



George Yefchak NJACA Corrections Quarterly



Spring 2010

Our Mission: To shape public policy and provide information, training, and networking opportunities, thereby promoting professional growth and organizational effectiveness in New Jersey's criminal/juvenile justice system.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I just read my message from our last newsletter and could probably say “ditto” and leave it at that, but since most of us do not consider me either a famous or gifted scribe you probably did not save it on your hard drive. Needless to say, I expressed a hope that we wouldn’t have as long as a hiatus between publications, I was wrong. It’s been a year. We introduced our new board members; we get to do that again. I made mention of the fact that government policy was having a detrimental impact on our ability to hold our annual conferences, that has not changed. Although we will have one bright spot in that arena this year, MASCA is holding their annual conference in Atlantic City June 6 through June 9, 2010. We are hoping for a solid turnout from New Jersey. We do have a new governor and I am sure everyone waits with baited breath to see the impact of his budget on our field. I am of the mind that it will be not as bad as some think. Short of releasing hundreds of folks early or cutting short their probationary or parole terms, there is not a lot of money to be cut out of this system. Of course I have been known to be wrong before so the next time I may be seeing some of you could be on the unemployment line.

I also have to admit to a grave error in my last message. I gave credit to Drew Barrymore for “they’re back” quote. I was wrong. It was another little blonde girl, Heather O’Rourke. And before I go, let me give kudos to Steve Troyanovich. He really carried the weight on putting this newsletter together and getting his recalcitrant fellow board members to do what they promised.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Hemm

Reentry Defined

“... reentry is defined as the process of leaving jail and returning to society. Virtually all inmates experience reentry, irrespective of their method of release or the presence of community supervision....

Reentry is not a program, not a form of supervision, not an option.”

Excerpted from Life after Lockup: Improving Reentry from Jail to the Community (published by the Urban Institute 5/2008)

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**NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION
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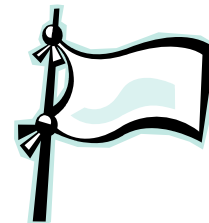
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Questions, comments, and suggestions for future newsletter content can be e-mailed to steve.troyanovich@njjjc.org



More than 4,000 Turn Themselves in at Fugitive Safe Surrender

Striking Turnout Makes FSS-Newark the Second-Largest in the nation



More than 4,000 fugitives from across New Jersey turned themselves in last fall during Fugitive Safe Surrender. The striking turnout made the initiative in Newark the second-largest nationwide in the history of the US Marshals Service-led Fugitive Safe Surrender program.

U.S. Marshal James Plousis, New Jersey Attorney General Anne Milgram and State Parole Board Chairman Yolette C. Ross today joined Essex County Prosecutor Paula T. Dow, Union County Prosecutor Theodore J. Romankow, the Rev. Dr. M. William Howard Jr. and Deacon Edward Cosby of Bethany Baptist Church, Joseph Matara, chief operating officer for New Community Corporation, and other leaders to announce the initiative's successful conclusion.

With more than 4,000 fugitives turning themselves in over four days, the Fugitive Safe Surrender initiative in Newark was the second-largest since the US Marshals Service held the first such operation in 2005. The US Marshals Service is still calculating the numbers based on thousands of fugitive records. Final numbers should be available in the next few weeks. The top Fugitive Safe Surrender site nationwide is Detroit, where 6,578 individuals turned themselves in over four days in June 2008. The third-largest is Camden, NJ, where 2,245 individuals turned themselves in over four days in November, 2008.

US Marshal Plousis said, "We are more than pleased with the success of this program. Due to the hard work of many agencies especially in Essex and Union counties, Fugitive Safe Surrender in Newark has exceeded all

*It is not an amnesty program, but the first step
for a second chance for non-violent offenders to
become law-abiding citizens.*

previous efforts except that in Detroit. In fact, our initiative had a larger turnout than Detroit's in relation to the population of the host city. The benefits of being able to surrender safely will reverberate far beyond the thousands who participated, to touch their families and their communities all across New Jersey."

"For more than four years now, Fugitive Safe Surrender has proven it works as a cooperative venture of faith-based communities, law enforcement, and the judiciary," Attorney General Milgram said. "It is not an amnesty program, but the first step for a second chance for non-violent offenders to become law-abiding citizens. I believe that is exactly what happened last week for the people who voluntarily surrendered in Newark."

"The opportunity to surrender and receive favorable consideration – not amnesty – is helping thousands of fugitives face the court and get back on the road toward leading productive, law-abiding lives," State Parole Board Chairman Ross said. "This is consistent with the Parole Board's mission to hold ex-offenders accountable for their crimes, while helping them successfully change and reenter society."

The final results of the Fugitive Safe Surrender initiative in Newark are as follows:

Total number of fugitives from across New Jersey who turned themselves in from Nov. 4 through Nov. 7 at Bethany Baptist Church and the nearby Priory building, headquarters of the New Community Corporation:
More than 4,000 (this includes the 25,000th nationwide in the Fugitive Safe Surrender initiative)

(Continued on page 4)

Fugitive Safe Surrender *(Continued from page 3)*

Total who were processed on site: **1,851**

Total who were not processed on-site, but received vouchers for a future court date: **more than 2,149**

Total number of individuals who were arrested: **9**

Partial breakdown of the 1,851 individuals processed on-site:

Number of individuals who had at least one felony warrant: **274**

Number of individuals who had at least one misdemeanor warrant: **618**

Number of individuals who had traffic warrants only: **565**

Number of individuals who had no warrant found: **369**

Total number of warrants cleared so far: **4,389**, of which **361** were felony warrants

“More than 4,000 fugitives took advantage of this life altering program by turning themselves in, accepting responsibility for their crimes and getting a fresh start with their lives again,” said Essex County Prosecutor Paula T. Dow. “It is our hope the success of the Newark Safe Surrender program will echo to other fugitives across this state and nation.”

“We’re talking about people who are not involved in violent crimes, people who have made mistakes and are trying to repair them,” Union County Prosecutor Theodore J. Romankow said. “This was more rewarding for everyone than bringing them in handcuffs.”

