



VOLUME 21 ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2025

THE NASH NEWS

INFORMATION AND THE ARTS FROM THE PRISON COMMUNITY

20TH ANNIVERSARY



BY TIMOTHY JOHNSON

The *Nash News* (TNN) has reached its 20th anniversary. This milestone reminds me of an African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go to-

gether."

TNN has traveled far since its beginning. Everything TNN has achieved has been done through the power of going together—the power of partnership. TNN owes its creation, its 20 years in publication, and its immense impact to all the partners who have worked with us and supported this endeavor.

TNN would never have gone from idea to published work without its first partners: E. C. Conn, then the unit 4 manager, and Phil Rowe, the print plant manager at that time. They worked with founders Brian Scott and Mark Pieczynski to obtain approval from prison administrators and produce the first issue in spring 2005.

Since then, numerous partners have supported TNN. Conn was the first staff coordinator. He served in that role until his retirement in 2012. His contributions, to TNN and Nash, were so instrumental that the Nash Alumni Association, a group of former Nash residents, named him an "honorary member."

Connie Drew, Nash's psychological services coordinator, joined TNN as staff advisor. Mr. Boone and Captain Richardson followed. For the past decade, half of TNN's life, Ms. Walyko has served as advisor and coordinator. Too often, she not only advises on publishing-related matters, she also encourages during frustrating times and mediates disputes. She is our advisor, counselor, and champion. Through her extreme generosity, she's made it possible for us to celebrate together along the way, going over the top to make each occasion special. I repeat-

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

edly say, and truly believe, she is the one irreplaceable person on TNN.

Twenty years of Nash Correctional administrators have allowed the TNN team unprecedented access and freedom. They've allowed reporters to cover events and interview dignitaries and guests. They've allowed the team to meet weekly unaccompanied. These liberties have been vital to every edition.

Warden Lee has been at the forefront of this support in recent years. She reads each issue before publication and enthusiastically promotes the publication to guests here and at meetings around the state. Her support and guidance have been instrumental.

Nash Correctional's programs staff and custody officers have given significant support. Programs staff welcome our reporters at each special event and introduce us to the speakers and other guests. Several case managers hand out TNN copies to guests, because they want people to know the positive side of the people who live here.

Custody officers enable us to meet weekly, in unit 4 for 15 years and in unit 3 for the past few years. They also allow us to go to the units to communicate, interview residents, and distribute each TNN edition.

Prison system officials at the state level, now the Department of Adult Correction, have also supported TNN. Perhaps, the greatest validation of this support came two years ago when the TNN team was asked to partner with them to build a statewide publication. This partnership produced *NC Prison News Today*, which has the mission of amplifying the voices of the incarcerated statewide.

Obviously, TNN would not have been possible without the Nash Print Plant. After printing tens of thousands of copies, TNN has never paid a cent, which is good, because we don't have any money. Print plant managers from Phil Rowe to Kris Petrie, the current manager, have donated the paper, ink, and other supplies

needed for printing. They've also given TNN staff and other plant workers the space and time to create. Additionally, every plant worker who has contributed to this effort has performed a critical role and deserves to be recognized.

Former Editor Emeritus Ken Ripley shared his time and knowledge. His expertise was extensive and valuable, deriving from vast professional experience as a journalist, editor, and journalism professor. He also donated our first camera, which took the design to a professional quality level not possible before that.

And, last but definitely not least, what would TNN be without the residents of Nash? The answer is certain: TNN would be nothing. TNN owes thanks to the many who have submitted art work, participated in interviews, shared personal stories, entered writing contests, and provided constructive feedback. Every person who has contributed over the past 20 years has been a crucial partner.

Twenty years doesn't happen fast. And twenty years in prison can seem like a century. It has for me. I began this incarceration journey in 2004 and processed into prison at Polk Youth Institution (now Granville Correctional Institution) in 2005, the same year TNN began. If I had known then that I still wouldn't have a release date two decades later, I probably would have given up. But I'm glad I didn't, because I would have missed the opportunity to grow into a person who serves my prison community and missed many incredible experiences, including serving on the TNN team.

Thanks to all who have partnered with TNN to make 20 years possible and have made it a publication we're proud to be part of. Our TNN team gets the credit because our names accompany each issue and the articles within, but we know every step along this journey has been taken through the power of partnership.

Partnerships make *The Nash News* exceptional—always have and always will. **TNN**

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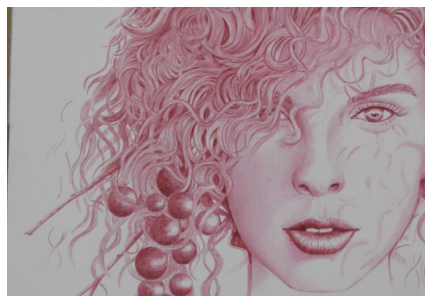
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Guest journalist, former TNN Art Reporter Barry Mintz, gives us a look into how the art program has grown over the years.



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DAC Secretary Dismukes visited Nash in February. Read what she had to say about the challenges of her new job.



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For Black History Month, Nash residents put on a show highlighting the influence of art and great leaders on the movement.

NEW TRANSFERS

PERHAPS YOU RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO NASH CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FROM ANOTHER PRISON FACILITY. IF SO, WHILE WE DO NOT WISH FOR ANYONE TO BE IN PRISON, WE WELCOME YOU TO YOUR NEW COMMUNITY. PLEASE, PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO YOUR BLOCK'S BULLETIN BOARD FOR THE STANDARD PROCEDURES PARTICULAR TO EACH UNIT. YOU WILL ALSO FIND HELPFUL INFORMATION HERE IN THE NASH NEWS THAT SHOULD MAKE YOUR TRANSITION EASIER.

PICTURE OF BRIAN SCOTT COURTESY OF OURJOURNEY WEB SITE; "LADY IN RED" BY ERIC COX; PICTURE OF SECRETARY DISMUKES COURTESY OF DAC; BLACK HISTORY FLAG COURTESY OF DOMINIQUE PERRY

TNN CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PUBLICATION AND IMPACT



BY TIMOTHY JOHNSON

Twenty years ago, Brian Scott and Mark Pieczynski created something that mattered then and still matters 20 years later. They created *The Nash News* (TNN).

Scott and Pieczynski met at Central Prison while processing, then came to Nash Correctional Institution in 2002. The idea for TNN came from prison's breeding ground for ideas: sitting around talking. Both men worked at the Nash Print Plant, where they spent their breaks talking through ideas. In spring 2003, their brainstorming generated an idea for a facility newspaper.

They pitched the concept to their unit manager, E. C. Conn. He joined the effort immediately and helped them recruit Phil Rowe, the print plant's manager. Scott and Pieczynski prepared a proposal and sample copy of the newspaper. Rowe drafted a letter of support. Conn took the packet to Bonnie Boyette, Nash's superintendent, in June 2003.

The instant support and quick progress excited Scott and Pieczynski, but starting something in prison can never be that easy. The process stagnated. They waited and waited.

Scott said he was on the brink of giving up. "At one point, I got so frustrated by what I saw as bureaucratic dithering that I told Mark [Pieczynski] that it just wasn't worth it. He implored me to stay the course and not give up."

Their perseverance was rewarded in spring 2005 when they completed the first edition of TNN.

