved false and the outcry over the public burden of the costs involved reduced the entire program down to where it is now almost nonexistent.

I hope this helps and you can find it useful.

Source: 19 years as a Corrections Officer in a max prison

Putting aside the poor grammar, run on sentence, poor punctuation and a response that ignores 25 years of evidence based practices, some effort, if only preaching to the choir, must be made to clarify the issues.

Yahoo seems to be a popular search engine, not paying the salaries of its workers. It’s beginning to sound an awful lot like New Jersey.

Meaningful change. California can no longer afford to pay its vendors, threatens furloughs and layoffs as well into an excess of 100 billion dollars. California provides the better example of the bankrupt practices of wholesale incarceration. California represents what will potentially be every other state’s problem unless there is responsibility for answers to its questions.

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...if ex-convicts return to society no better educated than when they went into prison then why should we expect anything other than re-offending?

70% of prison convicts are functionally illiterate. Another study suggests that the majority of convicts suffer from mental illness. Two questions should put this in perspective. First, if ex-convicts return to society no better educated than when they went into prison then why should we expect anything other than re-offending? Second, if ex-convicts return to society without having their mental health issues addressed then why should we expect a re-adjustment to society? Quite frankly we can no longer afford to continue to operate prisons as they have been for the past 30 years. A conservative estimate of the national cost of prisons is in excess of 100 billion dollars. California provides the better example of the bankrupt practices of wholesale incarceration. California represents what will potentially be every other states’ problem unless there is meaningful change. California can no longer afford to pay its vendors, threatens furloughs and layoffs as well not paying the salaries of its workers. It’s beginning to sound an awful lot like New Jersey.

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Someone told me that you can get a free Ph.D. degree while serving time in prison. I find this hard to believe because an armed robber gets a 10 year sentence, he gets an all expense paid trip to earn a doctorate? Doesn’t seem right. Anyone know any details?

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Hello Nic. I can only speak for the state of Ohio, where I work. We had a program of Pell grants that ended in 1996 that allowed certain inmates to get up to a 4 year degree only in several different fields. That ended and we currently have a max of a 2 year (bachelors degree) available with a selection list that has been highly modified and is very selective. In the state of Ohio (and to the best of my personal knowledge no other state either) ever offered full Doctorates to any inmates while incarcerated. The philosophy at the time period was that if a man bettied himself with an education, it would help reduce the recidivism rate, but it proved false and the outcry over the public burden of the costs involved reduced the entire program down to where it is now almost nonexistent.

I hope this helps and you can find it useful.

Source: 19 years as a Corrections Officer in a max prison

Putting aside the poor grammar, run on sentence, poor punctuation and a response that ignores 25 years of evidence based practices, some effort, if only preaching to the choir, must be made to clarify the issues.

Yahoo seems to be a popular search engine, not paying the salaries of its workers. It’s beginning to sound an awful lot like New Jersey.

Meaningful change. California can no longer afford to pay its vendors, threatens furloughs and layoffs as well into an excess of 100 billion dollars. California represents the better example of the bankrupt practices of wholesale incarceration. California represents what will potentially be every other state’s problem unless there is meaningful change. California can no longer afford to pay its vendors, threatens furloughs and layoffs as well not paying the salaries of its workers. It’s beginning to sound an awful lot like New Jersey.
**AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY**

**NATURE POEMS IN A POST-NATURAL AGE**

Poet Gary Snyder thinks the landscape of contemporary poetry should include wildflowers . . . and highway fast food joints.

By John Felstiner
Poetry Foundation Media Services

One of the original voices of the Beat Generation, Gary Snyder, has been publishing poems for over 50 years. In addition to writing poems, Snyder has had a firm commitment to sustainability, a concern that is echoed in both his poems and essays.

John Felstiner: Do you remember some moment in your recent or remote past when you got the connection between poetry and environmental consciousness, where you felt it as a kind of absolute truth?

Gary Snyder: I grew up with it. Beginning when I was four years old, five years old, in the countryside, in a wooded landscape north of Seattle, back in the days when kids weren’t programmed. We just ran loose around the family dairy farm and went through the gap in the fence and right back into the woods. I felt as welcome and as much at home in the forest, second-growth forest growing back, as I did anywhere else, and I was comforted by it. I was always easy being alone. And if I went with a friend, that was fine too.

John Felstiner: So you would distinguish an environmental poem from what is sometimes called an ecological poem?

Gary Snyder: I look at the words. “Environment” means the surroundings. The surroundings can include an oil refinery, can include all of Los Angeles and the I-5 strip. That’s the environment too, whatever refinery, can include all of Los Angeles and the I-5 strip. That’s the environment too, whatever surrounds us.