“Bethany Baptist Church is proud to have provided this opportunity for fugitives to take responsibility for what they have done, stop living in hiding and start building productive lives,” Deacon Edward Cosby said. “Surrendering in safety is the first step in receiving a second chance, and in providing healing for the fugitives themselves, and their families and communities.”

“For over forty years, New Community Corporation has been helping families and individuals through our housing, employment, healthcare and education programs. We are pleased to have added to these services by offering our headquarters as the official judicial processing site for the Fugitive Safe Surrender program,” said Joseph Matara, chief operating officer of New Community Corporation. “We believe Fugitive Safe Surrender to be an important program that is allowing people to address both minor and more serious issues they have with the criminal justice system and move on with their lives, thereby helping the community at large.”

Fugitive Safe Surrender was made possible with help from more than 50 agencies and organizations at the Federal, State, county, municipal, community-based and faith-based levels, and with funding awarded by the US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs. A full list of the partner agencies and organizations is attached to this press release.

For more information about Fugitive Safe Surrender, see <http://www.usmarshals.gov/safesurrender/index.html>.

The New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) is New Jersey’s lead reentry agency, and works to ensure ex-prisoners return to society as law-abiding citizens. As required by law, appointed Parole Board Members and staff conduct more than 20,000 hearings per year, solicit input from victims and decide parole matters. SPB’s sworn parole officers supervise more than 15,000 offenders statewide. In addition, SPB is New Jersey’s primary law enforcement agency responsible for sex offender supervision. SPB officers are also active partners with multiple Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and task forces. Finally, SPB’s Community Programs Unit partners with government, non-profit and private agencies to connect ex-prisoners with vocational, mental health and related services, targeted to break the cycle of recidivism and reduce risk of crime.

Weathington Named as Director of JJC Office of Education

LaCoyya Weathington has joined the JJC as its new director of the Office of Education. With a background in education spanning over 15 years, Ms. Weathington's career has focused on improving educational opportunities for youth in our state.



Under Ms. Weathington's leadership, and in coordination with the JJC administration, the JJC's education program has undergone many changes. Foremost, a fundamental shift has taken place to redirect educational services from a focus on students' skills to an experiential, performance-based model of learning that concentrates on high school completion, career and technical education, and opportunities for post-secondary education. The enhanced curriculum places an emphasis on thematic project-based learning, integration of technology, credit accrual/recovery, and obtaining a recognized credential.

Another milestone includes that all JJC educational sites now have access to distance education via video conferencing and have the capacity to present lessons and conduct instructional activities, incorporating video conferencing capabilities. In addition, the JJC currently has strengthened partnerships with local education agencies. Agreements now exist for students in community and residential programs to enroll in Burlington County College, Burlington County Institute of Technology, Middlesex County College, and Middlesex County Career and Technical Center.

Through these and other initiatives, the JJC's Office of Education strives to ensure that students leave the JJC equipped with both short and long-term skills needed for success in their choice of college or career.

Prior to joining the JJC, Ms. Weathington was employed by the New Jersey Department of Education where she was responsible for the development and administration of programs that enhance the quality of education for students, including dropout prevention, alternative education, Even Start Family Literacy, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. As Innovative Programs Coordinator, she provided oversight of the Best Practices, Star Schools, and Blue Ribbon Schools Programs. Ms. Weathington also served as a facilitator to school districts participating in the Secondary School Leadership in a Time of Change High School Redesign Pilot Initiative, which involved collaborative goal setting and action plan development. Most recently, as Coordinator of School Health and Social Services, she was responsible for the management for a \$3.5 million cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Ms. Weathington is an experienced trainer and presenter who has provided guidance and technical assistance to school district administrators, staff, parents and community members on diverse issues ranging from regulatory requirements to program implementation. During her tenure at the Department of Education, Ms. Weathington co-created several training and technical assistance materials including, [A Guide for the Operation and Approval of Middle and High School Alternative Education Programs](#), and [Strategies for Strengthening Student Centered Practice-Health and Social Services in Secondary Schools](#).

Prior to joining state government, Ms. Weathington served as a school social worker for the Perth Amboy Board of Education.

Ms. Weathington's juvenile justice experience includes serving on the New Jersey Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Committee, where she was Vice Chair of the Northern Regional Coalition, the chairperson of the Perth Amboy Juvenile Conference Committee, and the Middlesex County Youth Services Commission.

Ms. Weathington is a graduate of Rutgers University where she obtained a baccalaureate degree in 1992 and a master's degree in Social Work with a concentration in Administration, Policy and Planning in 1993.

GOVERNOR CORZINE SIGNS PACKAGE OF RE-ENTRY BILLS



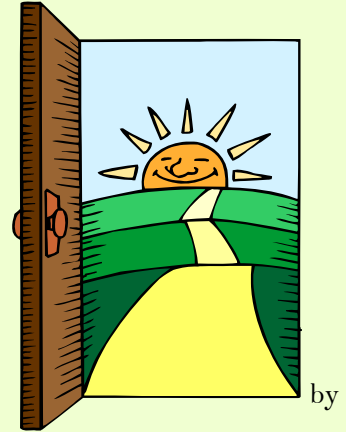
TRENTON – Governor Jon S. Corzine signed four bills that will enhance public safety by improving the state's efforts to help ex-offenders re-enter society and become productive citizens.

"Earlier in my term, we put into place a comprehensive anti-crime strategy that focused on aggressive action against gangs and illegal guns, greater crime prevention activities, and new re-entry initiatives," Governor Corzine said. "Thanks to the efforts of Attorney General Anne Milgram and the support and active participation of committed public officials like Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman and Newark Mayor Cory Booker, our strategy succeeded in reducing violent crime and improving public safety. This package of bills significantly strengthens the re-entry component of our strategy."