Compared to later versions, the first issue looks thin and plain, with a lean eight pages and simple two colors on non-glossy paper. It

doesn't have any of the photos or artwork that have become a TNN trademark. Despite the modest start, they must have felt like first-time parents, seeing their baby as the most beautiful thing in the world.

In that edition, Scott wrote, "We hope this newspaper challenges us as prisoners to approach our incarceration in ways that leave us better as fathers, husbands, sons, and citizens." He warned that readers wouldn't agree with everything they read. "Yet, agreement isn't the goal. Growth is the goal. We hope we will grow together and that *The Nash News* will serve as a catalyst for such growth."

By its first anniversary, TNN expanded from two to eleven members. The content doubled to 16 pages, and Nash artists started contributing

He served as editor for 14 years. In his farewell to Nash, Farlow wrote, "I have thoroughly enjoyed my years with TNN ... Everyone who serves on the staff of TNN volunteers his time and talent to bring you each issue and hopefully help to change the public perception of prisoners as society's castoffs."

During Farlow's tenure, the publication progressed from a newsletter layout to a magazine design. TNN covered the lives of Nash residents through the series "A Day in the Life," which reported about various job assignments. It also covered events like art shows and the annual field day. And it added to its repertoire with featured art and artists, its own camera, and writing contests.

In 2017, TNN and author Kwame Teague established a creative writing class, The Art of Story Telling. The class has provided an outlet for literary expression and helped create a writing community at Nash. In April 2018, TNN featured the writing of class graduates in a short story anthology.

TNN helped students from the North Carolina Field Minister Program launch a publication: *Ambassadors In Exile* (AIE). TNN staff allowed AIE's editor to attend their meetings and gave AIE its start by providing space in a "flip" issue in summer 2019.

Phillip Smith replaced Farlow as editor in fall 2021. Serving as editor for three years, he embraced "amplifying incarcerated voices to the outside fairly

and professionally." His first editorial letter stated, "This publication grants us the opportunity to showcase our talents, truths, and lives anywhere in the known world. We possess the ability to change the narrative of how the free world witnesses our positive transformations."

The significance of his contributions vastly exceeded the length of his term as editor. First,



Top row (left to right): Larence Proffitt, Howard Ashleman, Steven Blue, Jason Williford; Second row: Tim Johnson, Tony Johnson, Michael Sutton; Third row: Jon Adams, Tyler Bowman, Brian Jones, Kwame Teague; Bottom row: Joseph Lee, Kalab Lackey, Cris Gardner

PHOTO BY KELVIN SMITH

their work.

In the issue marking that anniversary, Conn said, "I feel that my involvement with the paper is one of the top five blessings of my career." Nearly everyone who has contributed to TNN feels the same.

Gary Farlow joined TNN during its first year as a book reviewer and became editor in 2007.

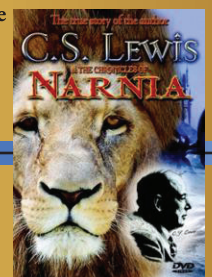
A Newsworthy 20 Years: Evolution of The Nash News Continues

The first issue of *The Nash News* is published in April and the inaugural staff meets for the first time in June.

2005



First book review is printed in the fall issue with reviewers Billy Johnson and Gary Farlow.



2003

A proposal is made by Nash residents Brian Scott (right) and Mark Pieczynski (left) to begin a newsletter. Then-Unit 4 Manager E. C. Conn endorses the proposal and forwards it to Nash administration.

he challenged TNN writers to improve the content quality. Next, he expanded TNN's reach nationally through inclusion in JSTOR's American Prison Newspapers collection. This collection is available to everyone through JSTOR's digital library, a library that is an essential part of research at more than 1,500 academic institutions. Then, he told the story of TNN on the *Criminal* podcast for its "The Prison Newspaper" episode, which was released on July 7, 2023.

Smith also led TNN's effort to launch a statewide prison publication. *NC Prison News Today* released its first issue in fall 2024. The second issue was released July 2025, with contributions from incarcerated individuals at nearly a dozen facilities, including several of the women's insti-

tutions.

TNN has succeeded in its mission to be a key part of Nash's culture of growth, a culture unlike that of any other North Carolina prison. This growth focus has empowered TNN and its members to have an impact beyond Nash and after release from prison.

Brian Scott walked out of the prison gates several years ago. He partnered with men he met in prison to form OurJourney, a nonprofit organization dedicated to "meeting the immediate needs of returning citizens during their first thirty to ninety days." OurJourney offers "a new approach to freedom, where being released from prison isn't just an occasion to celebrate, but also a journey to join."

OurJourney supplies returning citizens with

a five-item reentry kit: a 60-page reentry booklet, reentry resource guide specific to each home county, NC DMV Driver Handbook, \$25 gift card to a local restaurant, and an OurJourney t-shirt. The nonprofit also offers the Essential Services program, which provides life-skills coaching and mentorship, and the MyJourney app, which helps individuals connect to reentry resources.

Twenty years after its start, Scott and Pieczynski's creation continues to help people find purpose within the prison wasteland through its stories, art, and impact beyond the publication. Hopefully, twenty years from now, *The Nash News* will have been instrumental in achieving prison reform and still be a key part of a growth culture, at Nash and beyond. **TNN**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINT PLANT MANAGER



BY KRIS PETRIE

It is hard to believe that 20 years after it was first started, *The Nash News* is still going strong! That would be quite an accomplishment for a publication in a "normal" environment, but for a publication that is produced entirely by the incarcerated, in a prison environment, that is truly a remarkable feat! During my time at the Print Plant, I have seen the staff of *The Nash*

News come and go as their life's paths progressed, each one leaving their mark and affecting its evolution. *The Nash News* has taken on a life of its own, culturing its writers and artists along the way and developing their talents. And, oh, what talent! I am very proud of *The Nash News*, its staff, and all of the wonderful ways that it has positively affected the lives of the incarcerated and their families.

Nash Print Plant Manager Kris Petrie

OUR PRINT PLANT

The print plant runs on the sweat and skill of print professionals on both sides of the fence. Along with the dedicated staff of outside managers, Nash residents also do their part. Top left: Michael Kollman has worked in the print plant for nine years. He maintains the warehouse and its inventory.

Bottom left: The 29/5 is the largest of the print plant's presses. This behemoth runs press sheets up to 29 inches wide, and lays down five different colors in one pass, hence the name 29/5. It can produce up to 10,000 sheets an hour.

Top right: Armando Ortiz (left) and Mario Sotelo (right) set up their machines in preparation to fold The Nash News.

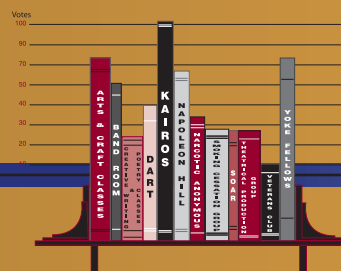
Bottom right: Jimmy Malone, press operator, is one of many skilled journeyman whose attention to detail makes our publication professional quality.



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH LEE

First special issue published and devoted to artwork submitted by Nash residents, including "Angel," the picture below drawn by Vernon Rife.

2006



First opinion poll conducted by TNN on programs desired, with Kairos garnering the most votes.