John Felstiner: So there’s an “us” in “environment.”

Gary Snyder: Everything surrounds everything else. Yes. What is “ecological”? Etymologically, the “household of nature” is what’s being called up. “Ecological” refers to the systems of biological nature, which include energy, and mineral and chemical transformations and pathways. “The environment” is used more commonly to also include human and technological productions. And it’s not an absolute, hard and fast separation . . .

John Felstiner: Have you written poems that could be qualified as one way or the other, or as both together—environmental and ecological?

Gary Snyder: The best example is in this little book right here, *Danger on Peaks*.

*In the Santa Clarita Valley*: That is the first valley north of the San Fernando Valley on Interstate 5. There’s a little river there, and it has become almost entirely suburban development now. Here’s the poem:

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Like skinny wildflower growths sticking up
hexagonal "Denny’s" sign
loopy "McDonald’s"
eight-petaled yellow "Shell"
blue-and-white "Mobil" with a big red "O"
growing in the asphalt riparian zone
by the soft roar of the flow
of Interstate 5.
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This is playing with the possibility that we might look at the human, physical, made environment as if it were natural environment.

John Felstiner: So we move from “Mobil” into a “riparian zone.”

Gary Snyder: Yeah.

John Felstiner: And hear that word “flow” for the highway.

Gary Snyder: Right. I comment when I read this in meetings, that this is to help prepare us for a post-natural age. For writing nature poems in a post-natural age

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John Felstiner’s translations and critical work have been widely published and awarded. He teaches at Stanford. John’s newest book, *So Much Depends*, dealing with poetry and environmental urgency, have enjoyed them.
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It’s a warm, windy day in the Mexican War Streets district of Pittsburgh, and I am looking for the house where the exiled Chinese poet Huang Xiang has been settled for nearly two years. The street is so narrow that it might easily be mistaken for an alley. Finally I find what I’ve heard described: a house with Huang Xiang’s poetry painted on its brown clapboard exterior in vast, spidery characters. Some of the characters are almost six feet tall.

Huang Xiang is a Chinese poet who is sponsored by the Pittsburgh branch of the North American Network of Cities of Asylum (NANCA), an organization that seeks to aid and defend writers who are persecuted in their home countries.

Founded in 2003 by Russell Banks, Wole Soyinka, and Salman Rushdie, NANCA was born out of the International Parliament of Writers. Huang Xiang began his residency in Pittsburgh in 2004 and writes from the house he refers to as “Poet’s House, Dream Nest.”

The ancient Chinese poets wrote on walls and in caves, and carved their words in stone. “I want to preserve and expand this Chinese tradition,” he says, referring to the poems painted on his house. “Where the poem is on the street, on the stones, in the gardens. I want to beautify every corner.”

Born in 1941 in the Chinese province of Hunan, Huang Xiang is a compact, well-kept man who meets me at the door in a white pressed shirt. Nothing about his appearance betrays the 12 years he spent in Chinese prisons and labor camps. He was first arrested in 1959 for leaving one province without official permission and seeking employment in another. For this he was sentenced to four years in laogai, a reform camp similar to the Russian gulag. In 1965 he was arrested for engaging in counterrevolutionary activities—primarily writing, reading, and discussing issues related to human rights—and was sentenced to three years of hard labor in laogai and forbidden to read or write. By the time he was 25, he’d served more than seven years in laogai. His writings were banned in China for 40 years.

Though he avoided prison for the next decade, he was officially forbidden to write. He continued to do so anyway, secretly, his rooms were regularly searched, and any discovered writing was confiscated. Out of necessity, he made it a habit to commit his poems to memory, sometimes reciting them privately for a small circle of friends.

In 1978 Huang Xiang traveled 1,500 miles to Beijing to post his poems in huge character posters on what became known as the Democracy Wall. His act sparked the Democracy Wall Movement, in which dissidents posted news and ideas on a wall in the Xidan district of Beijing. Over a six-month period, Huang Xiang returned to Beijing on three separate occasions to post more poems, to advocate for political reforms.

(Continued from page 10)

**Nature poems...**

John Felstiner: What stayed with me was how he said ultimately the poet, the artist, brings to society and to the world “conviviality.” That surprised me and stayed with me: conviviality.

He said art is about conviviality. I saw instantly that this goes past the idea of the solitary, romantic, lonely artist suffering for his art, which I never trusted. And the acknowledgment that artists have a role in society, which is to contribute to the community -- to the heart of the community.