The four-bill package consists of the following:

- ◆ 2008:A-807/2008:S-1471 (Gusciora, Fisher, Turner, Sarlo) - Allows a municipal court to permit a person to pay a fine in installments; grant a credit for jail time against the penalty; have the penalty suspended or revoked or order the performance of community service in lieu of payment of the penalty; or impose any other alternative authorized by law.
- ◆ 2008:A-4197/SCS for 2008:S-1347 (Watson Coleman, Spencer, Evans, Tucker, Coutinho, Jasey, Turner, Cunningham, Lesniak) – Establishes the "Women and Families Strengthening Act." The Act makes changes to

various state laws and corrections system procedures that have served to impede the ability of formerly incarcerated persons to succeed after serving their sentences. For example, the bill would remove a statutory prohibition of the receipt of food stamps by ex-offenders.



- ◆ 2008:A-4201/2008:S-502 (Coutinho, Watson Coleman, Evans, Tucker, Jasey, Spencer, Cunningham, Turner, Ruiz) – Enables inmates and formerly incarcerated persons to obtain information and services that would foster rehabilitation and reduce recidivism rates. The information and services covered under the bill include information on the availability of programs, including faith-based programs as well as secular programs, that would assist in removing barriers to employment; a written accounting of the fines, assessments, surcharges, restitution, penalties, child support arrearages, and any other obligations due and payable upon release; and a non-driver identification card issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

- ◆ 2008:A-4202/2008:S-11 (Watson Coleman, Jasey, Spencer, Evans, Tucker, Coutinho, Cunningham) – Improves the rehabilitation and education of persons who are currently incarcerated. For example, the bill directs the Commissioner of Corrections to work with the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to establish a mandatory workforce skills training program in each of the state's correctional facilities. The bill also establishes a mandatory six-month period of post-release supervision for all State inmates.

Supporters hope the bills lower the state's recidivism rate: 65 percent of inmates are back behind bars within five years of their release. New Jersey has about 25,600 state inmates, and it costs an average of \$48,000 per year to keep each incarcerated.

OFFENDERS AND COMPULSIVE GAMBLING: THE INVISIBLE ADDICTION

By: Donald Weinbaum, MBA, LCADC, CCJP



Pathological gambling is a significant and widespread mental disorder in New Jersey and much of the world; an estimated 350,000 adults and adolescents in NJ evidence symptoms of pathological (compulsive) gambling, or present as problem or at-risk gamblers. Despite its inclusion in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM IV-TR, 312.31), pathological gambling remains a hidden problem that, because of its nature, is rarely disclosed by clients and is generally under diagnosed by mental health clinicians.

Identification of a compulsive gambler is not always easy. Gambling is a common and normalized behavior in society today. There are many legal ways to gamble in NJ – casinos, horse racing, lottery, stock market, bingo, recreational card or dice games with family and friends – and over 70% of adults report participating in such activities. Other forms of gambling are illegal but common – internet, numbers, sports betting, and dog fighting are examples. Unlike recreational gamblers, pathological gamblers frequently borrow money to finance their gambling and may gamble to try to recoup earlier losses. An estimated 50-60% of pathological gamblers will turn to crime at some point in their addiction. Simply put, when they run out of money from legitimate sources that can be used to continue gambling, they consider illegal sources.

Sometimes referred to as an “addiction”, pathological gambling frequently occurs in parallel with other mental and substance use disorders. Because it is not detectable through drug screening (e.g., urine screens, blood tests, hair follicles, breath testing) or through appearance or other outward signs, compulsive gambling is often an undocumented cause of relapse for recovering substance abusers. Depression and suicidality rates are extremely high among late stage compulsive gamblers. Between 60-75% of compulsive gamblers evidence depression; twenty (20) percent have attempted suicide, higher than for any other addiction.

Overall, 1-2% of the general population meets the diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling; an additional 2-3% qualifies as problem or at risk gamblers. The rates are double among adolescents and young adults. Research suggests that substance abusers and criminal offenders have a significantly increased prevalence of pathological gambling (2-10 times that for the general population) and greater consequences from their gambling compared to other groups.

At present, only a small percentage of the offenders who have gambling problems are being identified by courts and correctional systems, as this addiction is not typically looked at in pre-sentence evaluations or by supervision or custody officers. Nonetheless, offender gambling has begun to attract attention from researchers in the US and Canada and was the subject of the July 2004 National Institute for Justice (NIJ) *Research for Practice* issue. The evidence suggests that if we do not address a gambling addiction during supervision and treatment, it will continue unabated. Of equal concern, failure to address a coexisting gambling problem increases the chance of relapse for clients in recovery from a drug or alcohol addiction. Fortunately, there is a simple solution that is neither costly nor difficult.

Using an initial screen of 2-3 questions, individuals at greatest risk from gambling problems can be identified easily during reentry planning, permitting them to be referred for further evaluation or treatment, including self-help group participation. If the offender is released on parole, appropriate conditions can be included in the parole plan and supervision agreement. If a max-out, the offender will have a greater chance of remaining abstinent following community release.

Without screening, gambling problems will remain hidden and unaddressed, and may lead to further criminal

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(Continued from page 7)

activity following release from custody. Rehabilitation services that properly address offender problems increase the likelihood that they can become productive, law-abiding citizens. Referral of problem gamblers to treatment and/or self-help programs (such as Gamblers Anonymous) improves compliance with legal mandates, reduces likelihood of committing further crimes to support their addiction, and assists offenders to abstain from gambling.

Finally, lest we forget, reduced recidivism by non-violent or low-risk offenders (particularly those incarcerated for financial and other offenses related to an addiction) serves to free up prison beds for offenders who pose a higher risk. In today's world, decisions are sometimes driven by economics, to the exclusion of other considerations. In this context, screening for compulsive gambling is a good bet -- a win-win situation that promotes public safety while also supporting individual rehabilitation.

About the Author:

Donald Weinbaum is retired from the NJ State Parole Board and was previously with the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services. He currently is the Executive Director of The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, Inc., a private non-profit organization that provides information, education and referral services for people affected by a gambling problem. The Council's mission is to educate the public to the fact that compulsive gambling is a treatable illness. With support from the NJ Department of Human Services and other partners, the Council provides a wide range of services, which are available to correctional facilities, community providers and all in need. Of particular note, the Council manages the statewide compulsive gambling treatment network, offers clinical training workshops and in-service programs for professionals, and conducts outreach to high-risk populations in residential, criminal justice and substance abuse programs. The Council's 1-800-GAMBLER® Helpline and website, www.800gambler.org, have been resources for thousands of people who are compulsive gamblers and recovering from compulsive gambling, as well as their friends and families.