By TONY JOHNSON

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

THE NASH NEWS (TNN) has served the Nash Correctional community for 20 years. To celebrate this monumental achievement, the current TNN team is giving readers a peek between the pages by sharing the reasons we volunteer our time and energy to serve the Nash community through this forum. Producing each TNN issue takes considerable time and work. All the work is worth the opportunity to tell your stories and the privilege of being your voice. Thank you for trusting us with your stories.

TIMOTHY JOHNSON, EDITOR:

With any writing or editing role, I do it to inspire other incarcerated individuals to change and inform society of our change. We need to change the narrative that claims we can't change and don't even want to change. The truth is many of us have already transformed and are having a positive impact in remarkable ways.

CRIS GARDNER, ASSISTANT EDITOR & GRAPHIC DESIGNER:

My teen-aged years were a nightmare. *The Mountain Shadows* newspaper room at my high school gave me a refuge from the bullies and a place where I felt accepted. I've found the same sense of comradery with the men who produce TNN. Helping to produce something enjoyed by many gives me a sense of purpose and reminds me of a time when all the world's possibilities lay before me.

LARENCE PROFFITT, COMMENTATOR:

I write for TNN because I believe I have a measure of wisdom to share, and because writing gives me the opportunity to do so from a unique perspective with an audience who shares much of my life experience. Receiving reader responses, hearing how my words helped or influenced my peers, has been one of the most gratifying experiences of my life.

KWAME TEAGUE, UNIT 4 JOURNALIST:

As an existentialist, I'm inspired by initiatives that consciously embody the credo: Create the world you want to live in. TNN represents that credo to the fullest. TNN gives me a chance to help realize the vision Brian Scott and Mark Pieczynski started 20 years ago. They fought for a platform to give our community members a voice and a chance to create the world they want. Every day I strive to preserve that legacy and pass the torch that was passed to me.

KALAB LACKEY, PHOTOGRAPHER:

Society constantly stereotypes incarcerated individuals. Based on the maxim, "A picture is worth a thousand words," I believe the pictures I take show the character of the men incarcerated here at Nash and show our readers that we can, and do, change for the better.

JOSEPH LEE, SECRETARY:

My parents raised me to strive for a meaningful life. Working for TNN helps me in this endeavor. TNN celebrates the efforts we put into becoming our best selves. If my skills and knowledge can help a group of men strive for that ambition, count me in.

TONY JOHNSON, SPORTS REPORTER:

Each one of us is a story. The story is our life played out scene by scene, choice by choice. Since we are in prison, our stories should be redemption stories. I write for TNN to highlight these redemption stories. These stories deserve to be shared, boldly and broadly, to show others in our community the transformation path and to show society that prison reform must come because we are changing.

HOWARD ASHLEMAN, UNIT 1 JOURNALIST:

I'm driven by the desire to be part of the change incarcerated people need. TNN is a positive beacon. It lifts people's spirits, delivers prison news, and brings awareness to key issues. I'm honored to be part of TNN's mission to shine light.

BRIAN JONES, UNIT 3 JOURNALIST:

Writing for TNN allows me to show readers why their stories matter. I hope my articles lead to fruitful conversations and encourage readers to pursue writing. Getting pens in the incarcerated's hands is a great way to effect change through positive and productive expression.

STEVEN BLUE, ART REPORTER:

I write to express my thoughts and emotions on issues that matter to me. TNN gives me the opportunity to learn to communicate more effectively and communicate to a wider audience. The crew of TNN helps me through their guidance and experience when I ask for help, with plenty of laughter along the way.

MICHAEL SUTTON, UNIT 2 JOURNALIST:

I joined TNN to help entertain, educate, inform, and humanize the incarcerated population. I seek to share how individuals in prison transform their lives and add value to the lives of others. Growth and rehabilitation occur every day in here, especially when there are adequate programs and resources. It is an honor to amplify the voices of my peers and showcase how we can be assets to society.

TYLER BOWMAN, REPORTER:

I participate in TNN because it adds volume to the voices of the incarcerated. I value being part of a publication that informs and entertains my peers. I'm passionate about writing, so I'm thankful for my TNN writing community. I'm thankful for the creative outlet it provides and my TNN family who offers me a healthy place to learn and grow.

JON ADAMS, REPORTER:

I discovered the power and purpose of writing in prison. Writing gives me the chance to tell stories, and everyone's story is worth sharing. Prison muffles us by declaring we have nothing good to offer the world because of our pasts. TNN exposes that declaration as a lie. I hope many find life-giving freedom on the pages of TNN.

JASON WILLIFORD:

I missed my deadline, again!

TNN "travels" to both Iraq and Afghanistan as copies are mailed to U.S. military troops stationed abroad.



TNN uses photographs for the first time in the fall issue highlighting Nash's New Leash on Life dog training program.



Ms. Drew, Nash psychologist, joins TNN as staff advisor. Brian Scott resigns as TNN editor and Gary Farlow becomes editor.

NEWEST TNN CONTRIBUTORS EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY

SINCE ITS FOUNDING TWENTY YEARS AGO, *The Nash News* (TNN) has experienced the inevitable change brought by a long time period. It has changed its members, content quantity, design quality, and audience reach. Through the changes, two things have remained the same: its mission and its training strategy.

TNN has always embraced the same mission:

- Provide timely and useful information to the incarcerated population
- Offer a forum for discussion, dialogue, and creativity
- Encourage, give hope, and strengthen the Nash prison community
- Instill an appreciation for the written word

This mission has been passed from founders Brian Scott and Mark Pieczynski through the staff who followed them to the current team.

The current staff's newest members—Jon Adams, Howard Ashleman, Steven Blue, and Tyler Bowman—joined TNN in the fall of 2024. With their joining and training still recent, they offer an insightful perspective on the publication and its future.

When selecting someone for an open position, TNN looks for someone with writing proficiency, passion for learning, and ability to work well with the group.

New members receive training from the editors and experienced staff to help them learn the journalism skills needed to fulfill the mission. Editor Timothy Johnson has a passion for training writers and described observing new members grow as a rewarding experience. He said, "My prized moments are the light-bulb moments, when a writer shifts from 'I don't get it' to 'I've got it!'" Johnson said he wants them to develop as writers, thinkers, and people. He and Assistant Editor Cris Gardner facilitate training sessions and provide instructive feedback on articles.

Although journalism was new to Reporter Jon Adams, writing was already a big part of his life. He is a senior in the North Carolina Field Minister Program and volunteers as a writing tutor. He said, "I heard about TNN before I came to Nash and thought it was awesome. When I got

to Nash and started reading actual copies, I fell in love with it." He loves to write, so he applied eagerly when a spot came open. He said, "It's a dream to be a contributor now."

Incarcerated journalists have a unique position from which they influence change in the lives of their neighbors by challenging them to think and act differently. Adams said, "It's one thing to write something impactful. It's quite another to inspire others to express themselves with words and pens." Incarcerated at the age of 15, he said his family and teachers encouraged him to write more, but he didn't enjoy it until later. Now, he finds it transformative.

Ashleman, the unit 1 journalist, likes the way writing challenges his thinking. He said, "Writing helps me think in ways I normally wouldn't." Journalism requires a writer to look at each story from several perspectives and consider how the people involved are affected. Ashleman said, "It helps me focus more on the needs and struggles of others."