Take Williams’ statement that people “die for lack of what is found there,” I think this means lack of open-heartedness, lack of sweetness and tenderness to each other. But then a little later I saw that meaning also as ecological, that openness not just for the human community but for the natural community: it’s for our immediate neighborhood of all the other species, all of us passing through time. I get angered when the bears eat my apples right off the tree. But I can say well, okay, they got to them first; they must have eaten them.

John Felstiner: That was fine too.

Gary Snyder: I comment when I read this in meetings, that this is to help prepare us for a post-natural age, for writing nature poems in a post-natural age

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Scholars and poets around the world consider dissident poet Huang Xiang the Whitman of China, but his work is still banned there.
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by Susan Hutton

**WRITING ON THE WALL**

Poetry Foundation Sydicate
Correction Officers From Whence You Came

By Matthew J. Sheridan, Ed.D.

(The following is a condensed version of a longer article being prepared for publication)


The Nightkeeper’s Reports 1882 may be the first book published in a prison. It is the daily anecdotal duty report of the prison Nightkeeper, John H. Purvis, to the Warden. Warden William H. Bannon in 1875 described Purvis’ journal entries as “penned in a neat Spencerian script.”

The Nightkeeper’s Reports provide us with examples of the penology of the 1800’s. Without preserved works such as The Nightkeeper’s Reports, that trace “the antics, misbehaviors, pathos, and human frailties that he observed during his nocturnal duties,” we would have precious little with which to compare penological practices as they existed then with what we have today. There are few official records from the earliest period of prison history and any records provided by staff are more scarce. The scarcest of all, however, are convict accounts and on this score, Bannon informs us were not kept. For example, Purvis was elevated to the rank of Captain, but there is no record to show when that occurred. What we are told about Purvis is that he was a veteran of the Civil War who survived no less than seven bullet wounds and one bayonet stabbing before beginning his more than 3 decades as the prison nightkeeper.

The reports are Purvis’ observations of the confined, the interactions between keeper and, and to the discipline measures, both officially and unofficially sanctioned. We get a sense of the keeper’s frustrations when policy and rule are not clearly stated for the keeper to follow. These are anecdotal and often humorous entries that address escapes, searches and the plans for escape. Purvis records not only the information received from convicts about such events but his impressions of the value of the content of the offered information.

The Nightkeeper’s reports help us to understand that even though it is 1882, almost one hundred years after the birth of the prison, it is still coping with establishing the manner in which a prison should operate. The prison process is informal. Rule violations were responded to swiftly and with brutality and meted out in four degrees:

1. Suspension of writing privileges
2. Whipping on the bare flesh with a leather hat*
3. Solitary confinement
4. Solitary confinement and hanging up. (hanging up was accomplished by chaining an offender by his wrists at a height sufficient to prevent his feet from touching the floor)

“The leather hat was a wide leather strap that broke the skin and left heavy scarring. While these represent the officially imposed permissible sanctions, we learn from the Nightkeeper of other penalties imposed and some without official sanction:

♦ Ball and chain
♦ The iron hat (This device sounds like the branks and was used for the same purpose - to keep someone quiet and to teach them to obey the rule of silence)

“Oil lamps were used to light the cells. Oil was distributed periodically to fill the lamps. Someone would come around each evening to light the lamps. At times, the oil supply would run out and the Nightkeeper thinks the men should be more frugal in their use of their lamps to provide themselves with light.

These punishments would be meted out as the keepers would see fit to enforce their authority, and even to serve as pre-emptive strikes so that the convicts would know their place before beginning to act out. He provides us with several examples his threats illustrating how far he would go should an offender continue to violate the rules.

The Nightkeeper describes the convicts telling us that some were literate and possessed more than a rudimentary education seeking to express themselves with what Purves refers to as “scientific indulgence.”

“This is as crazy a notion as I’ve run onto (sp) since I’ve dealt with convicts. Toombs and Gugino, life Costello, are working on a project they call “radiant energy.” Toombs savours, and like a sea captain, that he can prove that electricity and light travel in waves; that they’re related, and that if we will give him a piece of crystal and some fine wire to make contact with these alleged waves – he’ll pick up voices. Something should be done, said Toombs, for a man with my ability to look into the future. So I chalked him in for the night and shall leave word to have his head gone over by the doctor, first thing tomorrow.”