NJ Parole Program Garners National Innovations Award

*Regional Assessment Centers (RACs), Unique to New Jersey,
Earn Prestigious Council of State Governments Award*

TRENTON – The Council of State Governments on Sunday, August 2, 2009 honored a New Jersey parole program with the prestigious Innovations Award, recognizing New Jersey's leadership in ex-offender reentry initiatives.

Each year, the Council of State Governments honors eight state-based initiatives nationwide with the Innovations Award. New Jersey's award recognizes the success of the Regional Assessment Centers (RACs) developed in a partnership between the New Jersey State Parole Board and Governor Corzine's Government Accountability and Reform (GEAR) Commission. The program, in Newark and Trenton, is delivered in partnership with a private provider.

State Parole Board Chairman Yolette C. Ross said, "True to Governor Corzine's focus on reentry, the RAC is an example of innovative thinking. It successfully promotes New Jersey's public safety while

(Continued on page 9)

Parole Program (Continued from page 8)

reducing a burden on the State budget. We are proud of Innovations Award, and would encourage other states to learn from what New Jersey has accomplished.”

State Parole Board Executive Director Joseph M. Shields, member of the GEAR Commission task force that helped develop the RAC, said, “The RAC represents a significant forward in parole policy. It appears to be the first model of kind in which a paroling authority uses its law enforcement process as an opportunity for intervention clinical assessment of high-risk parolees. As a result, the agency is making better-informed decisions about the continued supervision of these technical violators.”



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The RAC program was created as an investment in public safety, and a method to save taxpayer dollars by reducing the rate at which technical parole violators are returned to incarceration. Technical parole violators are parolees who have violated the rules of supervision, but have not been charged with a new crime. Their at-risk behavior is usually consistent with addiction, and indicates that enhanced supervision and community-based programming are an appropriate law enforcement response.

By allowing the State Parole Board to divert technical parole violators into appropriate supervision and away from incarceration, the RAC program saved New Jersey more than \$2 million during the last fiscal year and is expected to prevent \$14 million in incarceration costs during Fiscal 2010. The State Parole Board launched the program in July 2008.

The Council of State Governments Awards are chosen based on each initiative’s newness, creativity, transferability to other states, and addressing regional issues. The Jersey’s RAC initiative is one of Awards the Council of State present this year, and one of two 2 at the 49th Annual Meeting and Forum of the Council’s Eastern Conference, held in Burlington,

It appears to be the first model of its kind in which a paroling authority uses its law enforcement process as an opportunity for intervention and clinical assessment of high-risk parolees.
~Joseph M. Shields
NJSPB Executive Director

Innovations nominated effectiveness, significance in award for New eight Innovations Governments will announced August Regional Policy Regional Vermont.

The Council of State Governments is our nation’s only organization serving all three branches of state government. CSG is a region-based forum that fosters the exchange of insights and ideas to help state officials shape public policy. This offers unparalleled regional, national and international opportunities to network, develop leaders, collaborate and create problem-solving partnerships.

The New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) is New Jersey’s lead reentry agency, and works to ensure ex-prisoners return to society as law-abiding citizens. As required by law, appointed Parole Board Members and staff conduct more than 20,000 hearings per year, solicit input from victims and decide parole matters. SPB’s sworn parole officers supervise more than 15,000 offenders statewide. In addition, SPB is New Jersey’s primary law enforcement agency responsible for sex offender supervision. SPB officers are also active partners with multiple Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and task forces. Finally, SPB’s Community Programs Unit partners with government, non-profit and private agencies to connect ex-prisoners with vocational, mental health and related services, targeted to break the cycle of recidivism and reduce risk of crime.





AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY



Column 243

BY TED KOOSER,
U.S. POET
LAUREATE, 2004-
2006

Lots of contemporary poems are anecdotal, a brief narration of some event, and what can make them rise above anecdote is when they manage to convey significance, often as the poem closes. Here is an example of one like that, by **Marie Sheppard Williams**, who lives in Minneapolis.



Everybody

I stood at a bus corner
one afternoon, waiting
for the #2. An old
guy stood waiting too.

I stared at him. He
caught my stare, grinned,
gap-toothed. Will you
sign my coat? he said.
Held out a pen. He wore
a dirty canvas coat that
had signatures all over
it, hundreds, maybe
thousands.

I'm trying
to get everybody, he
said.

I signed. On a
little space on a pocket.
Sometimes I remember:
I am one of everybody.

For over forty years, **Mark Vinz**, of Moorhead, Minnesota--poet, teacher, publisher--has been a prominent advocate for the literature of the Upper Great Plains. Here's a recent poem that speaks to growing older.

Cautionary Tales

Beyond the field of grazing, gazing cows
the great bull has a pasture to himself,
monumental, black flanks barely twitching
from the swarming flies. Only a few strands of
wire separate us--how could I forget
my childhood terror, the grownups warning
that the old bull near my uncle's farm
would love to chase me, stomp me, gore me
if I ever got too close. And so I
skirted acres just to keep my distance,
peeking through the leaves to see if he still
was watching me, waiting for some foolish move--
those fierce red eyes, the thunder in the ground--
or maybe that was simply nightmares. It's
getting hard to tell, as years themselves keep
gaining ground relentlessly, their hot breath
on my back, and not a fence in sight.



American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation (www.poetryfoundation.org), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Poem copyright ©2008 by Mark Vinz, whose most recent book of poems is "Long Distance," Midwestern Writers Publishing House, 2006. Poem reprinted from "South Dakota Review" Vol. 46, no. 2, by permission of Mark Vinz and the publisher. Introduction copyright ©2009 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006.