Left to right: Jon Adams, Howard Ashleman, Tyler Bowman, and Steven Blue PHOTO BY JOSEPH LEE

Blue, the art reporter, said he joined to "learn how to communicate through writing in a clearer way." Writing about personal experiences helps him cope with prison life. It also helps him organize and communicate his thoughts. Blue didn't have any journalism experience before TNN, but he builds confidence with each article. He treasures the instruction he receives from Johnson, Gardner, and other team members.

Reporter Tyler Bowman was the lone recent addition with journalism experience. He had

two articles published in *Dollars and Sense*, a business and finance magazine. He values the way writing amplifies his voice. He said, "I hope to write articles that are impactful by being both entertaining and informative. I think I can make a difference by keeping my peers informed and aware of issues that affect them."

He believes writing for TNN is helping him grow as a journalist while offering the chance to positively represent his prison community. "It's my goal to try to help solve problems, or at least influence the people who can."

These four TNN contributors want to continue to grow so they can help the publication continue its growth as it moves into the next 20 years. Bowman said, "Twenty years from now, I want to see TNN reach readers out in the world as an award-winning publication."

Blue said, "I want TNN to continue to grow in both the depth and scope of its articles. TNN has come from a community newsletter to a publication with far-reaching and impactful articles. In 20 years, TNN could spread beyond the borders of North Carolina to a national scope."

Ashleman wants to see an issue produced monthly, instead of quarterly, and the publication have a full-time staff, with its own work area.

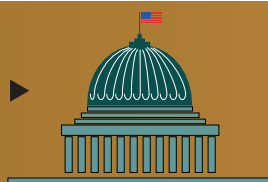
Adams said he wants TNN to continue "teaching people like me to express themselves through the art of writing and journalism and amplifying the voices of the incarcerated." He recognizes that these contributions have produced TNN's positive impact through its twenty years in print and will produce an even greater impact going forward.

Adams, Ashleman, Blue, and Bowman excitedly embrace the opportunity to contribute to TNN and accept the responsibility to ensure TNN continues to pursue its original mission, for the next 20 years and beyond. **TNN**



BY BRIAN JONES

2008

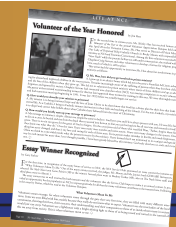


TNN is recognized by Art for Justice, a Washington, D.C. group devoted to reform in the spring 2007 edition of their magazine.

Nash Print Plant agrees to publish TNN's 3rd Anniversary issue in full color. Graphic Designer Robert Autry designs a new cover.



2009



TNN co-sponsors the first essay contest to honor Nash volunteers. "What a Volunteer Means to Me" becomes an annual feature.

2010



Ms. Drew retires and Unit 4 Manager Mr. Boone becomes TNN advisor.



By KWAME TEAGUE

20 JEWELS FROM KWAME TEAGUE

I HAVE BEEN INCARCERATED FOR OVER 30 YEARS. Along the way I've accomplished a lot, but I've failed a lot more. For the 20th anniversary of *The Nash News*, I want to share twenty jewels that I've learned during my journey. They may not all work for you, but they've helped me through some dark times to maintain my focus, purpose, and my sanity.

1. WHO ARE YOU?

I pose this as a question, because it is the most important one you will ever answer. To define yourself is the first step in establishing your foundation. If you define yourself as a father, are all your actions aligned with this definition? If not, then you're not who you say you are. Take the time to get to know Self.

2. SEIZE THE TIME

There is never a time other than now. Yesterday is gone, and tomorrow never comes. Procrastination is the enemy of success.

3. YOUR WORD IS YOUR BOND

Like the younger brothers say, "Stand on Business." If you say it, do it. If you call yourself a king, then your word is the law of your kingdom. If not, then why should anyone respect your domain?

4. CREATE THE WORLD YOU WANT TO LIVE IN

Every day we are faced with dilemmas, obstacles that we don't control. How you perceive these situations is up to you. Whether you see them as problems or as opportunities will determine if you make lemonade or live a life full of lemons.

5. I AM WHAT I WILL BECOME

There is a difference between human *beings* and humans *becoming*. Life is an infinite process of becoming. To become what you are not is the true goal of man.

6. KARMA DOESN'T EXIST

Moral cause-and-effect does not exist. The concept of cause and effect ultimately depends on a First Cause, which is either a god or some arbitrary "Big Bang." If the First Cause is a god, then his rewarding actions that are simply effects is capricious. If it is a universe that just "is," existence does not determine becoming. Only YOU can give actions meaning. Value your power to choose.

7. I-STATEMENTS VS. THEY-STATEMENTS

When assessing problems, never start the sentence with "They/He/She did," because that gives someone else power over your reality and makes you a victim. Start with "I did," retain your power, and/or take responsibility ... that makes you a god.

8. BE ORIGINAL

Like Erykah Badu said, if we were made in his image, then call us by our name ... Psalms 82:6. Now you know.

9. INSPIRE GREATNESS

Abhor mediocrity. Shun the complacent. Humility is overrated. Prove it.

10. FIND YOUR WHY

Once you have embarked on the journey of Self, and you know who you are, then you will automatically know why you are. Identity begets Meaning.

11. WHAT IS YOUR LEGACY?

This is the culmination of your Why. We don't do this for our first name. We do this for our last name.

12. USE YOUR CHESSBOARD

Everybody has resources that can be utilized for success: rooks, bishops, and queens. Deploy strategically.

13. IF YOU DON'T USE YOUR MIND, THE WORLD WILL USE IT AGAINST YOU

When you don't think for yourself, you give your adversary the opportunity to think for you. If you don't have an identity, society will give you one. And when you don't know your Why, the world will use you for theirs.

14. IT MAY NOT BE YOUR FAULT THAT YOU'RE DOWN, BUT IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GET UP

In life, we all face obstacles that seem to be designed specifically for our personal downfall. You can't control that. But if you allow it to hold you down, then you're only hurting yourself.

15. FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEED

This is the essence of justice. Holding the able accountable and assisting the needy to become able.

16. CHERISH LAUGHTER

These are the moments we live for. Celebration of pure being.

17. QUESTION EVERYTHING

Take nothing on face value, not even your own sense of identity.

18. TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS OWED

Each one teach one. It is your duty to enlighten the blind and resurrect the dead.

19. NEVER GIVE UP.

Dripping water can split a stone.

20. IMPOSSIBLE

There are two ways to read this. Who you are determines what you see.

TNN devotes an issue to the 2nd Annual Nash Art Show.

The 2nd Annual Green Corn feast is held at Nash with full coverage by TNN.

Mr. Boone becomes TNN coordinator and Captain Richard-son joins TNN as advisor.

TNN's first coordinator E. C. Conn retires and TNN co-sponsors a retirement party with the Nash Print Plant. Conn calls the founding of TNN the "crowning achievement of my career" in corrections.



2011

2012



A MATTER OF TIME: A 20 YEAR PERSPECTIVE



By MICHAEL SUTTON

OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS, the population of the United States (US) became more divided over the partisan politics surrounding the effects of climate change, gun rights, and social justice issues. An increase in natural disasters, mass shootings, and hate crimes added fuel to the already incendiary debates surrounding these issues. The following are just some of the notable events of these last two decades.