SUMMARY

Much correctional history is unclear because of a lack of documentation and a dearth of objective investigation. Finding books, such as The Nightkeepers Reports 1882, provides us with the daily impressions of an individual working on the inside, a view that is never seen by most due to the hidden and restrictive environment of prison. Works such as this lead us to wonder why the prison environment has remained basically unchanged throughout its history. We begin to realize that there has been little change in correctional operations despite overwhelming evidence of its failure. Even though older writings are relatively scarce, there are a sufficiently known numbers of documents to demonstrate a continuity of behavior and control in prisons that does little to affect behavioral change. While corporal punishment has been formally eliminated it has been replaced by more subtle but equally damaging restrictions as prisons seek to maintain their required levels of custody and control.

American Life in Poetry Celebrates Fourth Anniversary
Free Column Restores Poetry’s Place in Newspapers

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation is pleased to announce the fourth anniversary of American Life in Poetry, the free newspaper column featuring a weekly poem selected and briefly introduced by former U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser. Running regularly in over 75 papers, including the Seattle Times and the Des Moines Register, with a circulation of upwards of four million, American Life in Poetry has earned a following of “ennobled and thrilled readers with fanatic devotion,” says Nancy Cook Senn, editor at the Shawnee News Star (Oklahoma).

Over the last four years the column has featured nearly 200 poets, including current U.S. Poet Laureate Kay Ryan, Pulitzer Prize winner Yusef Komunyakaa, various poets representing large and small regions of the country, and several young poets from public school writing programs. The column not only promotes contemporary poetry to a larger audience but also restores poetry’s traditional place in newspapers.

George Yefchak NAACA Corrections Quarterly

(Continued on page 12)
WAY OUT OF AFRICA

Nigerian poet and novelist Chris Abani, once a political prisoner, finds peace and inspiration in L.A.

by Charles Mudede

POETRY FOUNDATION SYNDICATE

Readers in the West have been taught to understand African writers in one way: Africans as heroes. And heroes can do only one thing: overcome enormous obstacles. But despite the political persecution that poet and novelist Chris Abani suffered in Nigeria during the ’80s, he is not a hero, and the subjects in his books should not be read as heroes. They are humans.

Chris Abani was born in 1966 to an English mother and a Nigerian father. They’d met at Oxford as students, married, and moved to Nigeria to raise their children. At 16, Abani published his first novel, a thriller called Masters of the Board. At 18, the content of that book got him in big trouble with the government, which believed the thriller’s plot (the fictional takeover of Nigeria by neo-Nazis) to be the blueprint for a real coup attempt by General Mammam Vasta. Abani was arrested and imprisoned for six months. Soon after his release, he was arrested a second time for participating in antigovernment guerrilla theater and was sent to Kiri Kiri maximum security prison.

Few misfortunes can be worse than winding up in Kiri Kiri, which is known for blurring the line between political prisoners, criminal prisoners, and homeless prisoners. During his one-year stay, Abani was routinely tortured, confined in cells not fit for any kind of animal, and surrounded by the smell and threat of death.


From the poem "Unholy Woman": “It makes sense that Jesus, the new man of 2,000 years ago / Was a carpenter / You need that craft, the precision of measurement, angles of angels.”...
Meet the JJC Executive Director, Veleria N. Lawson

Veleria N. Lawson was nominated by Governor Jon S. Corzine to serve as Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Commission and was confirmed by the Senate on March 4, 2008.

Prior to joining the JJC, Mrs. Lawson served as an associate member of the New Jersey State Parole Board. She was appointed to that position in January 2004 and assigned to the juvenile panel where she worked directly with the Juvenile Justice Commission and its programs to rehabilitate juvenile offenders. She also worked with government and community groups to help ensure juvenile offenders have access to programs and support designed to aid in their successful reentry into society.

As the Executive Director of the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC), Mrs. Lawson directs the JJC to coordinate services and policies affecting delinquent youth throughout the State. From prevention to parole, the JJC is a partner in the entire juvenile justice system, working with communities to help redirect the lives of young people. The JJC operates four secure facilities, fifteen residential community homes and six day programs. It also oversees educational instruction and ensures compliance with state regulations at the county operated detention centers.

In the few months that Mrs. Lawson has been at the helm of the JJC, she has examined existing policies and procedures with a focus on efficiency and outcomes. In particular, changes are taking place in the areas of classification, step-up/step down units, reentry and classification, step-up/step down units, reentry and

The NJ Juvenile Justice Commission... Realizing Potential and Changing Futures
By: Steve Troyanovich

Jackie Leven Said (Cooking Vinyl, 2005) is the name of a collaborative album done with Ian Rankin, Scottish crime writer best known for his Inspector Rebus novels. Moreover, it is likely that few readers of this article have ever heard of Jackie Leven or are familiar with any aspect of his work. Jackie Leven is usually described as a Scottish songwriter and folk musician. However, he is far more than merely what is conveyed by that description. As one critic recently pointed out, Leven is in danger of becoming a living Scottish national treasure.