Fernando Perez Talks Poetry

Major League Baseball player reflects on the role of poetry in his life

CHICAGO — The Poetry Foundation, publisher of *Poetry* magazine, is pleased to announce that Tampa Bay Rays outfielder Fernando Perez is featured in the September issue of *Poetry* magazine. As a contributor to *Poetry*, Perez joins the varied ranks of non-poets—including singer Neko Case, actor Alfred Molina, psychiatry professor Kay Redfield Jamison, and *Vanity Fair* columnist Christopher Hitchens—who have recently written for the magazine about the place of poetry in their lives.

Perez is a graduate of Columbia University in New York City, where he received a degree in American studies and completed the creative writing program. He joined the Tampa Bay Rays in 2008 and was one of six Ivy Leaguers to be appointed to the roster of Major League Baseball teams in the 2009 season. A longtime reader of contemporary poetry, Perez has named Robert Creeley and John Ashbery among his favorite poets.

Perez says he turns to poetry when he's "after displacement, contrast" from the game of baseball. "The thick wilderness," he continues, "of, say, late Ashbery can wrangle with the narrowness of competition."

Created with the belief that not only should poetry have a wider audience, but the range of people writing about poetry should be diverse, *Poetry's* occasional special feature The View from Here this month includes short essays from Brenda Starr writer Mary Schmich and writer William T. Vollmann. Vollmann, like Perez, reminds readers of poetry's role in opening minds.

With their distinct backgrounds, contributors to ... *Poetry* also connect to poetry in individual ways. They may see poetry as an aid in professional life, as chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit Dennis Jacobs states: "My long interest in poetry has yielded a respect for the language that people should employ when they undertake to speak the law." Or they may regard it, as music and comic book critic Douglas Wolk says, "as a sort of chisel to break my brain open." Alternatively, poetry can be greeted as a departure from the daily grind.

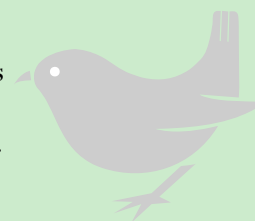
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About *Poetry Magazine*

Founded in Chicago by Harriet Monroe in 1912, *Poetry* is the oldest monthly devoted to verse in the English-speaking world. Harriet Monroe's "Open Door" policy, set forth in volume 1 of the magazine, remains the most succinct statement of *Poetry's* mission: to print the best poetry written today, in whatever style, genre, or approach. The magazine established its reputation early by publishing the first important poems of T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, H.D., William Carlos Williams, Carl Sandburg, and other now-classic authors. In succeeding decades it has presented—often for the first time—works by virtually every significant poet of the 20th century.

Column 232

I've built many wren houses since my wife and I moved to the country 25 years ago. It's a good thing to do in the winter. At one point I had so many extra that in the spring I set up at a local farmers' market and sold them for five dollars apiece. I say all this to assert that I am an authority at listening to the so small voices that **Thomas R. Smith** captures in this poem. Smith lives in Wisconsin.



Baby Wrens' Voices

I am a student of wrens.
When the mother bird returns
to her brood, beak squirming
with winged breakfast, a shrill
clamor rises like jingling
from tiny, high-pitched bells.
Who'd have guessed such a small
house contained so many voices?
The sound they make is the pure sound
of life's hunger. Who hangs our house
in the world's branches, and listens
when we sing from our hunger?
Because I love best those songs
that shake the house of the singer,
I am a student of wrens.

Study: NJ's Polygraph Testing of Sex Offenders Gives Parole Officers Vital Information

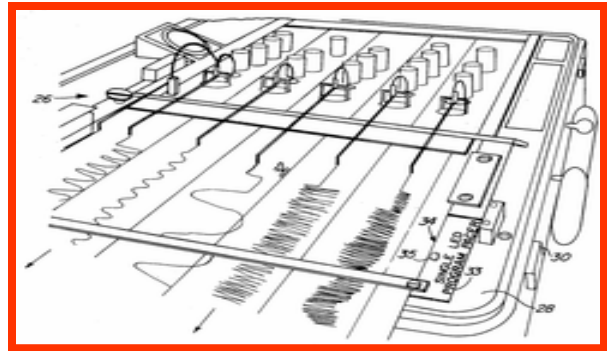
Polygraph Testing Helps Parole Officers Detect Problem Behaviors, Intensify Supervision

TRENTON – The New Jersey State Parole Board's polygraph testing of sex offenders helps parole officers detect problem behaviors, and intensify their supervision of high-risk offenders, according to a study announced today by a researcher from Rutgers University who conducted research funded through the State Parole Board with help from a Federal grant.

"One of the State Parole Board's most important and challenging roles is the containment of sex offenders who have been sentenced to lifetime supervision," Chairman Ross said. "As this report demonstrates, we continue to use the best available methods, based on nationwide research into sex offender crime prevention and psychology. Polygraph testing is an important component of our system of intense supervision, information-sharing with partner law enforcement agencies, and communication with psychological treatment providers, in our commitment for the safety of New Jersey's families and communities."

Researcher Heather Tubman-Carbone presented her findings today, during the State Parole Board's annual public meeting. The study included a review of 595 sex offenders under the agency's supervision, 40 percent of whom had been subject to at least one polygraph examination between December 2007 and April 2009. To describe how polygraph testing is used as a public safety tool, the study also included surveys of 118 New Jersey parole officers and sergeants, and 11 counselors who provide group sex offender treatment in partnership with the State Parole Board.

The Legislature has designated the State Parole Board as the lead agency responsible for sex offender supervision in New Jersey. The agency's caseload of approximately 5,600 sex offenders is one of the largest in America, mainly due to Supervision for Life sentencing guidelines for sex offenders. Polygraph testing is an important component of the Containment Approach to sex offender supervision, a method based on nationwide research into sex offender crime prevention.



The State Parole Board began using polygraph testing as a supervision tool in December 2007. Eleven parole officers have completed their polygraph training at the Academy for Scientific Investigative Training in Philadelphia. The training and polygraph equipment were funded by a \$50,000 Bureau of Justice Assistance grant provided to the State Parole Board, matched by \$16,667 in state funds. Tubman-Carbone's research was funded by the same grant, which required the State Parole Board to produce a research plan to evaluate its use of the polygraph testing of sex offenders.