2005–2009

- On August 29, 2005, the destructive effects of Hurricane Katrina and the nonstop footage of citizens fleeing for safety captivated the US.
- The US entered the smartphone era with the release of the first iPhone in June 2007. These devices quickly became ubiquitous, and ordinary citizens assumed the role of freelance journalist.
- Barack Obama defeated John McCain and made history by becoming the first Black president of the US in 2008.



2010–2014

- Over 199 confirmed tornadoes in one 24-hour period ravaged the Midwest and Southeast US, including multiple tornadoes in Raleigh, North Carolina on April 26–27, 2011.
- On July 20, 2012, a graduate student killed 12 and wounded 58 in a Colorado theater shooting. Later that year, on December 14, 2012, a former student killed his mother, 20 kids, and six staff members at Sandy Hook elementary school in Connecticut.
- A July 13, 2013, not guilty verdict for the suspect in 17-year-old Trayvon Martin's shooting death sparked the Black Lives Matter movement.



2015–2019

- A 21-year-old white supremacist shot and killed nine Black church members of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina after joining them for Bible study on June 17, 2015.
- Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton, the first woman nominated by a major political party to run for president, in 2016, becoming the 45th president of the US.
- In 2017, eight women accused Harvey Weinstein of sexual assault, igniting the nationwide “Me Too” movement. The climate debate also raged on after Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria battered the US and the Caribbean.
- The debate over immigration heated up in 2019 after conditions at migrant detention centers along the US-Mexico border were exposed.

2020–2024

- The World Health Organization's declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020, essentially put the entire globe on lockdown.
- The smartphone footage of George Floyd's murder at the hands of police in May 2020 drove protestors to the streets worldwide.
- On January 6, 2021, thousands of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol in protest of the election results after Joe Biden defeated Trump in the national election.
- Mass shootings continued in 2022 when a teenage gunman killed 17 and injured 17 at a Parkland, Florida high school. Even Raleigh, historically one of the safest large cities, experienced a mass shooting when a teenager killed five people in the Hedingham neighborhood.
- In October 2023, tension arose among Jewish and Palestinian Americans after Hamas militants attacked Israel, killed over 1,200 people, and took more than 140 men, women, and children hostage.
- Biden bowed out of the presidential race. Trump defeated Kamala Harris, the first Black woman of a major party to run for president, and was reelected in 2024.

TNN dedicates an issue to the 30th Anniversary of the Nash Print Plant's Apprenticeship Program.



2014



TNN publishes its first “Reader's Digest” size issue.

2013

THE NASH ART CLUB IS MORE THAN A CLUB



By BARRY MINTZ

AS A CHILD, RICHARD Dowless admired the work of artists in magazines and wanted to learn how to draw. Years later at Mountain View Correctional Institution, his desire to draw returned, so he decided to transfer to Nash Correctional. “The whole reason I came to Nash was because of the art program.”

Dowless is not alone. Every week men get off the bus at Nash, asking, “Where do I sign up for the art classes?” Across North Carolina prisons, Nash is known as “the art prison,” a designation largely due to the Nash Art Club. Since becoming a club in 2008, it has functioned to help residents discover and develop artistic talents while also developing interpersonal skills that transfer to all aspects of their lives.

The art club’s mission is to bring “artists together to encourage the art community at [Nash] through instruction, recognition, cooperation, and opportunity to help others.” For seventeen years, the club has fulfilled this mission by providing peer-led art classes, sponsoring bi-annual art shows, and donating art for charity. Even though the art club receives considerable support today, it initially met opposition.

In 2008, Christopher Reid and Jon Herring submitted a proposal to start an art club at Nash. The two artists met at Pasquotank Correctional in 2004, when Reid taught Herring the principles of drawing. When they proposed the club, prisons around the state were eliminating art programs, and both men wanted to continue creating art. So, they did their research

and proposed an art program that would benefit Nash.

“They told us ‘no,’ and they told us ‘no,’ and they told us ‘no,’ and then they told us ‘maybe,’ and we ran with it,” Herring told Laura McFarland, a local reporter. Originally, Drew Stanley, then-Assistant Superintendent of Programs, was hesitant to approve the proposal. Herring and Reid persistently appealed to Stanley. Recognizing the talent and passion of these men, he approved the art club.

Art instruction started in May 2008. Without a budget for the art club, supplies consisted of number two pencils, writing pens, and brown paper bags. Over time, staff realized the value of having the art class create artwork for program events. For example, in December 2008, Programs staff requested for the art club to furnish artwork for the 2009 Black History Program.

to Nash residents. With little support initially, the art club quickly became popular among residents and staff. Reid told McFarland, that by 2011 so many residents wanted to take art classes that the waiting list was three months long.

In 2012, several art club members received recognition at the Statewide Art Contest, a contest for artists in North Carolina prisons. Five of their eight entries won awards. Reid, co-founder of the art club, won People’s Choice and 1st Place in the painting category. In 2022, the Mims Art Gallery featured over 100 pieces from the art club at the *Finding Freedom Through Art* exhibit. On January 5, 2024, the Justice Arts Coalition presented the *Prison Reimagined: Presidential Portrait Project* art exhibition at President Lincoln’s Cottage in Washington, DC, where 6 of the 40 chosen artists were art club members.

The recognition members receive for amazing artwork builds a sense of self-worth, and the recognition gained from the club’s contributions to charity builds a sense of community.

The authors of the art club’s mission statement envisioned a community that provided opportunities for its members to help others by cooperating with outside organizations to raise money for charity and by passing on knowledge from member to member. In the spring of 2011, the club

donated several pieces of artwork for an auction at My Sister’s House, a charity maintaining a shelter for abused women. Meredith Holland, executive director of the charity, said, “I think everybody has a right to pay it forward, pay it back, no matter where you are.” The art club’s donated artwork raised \$800 for the shelter.

Faith Christian Ministries (FCM), a local charity helping low-income people, also bene-



In 2012, Faith Christian Ministries chose the Nash Art Club’s mural over designs presented by two local, professional artists.

This event commenced the club’s history of providing special projects for institutional programs and accomplishing another principle of its mission—recognition.

In response to the art club’s work at the Black History Program in 2009, a local newspaper recognized the club’s contribution as “spectacular and dynamic.” Later that same year, *The Nash News* recognized the club’s contribution



Print Plant Manager Phil Rowe retires and Joe Jones assumes the role of manager, pledging continued support for TNN.



TNN goes back in time with an article on David Marshall Williams, also known as “Carbine Williams,” who developed the prototype of the M1 Carbine while at Caledonia Prison in the early 1900s.

2015

TNN celebrates its 10th anniversary with a special edition that contains a reprint of the very first issue.





(Left): Chris Reid's list of proposals regarding the Nash Art Club "10/2008 · Proposal to hold Nash Art Contest to determine state art contest entries and increase participation – **DENIED**"; (center): June 17, 2010 – TNN, The Nash Art Club, and the Universal Love Interfaith Team joined together for a charity art show benefiting My Sister's House. (right): Faith Christian Ministry's thrift store mural in downtown Nashville. (Reid's list and photo of Nash Art Club courtesy of TNN Archives; Photo of FCM Courtesy of Richard Stancil)

fited from the talents of the art club. In 2012, FCM approached the Nashville City Council requesting approval to paint a mural of downtown Nashville on their thrift store. The art club submitted a mural design. A council representative and FCM's board of directors chose the art club's mural over designs presented by two local, professional artists. By using the club's design, FCM saved money, funds it needed to help low-income people in the area.