Born in Fife, Scotland Leven was forced to leave his childhood home at an early age as the result of becoming the subject of a local gang vendetta and issues with the police in northern England. He is clearly one of the most prolific and powerful songwriters working in Europe today. Known also to have a very commanding stage presence when performing, his name for the most part remains unknown outside of Europe.

Leven made his debut into the music industry in the late 1960s and later formed the critically acclaimed band, Doll by Doll in 1978. It was at this juncture in his career that he honed his songwriter skills. Doll by Doll was a band proverbially outside its own time. Although highly praised, the band never found a sustaining audience. The dark power of the Leven lyrics was in marked contrast to the fashionable unserious music of the day.

In 1984 he was the victim of a brutal and unprovoked attack in the street while working on his first solo release. This attack left him unable to speak for almost two years. As a result of not being able to sing, he lost his record contract. It was during this period that he turned to heroin and became an addict. He eventually cured himself in a nontraditional manner via the use of acupuncture and psychic healing. His recordings have included poetry by James Wright, Kenneth Patchen, e.e. cummings, William Butler Yeats, Robert Bly, Antonio Machado, Rumi, Pablo Neruda, Osip Mandelstam, Rainer Maria Rilke, Rolf Jacobsen and others.

His lyrics have been described as possessing a brave poetic beauty filled with nocturnal tapestries and devastating emotional transference. There is an uncompromising quality to his work combined with a stark confidence. He has carved out his own musical path and identity from the underbelly of the concrete jungle to the plaintive, untamed Celtic melancholy of the Highlands.

Leven recordings recommended for initial listening include: Fairytales For Hardmen (Cooking Vinyl, 1997), Night Lilies (Cooking Vinyl, 1998), Defending Ancient Springs (Cooking Vinyl, 2000), Creatures of Light and Darkness (Cooking Vinyl, 2000), For Peace Comes Dropping Slow (Cooking Vinyl, 2004), and Oh What a Blow That Phantom Dealt Me (Cooking Vinyl, 2007).

Since 1994 Jackie Leven has released fifteen official albums as well as a series of limited edition releases of fanclub-only live albums. He has also released albums under the names “Sir Vincent Lone” and “John St. Field”. His newest album is Lovers at the Gun Club (Cooking Vinyl, 2008). Several of his albums are scheduled to be reissued within the next few months and a new Sir Vincent Lone recording (Troubadour Heart) is scheduled for release this March. His John St Field recording, Control (Vinyl Cooking, 1971), is also scheduled to be reissued in March.

On February 16, 2009, The Haunted Year: Winter: Men In Prison & Munich Blues was released by Cooking Vinyl. This double CD is the first in a series of four double CDs to be released from previous recordings available originally only through the now defunct Jackie Leven fan club called The Haunted Valley.

Men In Prison was a live solo performance at Bergen Prison in Norway. In his opening remarks to the prisoners, Leven spoke about his drug use, prison time, and heroin addiction. A signature characteristic of a Jackie Leven album is the inclusion of poetry interspersed throughout the work. His recordings have included poetry by James Wright, Kenneth Patchen, e.e. cummings, William Butler Yeats, Robert Bly, Antonio Machado, Rumi, Pablo Neruda, Osip Mandelstam, Rainer Maria Rilke, Rolf Jacobsen and others.

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Readers wanting to learn more about Jackie Leven and his work are referred to the following websites:

www.jackieleven.co.uk
www.myspace.com/thelastleven
www.mmauve.mistral.co.uk/jackie.html

Writing...

huge crowd gathered. It was very risky, and the consequences were dear. Here, on the house, it was not risky. It was safe. The first time it was an act of rebellion; this time it is an expression of art. And if the two are combined, it reflects my pursuit of spiritual, artistic freedom."

This is his ultimate aim, he says, leaning forward intently. "I want to write my poems on the sky," he says, "so everyone can read them."

Later, reviewing my notes, I recognized the line. It comes from the poem for which he is best known: "Song of the Torches." The translation I have reads: "It seemed to me that there was nobody else in the church, nor / In the city, nor in the whole world. The sky was my paper, / And I was holding an immense brush to write on it."

Susan Hutton's first book of poems is On the Vanishing of Large Creatures. She lives in Ann Arbor.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Huang Xiang has recently moved to New York City.