The State Parole Board does not use the results of polygraph exams as criminal evidence or as evidence of a parole violation. If a sex offender is found to be deceptive in a polygraph test, the State Parole Board will investigate and will respond with intensified supervision, placement on GPS monitoring, surveillance, requirements for counseling, removal from a residence or place of employment where the agency determines there is a risk to children, or other measures.

The new study noted:

The experiences reported by parole officers and counseling providers, and initial data on the rates at which sex offenders were found to have failed to comply with the conditions of lifetime supervision, indicate that polygraph testing creates tangible benefits for sex offender supervision and treatment. Polygraph testing elicits information that would otherwise not be known about sex offender behavior. The mere possibility of being tested encourages sex offenders to be open and honest, and to more readily discuss their risk factors and activities with their parole officers and counselors.

In reviewing the data, the report states, "(t)his seems to indicate that polygraph testing allows parole officers to be more attuned to offenders' behavior, and their enhanced supervision prevents

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Polygraph (Continued from page 12)

problematic behavior from escalating into new crimes.”

Forty-two percent of all polygraph examinations result in new information or deceptive test results that lead the State Parole Board to make an adjustment to the sex offender’s supervision plan.

More than half of the adjustments to sex offenders’ supervision result in greater restrictions or prohibitions on the sex offender’s behavior, such as restriction of out-of-state travel, denial of a specific employment location that would put the sex offender in contact with minors, or removal from a residence with minors.

Polygraph testing, and the possibility of being tested, seems to increase sex offenders’ ability to acknowledge the crimes for which they were sentenced, and to progress in counseling. In order to successfully complete Phase 1 of counseling, the sex offender must admit culpability for his or her offense and be ready to progress in treatment. This result suggests that “(t)he addition of polygraph as a treatment tool may increase treatment providers’ ability to hold offenders accountable” and “to properly diagnose their place in treatment,” according to the report.

Eighty percent of treatment providers reported that when one individual in a treatment group undergoes a polygraph exam, the sex offender’s discussion of that experience will affect the rest of the group. If the sex offender says he was caught in a deceptive answer, others in the group will begin admitting their own behaviors. More than one-third of the treatment providers said that “simply reminding a client that they can be polygraphed has led to an admission,” according to the report.

The study also noted several case examples, provided by the State Parole Board, that illustrate the uses of polygraph testing as a public safety tool:

Immediately prior to taking a polygraph exam, a sex offender residing in Passaic County admitted to a new sex offense committed while under lifetime supervision. He admitted to having physical contact with his grandson for the purpose of sexual pleasure. Additionally, he admitted to lewd behavior in public on multiple occasions. The admission was made during a pre-polygraph interview. It was provided to the Sussex County Prosecutor’s Office and the sex offender was arrested.

A sex offender in Middlesex County was referred for polygraph testing as part of the assessment of his request to move into a home in which children were present. The sex offender had appeared to be doing well in therapy. As a result of the polygraph, it was learned that the sex offender violated lifetime supervision conditions by having contact with minors without supervision, and had engaged in illegal sexual activity by purposely touching women in public places. The State Parole Board denied his request to live with minors and responded with intensified supervision.

A polygraph test found a sex offender in Mercer County to be deceptive in answering questions about contact with minors. After the interview the sex offender admitted having unsupervised contact with a teenage boy he met in a park, and occasionally giving the boy cigarettes. As a result of the admission, the State Parole Board placed the sex offender on electronic monitoring, referred the matter to the county prosecutor’s office for a review of his Megan’s Law tier, and required that he return to counseling.

“These findings indicate that the polygraph, without doubt, is a useful tool for sex offender supervision and treatment,” Tubman-Carbone said. “Experts point out that sex offenders are practiced and experienced at being deceptive. But the study shows the State Parole Board’s polygraph testing policy clearly helps uncover information that parole officers otherwise would not know about the individuals under supervision. This supports the belief that polygraph is an essential component of the containment approach to sex offender monitoring.”

The New Jersey State Parole Board (SPB) is New Jersey’s lead reentry agency, and works to ensure ex-prisoners return to society as law-abiding citizens. As required by law, appointed Parole Board Members and staff conduct more than 20,000 hearings per year, solicit input from victims and decide parole matters. SPB’s sworn parole officers supervise more than 15,000 offenders statewide. In addition, SPB is New Jersey’s primary law enforcement agency responsible for sex offender supervision. SPB officers are also active partners with multiple Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies and task forces. Finally, SPB’s Community Programs Unit partners with government, non-profit and private agencies to connect ex-prisoners with vocational, mental health and related services, targeted to break the cycle of recidivism and reduce risk of crime.

New Jersey Named as the Annie E. Casey Foundation's First Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Model State

- Average Daily Population in Juvenile Detention Falls by 42 Percent, Improves Public Safety

In 2008, New Jersey was selected to serve as the first Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) state model site in the country. JDAI is currently being implemented in more than 100 jurisdictions nationally at both the state and county level. As the first JDAI state model site, New Jersey will provide jurisdictions with an example of how to implement juvenile justice system reform successfully.

JDAI was created by the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) in 1992 to address the fact that young people are often unnecessarily detained, with long-lasting negative consequences for both public safety and youth development. JDAI in New Jersey is a joint initiative of the New Jersey Judiciary, the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC), and numerous state and county agencies that work to safely reduce the unnecessary use of secure detention for youth. As the agency leading the implementation of JDAI, the JJC has worked in partnership with the Judiciary, and other state and local agencies to guide the Initiative. Each participating county has a local steering committee that relies on collaboration, leadership and data collection to improve juvenile justice system policy, practice and outcomes.

The goal of JDAI is to ensure that serious and chronic youthful offenders are detained, while effective alternatives are available for other youth who can be safely supervised in the community while awaiting their final court disposition. As a result of New Jersey's participation in JDAI, New Jersey has successfully reduced the use of secure juvenile detention by 42 percent while increasing public safety and maintaining court appearance rates.