Art club members also help one another. Page Warner majored in art at Appalachian State but dropped out nearly two decades ago. Before joining the art club, he lacked motivation to draw. Warner said the art community encouraged him to draw again by passing on their knowledge. "Even though I went to college for art, I learned new techniques," he admitted. "The art community changed my life by embracing me and encouraging me to work again." Warner

gained knowledge and found a community of artists who helped him overcome his struggles. Now, he helps others by assisting with several art classes, donating art to charity, and helping others find community the same way he did.

The goals of the art club's mission statement—encouragement, instruction, recognition, cooperation, and opportunities to help others—cannot be reached independently of each other. Warner's story exemplifies how the mission's goals are simultaneously accomplished and never-ending through the transfer of experience from current member to new member.

When Nash Art Club President Christopher Reid was getting ready to leave prison in 2014, his farewell to the club was recorded in *The Nash News*. "I hope the Art Program will continue after my departure," he said. "Guys will have to step up to keep the program going."

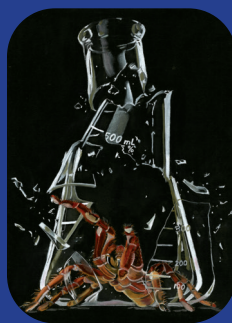
Since Reid's release, art club members have

continued instructing art students, even when the COVID-19 pandemic limited social gatherings. The club has also gained recognition in state and national art competitions and galleries, cooperated with local charities to raise money, and helped other up-and-coming artists acquire the art and life skills to help others also.

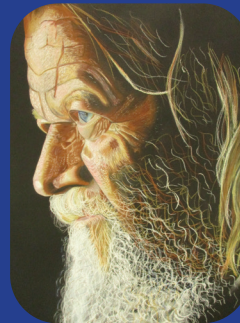
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines a "club" as a group of persons with a common objective. Reid and Herring originally believed an art club would accomplish the shared goal of allowing them to continue creating art. The club has accomplished that and more. Seventeen years of art club history reveals generations of men who have become much more than just another club. The Nash Art Club offers its members a new identity, sense of self-worth, community, and hope for the future. Nash Art Club membership provides the means for a new life. **TNN**



2010 – Rodney Tucker took 1st place in the State Art Contest with "Day of Rest"



2016 – Fall Issue of TNN published James Johnson's "Angry Arachnid"



2021 – Ovale Fabre's "Wisdom" took second place in the Fall Art Show



2024 – Nash artists participated in the Prison Reimagined: Presidential Portrait Project Exhibit

"OBAMA" by RODDEUSE CALHOUN

TNN "travels" to the Bahamas as Advisor Captain Richardson distributes copies aboard cruise liner.

TNN is profiled in the Inmate Shopper's Guide, a resource book published by Freebird Publications.



TNN adds an art reporter to the staff.



2016

Mr. Boone retires and is succeeded by Captain Richardson as TNN Coordinator. Nash Psychologist Ms. Walyko joins TNN as advisor.

A SUMMARY OF NC'S PRISON LEGISLATIVE BILLS FOR 2025



BY TYLER BOWMAN

MOST PEOPLE IN prison are not aficionados of politics, people who focus on the details of political events and government mechanics. However, politics becomes a focal point of discussions when election time comes and politicians compete for control over legislation that will either loosen or tighten the bonds of prison. Then, the incarcerated quickly become subject matter experts and political analysts.

North Carolina's 2024 election brought a new governor, Democrat Josh Stein, and solidified the Republican party's grip on both the Senate and the House. The state's incarcerated community is wondering what these elections mean for them. The current legislative session promises to be revealing.

Every two years, during each nonelection year, North Carolina's General Assembly meets for its long session. During this session, a host of new bills are introduced. Following the 2024 elections, the 2025 legislative long session has been remarkable in the number of bills pertaining to the criminal justice system. With bills originating from both the House and Senate, the state's legislature is prioritizing justice system matters. Here are a few of this session's bills.

DEAD THE PRISON RESOURCES REPURPOSING ACT (PRRA) NC S.B. (SENATE BILL) 681 & NC H.B. (HOUSE BILL) 625

Summary: An act to expand the Mutual Agreement Parole Program (MAPP) to allow parole for inmates sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. Applicability criteria includes assessment of applicants' first five years of sentence before consideration of a 15-year MAPP. Applicants must serve a minimum of 20 years total and comply with educational, vocational, and work requirements. This bill would also allow for retroactive parole eligibility of one to three years for inmates who have already served at least 20 years and who have completed some or most of the MAPP contract requirements.

** This is the PRRA's third time being proposed in the House but first time being introduced in the Senate.*

DEAD THE SECOND LOOK ACT NC H.B. 589

Summary: An act to implement criminal sentence reduction reform. Defendants must file a motion for appropriate relief (MAR) after serving at least 10 years, or 50% of their imposed sentence if the sentence was for 10 years or less. MAR relief is determined by factors, such as age, characteristics, history in and out of prison, and maturation. Based on the findings, a court could decide that a sentence reduction is warranted if an individual is deemed no longer a threat to the community. Does not apply to life sentences.

DEAD PRISON REFORM OMNIBUS NC S.B. 421

Summary: An act to reform prison labor laws to ensure fair compensation, meaningful rehabilitation, equitable work opportunities, and protections against labor exploitation. It would provide wages at least equal to the state minimum wage for Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Programs (PIECP) and no less than five dollars per hour for non-PIECP jobs.

DEAD THE FAIR SENTENCING ACT NC S.B. 686

Summary: An act to remove the mandatory minimum sentences required for certain criminal offenses. Allows for the possibility of significantly shorter sentences for trafficking and other lesser offenses.

DEAD REPEAL DEATH PENALTY NC S.B. 94

Summary: An act to repeal the death penalty and to provide that all current prisoners sentenced to death shall be resentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

REVISED DEAD LAW ON THE DEATH PENALTY NC H.B. 270

Summary: An act to revise the methods of execution available for a person convicted of a criminal offense and sentenced to death. The convicted person can choose between electrocution, firing squad, or lethal injection. If the convicted does not choose, or if they waive their right to choose, then the State will administer death by electrocution.

VARIOUS CRIMINAL LAW REVISIONS NC H.B. 307

Summary: An act to make criminal law revisions to matters such as recordation in district court and setting limits on MARs for noncapital cases, among others. If passed, this law would significantly limit the means and time-frame in which a defendant can file an MAR. Defendants would have only 120 days after conviction, or any appeals process, to file an MAR.

PASSED PUBLIC SAFETY ACT NC S.B. 429

Summary: Similar to NC H.B. 307 in regards to MAR filing limitations, but includes more criminal law revisions.

CRIMINAL LAW CHANGES NC H.B. 308

Summary: Currently, if a sentence goes to combined records to be finalized and the paperwork does not state specifically that a defendant's sentences should run consecutive, then combined records automatically runs those sentences concurrent. If this law passes, combined records will no longer automatically run sentences concurrently if it is not specified; instead, they will run sentences consecutively.