When New Jersey was named as the model state site, Bart Lubow, the director of programs for high risk youth at the Annie E. Casey Foundation said, "New Jersey has distinguished itself among the 25 JDAI states through outstanding results and a thoughtful approach to spreading detention reform statewide. No other state has built as impressive an infrastructure to stimulate change at the county level, nor mobilized as much political and administrative support. We are excited that New Jersey will serve as a learning laboratory for these other states."

"As a result of a true partnership, New Jersey's juvenile justice system is undergoing a transformation. While there is still more work to do, we are very pleased that our success so far has been recognized," said JJC Executive Director Veleria N. Lawson. "We are truly honored to be named as the first model state for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative."



The Annie E. Casey Foundation is headquartered in Baltimore, MD, and is one of the largest private foundations in the nation dedicated to fostering public policies, human service reforms and community support that meet the needs of vulnerable children and families. JDAI seeks to help youth involved in juvenile justice systems to develop into healthy, productive adults through policies and programs that maximize their chance for success, reduce the likelihood of incarceration, and minimize the risk they pose to their communities.

The JJC receives an annual financial award from the Casey Foundation to implement JDAI. Additional funds are provided to the JJC to finance costs

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associated with the distinction of being a model state.

The incentive grant program that Casey has implemented will allow JDAI sites around the country to travel to New Jersey at no expense to their home states and learn about statewide detention reform first hand.

The Initiative began in 2004 in New Jersey with five pilot sites in Atlantic, Camden, Essex, Hudson and Monmouth counties, and expanded in 2006 to Bergen, Burlington, Mercer, Ocean and Union counties. The latest round of counties, include Passaic and Somerset. It is expected to expand to all counties operating detention centers by 2011.

Significant reductions in admissions and length of stay, primarily for minority youth, have been

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~ Bart Lubow, Annie E. Casey Foundation

achieved in the five pilot sites. Comparing 2003 to 2007, on any given day in the initial sites of Atlantic, Camden, Essex, Hudson and Monmouth, there were 211 fewer youth in detention, representing a 42 percent reduction. Of these, on any day there were 189 fewer youth of color in detention, a 40.7 percent reduction.

The number of minority youth in detention has been cut in half in Camden (-50.1 percent) and in Essex (-47.5 percent). The initiative has also leveled the playing field in JDAI sites in regard to length of stay in detention, bringing minority and non-minority youth significantly closer in terms of average stays than prior to the implementation of JDAI.

Public safety has also improved during this same timeframe. In the five pilot counties, total juvenile arrests have declined 9.4 percent since 2003. Arrests for index offenses, the most accurately reported crime, have also been reduced since 2003 by 9.6 percent.

More information on JDAI is available at www.aecf.org. Detailed information on New Jersey's JDAI efforts, including the 2007 JDAI Annual Report and a list of JDAI State Steering Committee partners can be found at http://www.nj.gov/oag/jjc/localized_programs.html.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation *Helping vulnerable kids & families succeed*

Rutgers Study: Women in NJ Parole Program

Less Likely to Re-Offend

FORGE Associated With Significant Reduction in Recidivism for Female Parolees

NEWARK – Female parolees enrolled in FORGE, a comprehensive, gender-based reentry initiative, have a lower recidivism rate than female parolees not enrolled in the program, according to research announced today by the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations.

“This is a clear measure of success under Governor Corzine’s crime plan,” State Parole Board Chairman Yolette C. Ross said. “We have firsthand experience that FORGE helps women take charge of their lives, and even develop pride and responsibility. We know that FORGE helps women stop the revolving door of recidivism. Today, this scientific research is further proof that our statewide reentry efforts work.”

Heather Tubman-Carbone of the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations’ Economic Development Research Group presented the study today at Essex County College, during a panel discussion on the value of gender-responsive reentry practices.

The study compared data on the success rates of female ex-offenders in Essex County, both before and after FORGE began in 2004 was made mandatory for all female parolees in the county in 2006. Among other findings, the study noted:

Parole supervision, even without FORGE, is associated with a reduction in recidivism. Within four years of release from prison, female parolees not enrolled in FORGE had a lower re-arrest rate (48 percent) than those who “maxed out,” or left prison without parole supervision (66 percent).

FORGE, and especially the combination of FORGE with Parole Accountability Conference Team (PACT) support group meetings for female parolees, are associated with an even greater reduction in recidivism. Specifically:

Female parolees who were enrolled in FORGE but not

enrolled in PACT groups had a 42 percent re-arrest rate within four years of release from prison.

Female parolees who were enrolled in FORGE and in PACT groups had a significantly lower re-arrest rate – 28 percent – within the same time frame.



FORGE, or Female Offender Reentry Group Effort, is a coalition of state, county, municipal and non-profit agencies that provides case management and a full range of reentry services at one location, at Essex County College. FORGE reinforces the State Parole Board’s law enforcement supervision with several strengths.

These include a gender-responsive approach that recognizes the specific types of trauma and other unique barriers that female ex-offenders face; a “one-stop shopping” location for assistance as varied as acquiring legal identification, housing, and medical assistance.

PACT meetings are support group sessions held one evening a month for female parolees enrolled in FORGE. The participants commiserate about the challenges and difficulties they face when returning home from prison; share their successes for mutual support and inspiration; remind each other of their responsibilities to society; and discuss helpful details about various resources available in the community. PACT meetings also allow parole officials to receive insights about reentry from those directly experiencing it – the parolees themselves.

FORGE began with the observations of a New Jersey parole officer who noted that the women on her caseload faced unique challenges – often related to domestic violence, childhood sexual abuse and other

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forms of trauma – and that they often did not fare as well as men in various community-based reentry programs. In 2006, FORGE became a requirement for all female parolees living in Essex County.

Heather Tubman-Carbone, author of the report, said, “Of all women on the FORGE caseload, those attending PACT meetings are less likely to recidivate. The PACT meetings seem to give them a safe place to talk about their struggles in a relationship of equals, which is different from their normal relationship with a parole officer or counselor. In this setting they are more likely to open up and acknowledge their own problems; and acknowledgement is the first step in doing something to solve them.”

A video statement by Tonya Tucker, a former parolee and one of the initial FORGE clients, is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HMU6HjiHAM>. The 3 minute statement was recorded Friday, October 23, 2009. Ms. Tucker recently graduated from Essex County College is now a student at Rutgers-Newark. She also works as a resource specialist for FORGE, and provides help and encouragement to women enrolled in the program.

Dr. Bonita Veysey, Interim Dean of the Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice, said, “We know that the pathways into crime are different for women than they are for men, and services and supports for women returning to their families and home communities after incarceration must reflect the fact that the pathways back also differ.”

Dr. Veysey added, “From a national perspective, re-entry programs that are holistic and address the many varied needs as well as support the natural strengths and resiliencies of women appear to have superior results, and FORGE is one such program. My congratulations to all the FORGE staff and participants. I am happy to know that New Jersey

continues to provide leadership that improves the lives of formerly incarcerated women, their families and communities.”

With funding support from the Nicholson Foundation, the FORGE program at Essex County College has assisted nearly 1,500 women ranging in age from their early 20s to 60 since 2007. “We help parolees, those on probation and even walk-ins who need some help in turning their lives around,” said Katherine Knox, FORGE director at the college’s WISE Women’s Center. “Many of these women never have had real direction or a role model in their lives, and we’re trying to provide a little of that needed support,” she added, noting that some participants also complete their GED and then pursue associate degree programs at Essex County College.

“We are providing these women one of the pathways they need in order to re-enter the community as contributing members of society,” said Susan McDonnell, director the college’s Women’s Center. She said all FORGE participants have available to them the full resources of the college to further help them succeed.

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Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) Complete Intensive Training

January 15, 2010

TRENTON – In the true spirit of interagency partnership, 23 reentry professionals representing 20 reentry agencies graduated this month from a grueling, three-week Offender Workforce Development Training (OWDS) course led by the State Parole Board and funded by the National Institute of Corrections. The training is designed to connect reentry workers with state-of-the-art, nationally recognized skills in helping ex-offenders gain and keep employment.

The intensive course was led by State Parole Board Administrative Analyst Marty Houston, who wrote New Jersey's initial application for Federal grant funds to launch the OWDS program here. The instructors included OWDS-trained leaders from the State Parole Board, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, New Jersey Department of Corrections, The Kintock Group, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The course included 120 hours of classroom work, held over a total of three weeks during September, November and January 2009 at sites in Trenton including the HRDI building. It also included 60 hours of hours of field work, in which the OWDS trainees worked with parolees and other ex-offenders in reentry programs across New Jersey.

Those who graduated Jan. 15 from the OWDS course represented a host of federal, state, county, municipal and private reentry agencies, all located in New Jersey. State Parole Board Chairman Yolette C. Ross praised the graduates and the trainers, and said, **“Quite simply, this is a public safety initiative. Scientific research and basic common sense both show that employment helps prevent crime. We are living in difficult times, with many people struggling to find employment. As reentry professionals we must bring the smartest and best resources to bear on this issue.”**

The group members will create an interagency OWDS network, to help the diverse agencies share resources and information, in advance of New Jersey's public safety.



ABOVE: Clockwise from Left: Latania Cobb, Coordinator, Women Rising; Talitha West, Program Coordinator, Opportunity Reconnect; Rhonda Wise, Employment Specialist, Newark Works; Eyen Hinkson, Administrator, Newark Reentry Office; Jerome Wakefield, reentry professional; Ronald Prysock, Employment Specialist, Newark Works; Weldon Montague, Reentry Specialist, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development; and NJ State Parole Board Administrative Analyst Marty Houston celebrate at the Jan. 15 graduation ceremony.

The OWDS graduates represented the following agencies...

- ◇ NJ State Parole Board
- ◇ NJ Administrative Office of the Courts
- ◇ NJ Department of Corrections
- ◇ NJ Juvenile Justice Commission
- ◇ NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- ◇ Federal Bureau of Prisons
- ◇ Essex County Division of Training & Employment
- ◇ City of Newark Reentry Office
- ◇ City of Trenton Mayor's Office of Employment and Training (MOET)
- ◇ Behavioral Interventions
- ◇ Community Solutions

- ◇ The Kintock Group
- ◇ Opportunity Reconnect
- ◇ Newark Works
- ◇ Plainfield Action Services
- ◇ RE-ENTRY STEPS
- ◇ Team 2000 CDC
- ◇ Ujima Ministries / Urban Women's Center
- ◇ Volunteers of America Delaware Valley
- ◇ Women Rising

Congratulations!



LEFT: OWDS trainees from multiple reentry agencies at the Jan. 15 graduation ceremony. RIGHT: Marty Houston, OWDS Program Manager, addressed the graduates with National Institute of Corrections program liaison John Raikis, NJ State Parole Board Executive Director Joseph M. Shields; Joseph Fanaroff of the New Jersey Attorney General's Office; Hugh Dehaven, Career Technical Education Coordinator, NJ Department of Corrections; and Joe Gazarra, Special Programs Coordinator, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (not pictured.)

The Pick

I watched him swinging the pick in the sun,
breaking the concrete steps into chunks of rock,
and the rocks into dust,
and the dust into earth again.

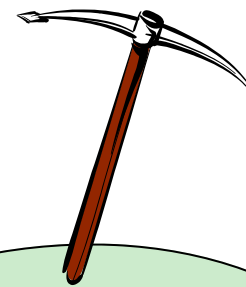
I must have sat for a very long time on the split rail fence,
just watching him.

My father's body glistened with sweat,
his arms flew like dark wings over his head.

He was turning the backyard into terraces,
breaking the hill into two flat plains.

I took for granted the power of him,
though it frightened me, too.

I watched as he swung the pick into the air
and brought it down hard
and changed the shape of the world,
and changed the shape of the world again.



BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET
LAUREATE, 2004-2006

Cecilia Woloch teaches in California, and when she's not with her students she's off to the Carpathian Mountains of Poland, to help with the farm work. But somehow she resisted her wanderlust just long enough to make this telling snapshot of her father at work.

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