Nothing spreads faster through prison than the rumor of a passed bill. It is important for the incarcerated to know the difference between a proposed bill and a passed bill (enacted law). The difference is important because, a person who believes that a bill has already passed—when in reality it has not—spreads false rumors and does nothing to ensure that it passes.

The incarcerated have a duty to organize their network of family and friends, tasking them to apply pressure to state representatives. Whether by phone, email, or in person, representatives need to know that a significant portion of their voter base cares about criminal justice reform.

Do not assume a proposed bill has become law or that nothing can be done from inside prison to advocate for legislation. A call to action and concerted effort are required. Individually, these proposals are nothing more than words on paper, but, with the proper support, the bills can become laws that change lives. *TNN*

2017

The Art of Story Telling



TNN sponsors an anthology of short stories by graduates of the creative writing class.



TNN sponsors The Art of Story Telling creative writing class with author Kwame Teague.

TNN is presented with its first camera by volunteer and Editor Emeritus Ken Ripley, former publisher and editor of the local *Spring Hope Enterprise* weekly newspaper.

HOPE FROM REFORM BILLS SPARKS TRANSFORMATION

FAR REMOVED FROM THE POWER AND PRESTIGE of the state's capital, a group of forgotten humans rests their fading dreams on the ayes and nays cast by North Carolina's lawmakers.

During the North Carolina General Assembly's long session, state senators and representatives introduce bills for their colleagues to consider and, possibly, vote on. Some of these bills pertain to criminal justice reform, a sphere in need of drastic revision.

Bills are not laws and, thus, hold no authority. However, their impact on the state's incarcerated community is real, because bills possess the power to spark positive transformation in these often forgotten people. One reform bill affected Matthew Grant in this transformative way.

Two events forever altered Grant's life. The first occurred in 2004, when he killed a law enforcement officer, the tragic result of an impulsive decision by a scared teenager. Grant expresses deep remorse for the actions that sent him to prison with a sentence of life without parole (LWOP).

Grant also regrets wasting the next 17 years entangled in what he calls "prison stuff," referring to the negative outlets common in prison. He gambled and used drugs, which led to an infraction in 2021 for possessing K2, the synthetic cannabinoid pervasive in prisons. In many ways, Grant had given up.

It is normal for an incarcerated person to adopt a defeatist mindset. Individuals sentenced to LWOP are especially susceptible to this defeated thinking, which says, "Why should I change? I've already messed up my life beyond repair."

This thinking is understandable, because society's accepted mentality is to lock up someone who has committed a crime and forget about them. Cast away by society, Grant has no avenue to earn his release through rehabilitation—ever.

Several days after the infraction, Grant's life forever changed again, this time taking a positive turn. A friend at Alexander Correctional Institution told him about a house bill that had been introduced, titled the Prison Resources Repurposing Act (PRRA). The PRRA is a legislative reform bill for North Carolina that attempts to address prison violence by restoring a path to freedom for people serving LWOP who meet behavioral, educational, and vocational criteria. This act was House Bill 697 in 2021. For 2025, it is House Bill 625 and Senate Bill 681.

Hearing about the PRRA resurrected the hope Grant thought was lost forever. That hope motivated him to evaluate his thinking and behavior. He said, "In my mind I had changed, but I realized how delusional I was."

Grant's hope-driven self-evaluation carried him forward on the path of transformation. He immediately quit gambling and using drugs. His transformation deepened as he became a Christian and determined to live a life of godly integrity.

Today, Grant is a sophomore in the North Carolina Field Minister Program. After he graduates with a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry, he will deploy to another prison as a field minister, working to positively influence other incarcerated men.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL SUTTON



I don't live and do what I'm doing to check the boxes of some bill. I actually want to be a good person.
—Matthew Grant

A bill sparked his hope, but his motivation now comes from a fire within him. "I don't live and do what I'm doing to check the boxes of some bill. I actually want to be a good person." He uses the fire inside to spark hope for others by encouraging them to quit the "prison stuff" and begin their transformation.

Like Grant, some incarcerated men and women need a flicker of hope to ignite their own transformation. People who commit crimes deserve to be punished for their mistakes, but a

pillar of criminal justice is rehabilitation. The people who truly change should be able to work toward an earlier release or, for those like Grant, a chance for release.

The Second Look Act, currently House Bill 589, provides an opportunity to reexamine a person's sentence through filing a motion for appropriate relief (MAR) after they've served 10 years or fifty percent of their sentence. The reexamination would consider factors of rehabilitation, such as education and behavior. The Second Look Act would offer hope to a forgotten community, hope that could spark system-wide transformation.

People sentenced to LWOP between 1994 and 1998 have a pathway to release that gives them hope. After serving 25 years, they can request a review that considers their rehabilitative efforts.

The 25-year review helps Gerald Williams focus on what is important to him. "A chance to see my loved ones again on the outside means everything to me," he said. "Although nothing is guaranteed, the possibility of getting a second chance is enough motivation for me to stay out of trouble." Hope is all many incarcerated people need to transform their lives and live rightly.

According to "Hope for the Hopeless: The Prison Resources Repurposing Act," a *North Carolina Law Review* article, "Without the promise of a meaningful future, prisoners serving life without parole have no incentive to live virtuous lives or pursue positive personal change." Every person, in prison or not, irrespective of past mistakes, needs hope to be able to change.

Grant wasted 17 years when he entered prison with no hope. Then, a bill without the authority of law ignited his transformation. If the bills that reward rehabilitation become laws, countless others would enter prison with the hope needed for their transformation. Not only individuals, but the entire prison system could be transformed. **TNN**



By TONY JOHNSON



Sgt. Cole joins TNN as advisor.
Captain Richardson retires and Ms.
Walyko becomes TNN Coordinator.

2019



TNN publishes a "flip" issue with space dedicated to Ambassadors in Exile of the NC Field Minister Program at Nash.

2018

TNN observes its 15th anniversary. A new logo is introduced.



THE POWER OF LOVE: ONE DAY WITH GOD 2025



By MICHAEL SUTTON

“THIS IS JUST a chapter. This isn’t your story,” Les Bonnett implored the nineteen anxious fathers sitting quietly. He reassured them that they did not have to be defined by their worst mistakes. This concept was hard for the men to fully grasp, because that is exactly what prison does—remove people from society and punish them based on their worst mistakes—and living in prison serves as a constant reminder of these mistakes. Bonnett assured the men that they could redefine themselves in their kids’ eyes. Many of the fathers desperately crave this redemption as they struggle to maintain familial bonds while incarcerated.

Nash Correctional Institution held its annual One Day With God (ODWG) event in the gymnasium on March 21 and 22. The ODWG camp hosted a fatherhood seminar on Friday, then gave nineteen incarcerated men the opportunity to spend seven hours with their children on Saturday. Unfortunately, Scottie Barnes (affectionately called Ms. Scottie), the event’s founder, was not able to attend, but her presence was felt by everyone involved. This year marked 25 years since Ms. Scottie hosted the first event at Angola Prison in Louisiana.

Paula Jauch, author of *Cross Addicted*, shared how childhood trauma impacted her life. She spent most of her childhood without her father, because he was either in and out of prison or in a mental institution. She lamented how her dysfunctional childhood led to her abusing drugs, becoming a teen mom, and forgoing education. Although Jauch never really got the chance to fully reconcile with her father, she was able to confront the trauma that tormented her well into adulthood. She shared the importance of releasing that trauma with the men, and she expressed how ODWG still encourages her to confront repressed childhood events. The men listened eagerly throughout the fatherhood seminars on Friday, but the anticipation for Saturday was evident in their faces and body language.

On Saturday, the gym buzzed with excitement and activity. Tables and chairs occupied one end of the gym, so the fathers and children could eat, do crafts together, or just sit and talk. At the opposite end of the gym, it was like watching a beehive as fathers and children entertained each other by racing, playing basketball, and doing any other activity they could think of. Recurringly, one of the kids ran off to the end with the tables to take a few bites of a snack or take a quick swig of something to drink, then hurriedly rejoined the fray.

Exhausted fathers dropped off one-by-one, leaving the kids to entertain each other. Watching these precious moments together, the pride and love they felt as they watched their kids interact with each other from the sidelines was apparent on their faces.

The impact ODWG had on the men and their children was also evident in the numerous tearful embraces and joyous smiles. The fathers and chil-



John Turner’s sons, 16 and 18, bowl him over with a tag-team tackle full of love

dren enjoyed pizza, birthday cake, and various snacks all day Saturday, but the time they spent together was the greatest treat. Some of the men shared how ODWG helped them maintain and strengthen their relationships with their children.

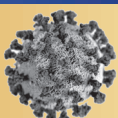
Joshua Lipe, whose daughter is six years old, reflected, “My daughter was born after I was locked up, so to be able to spend time with her and have a chance to spend a day with her, is a godsend. These One Day With God times are some of the best days in prison. I’m so thankful for this program. Being a part of my child’s life gives me inspiration to be the best dad possible.”

Marlon Cruz-Gonzalez shared how ODWG has enabled him to strengthen the relationship he has with his six-year-old daughter. “At first, I felt lost, because she had grown so much. Now, I feel more responsible and connected to my daughter as a person and myself as her father. Our conversations went from basic, ‘How was your day at school,’ to deeper emotional content. We were able to spend real quality time together to see what similarities we have. Our interaction is deeper and more meaningful.”



Father and child build a precious keepsake lamp together

2020
COVID-19 strikes the world. TNN features stories to help the incarcerated deal with the changes to their lives and routines.



2021



TNN Editor Gary Farlow hands the reins to Phillip Smith. Farlow was editor for 14 years. He was on TNN for 16 total.

TNN’s Phillip Smith and Timothy Johnson present the *Prison Resources Repurposing Act* at the National Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, and the bill is introduced in the house as H.B. 697.





Robert Jenkins and his daughter share a dance

John Turner has two teenage sons, ages 18 and 16. His two boys literally knocked him off his feet with a tag-team tackle when they greeted him. As he reflected on his time in prison and away from his sons, Turner commented, "The saying 'time is relative' has never had more meaning to me. Here in prison, the days slip by." He added, "The time we spent together was more than maintaining our relationship. It was restorative and helped to strengthen our

overall relationship. It furnished one thing every parent-child relationship needs: physical contact. Without this program, some of the fathers would not have the opportunity to see their children at all." He expressed his thanks for Ms. Scottie and the ODWG volunteers, and he shared how he and his sons spend the entire year looking forward to the next event.

Through ODWG, Ms. Scottie is not only helping repair the past, she is strengthening these families' futures. As many of the volunteers looked forward to the 25-year celebration planned for Ms. Scottie in September, they reflected on how she and ODWG have impacted their lives, as well.

Coordinator Bob Calhoun recalled when Ms. Scottie came to his church looking for volunteers. He started out setting up the audio for the camp. That was 21 years ago. As he considered ODWG's and Ms. Scottie's impact on his life, he said, "One Day With God has changed my life forever. Everyone looks for a mission, something that fits our talent. I see so many lives changed."

Coordinator Elaine Beal, the liaison for Nashville Methodist Church and Forgiven Ministries, shared how ODWG has impacted her life. She tearfully commented on how the event "lets you know there's a lot of hurt in the world, and God can do a lot of things about that." She also said that seeing the men reunite with their children keeps her from taking her freedom for granted. "It makes you realize how blessed you are."

Bonnett, also an event coordinator, expressed his desire to make sure the men



John Norman and his kids gather for a group prayer

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SUTTON

know that they can be better fathers, even behind prison walls. He described the impact that every camp has on him. "I love to see the dads with their kids. Every camp I go to I leave feeling filled up with emotion from having done something meaningful for the families." He echoed the attitude of service displayed by the Forgiven Ministries volunteers.

Even though Ms. Scottie could not be there physically, she still personally encouraged the men. Warden Lee called Ms. Scottie and let her address the men via speakerphone. Ms. Scottie greeted them warmly, encouraged them, and prayed with them. Each of the men shared their feelings of love and appreciation for her giving them the opportunity to strengthen their bonds with their kids. Ms. Scottie often proclaims, "If we can reach someone as a child, we may not have to repair them as an adult." For many of these families, ODWG is the first step in maintaining a familial bond and preventing this need for later repair.

The healing and restoration Ms. Scottie has made possible for numerous families over the last two and a half decades will be her legacy. As ODWG continues to expand to more prisons, this program will be the glue that helps bind together and strengthen countless families, now and well into the future. **TNN**



Daddy and Daughter share a quiet moment together

Kalab Lackey becomes TNN's first official photographer

2022



JSTOR puts TNN on the worldwide web through inclusion in the American Prison Newspapers collection.

TNN goes digital. A full color version of the Spring Edition is sent to every Nash resident's tablet.



2023



TNN Digital soon follows with a Special News Bulletin featuring The Art of Story Telling by Kwame Teague.

Podcast *Criminal* interviews Editor Phillip Smith about the history of NC prison newspapers and TNN's continued success.



NASH DONATES HANDCRAFTED CABINET TO WOMEN IN NEED



BY HOWARD ASHLEMAN

GREGORY SEAMAN and Aaron Johnston worked briskly inside of Nash Correctional's maintenance shop. A table saw pierced the air with a sharp wail as Seaman ran wood across its battered top. Several feet away, a power drill whimpered under the tight grip of Johnston as he used it to bore pocket holes. Their activity was a regular occurrence, but this time they were building something for a special cause.

Nash Correctional Warden Lee arranged for maintenance to build a cabinet for a charity donation in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week was established in 1981 by the Office for Victims of Crime. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed the Victims Crime Act as part of a broader movement to acknowledge crime victims and their needs. Celebrated in early April, this observance brings national attention to the importance of providing justice, resources, and recognition to those who have suffered harm from crime.

The build design started with a rough sketch from Johnston. After the design was sketched, Seaman created blueprints using Autocad, a computer aided design program. Next, Seaman and Johnston cut three sheets of plywood and two poplar boards into the correct dimensions, then assembled the wood like a giant puzzle held together by screws and glue. After assembling the wood, they applied a mahogany stain to its surface. Once the cabinet dried, they added door hinges, rollers, and handles.

Ms. Mitchell, a correctional programs supervisor, contacted My Sister's House, Inc. and arranged for them to receive the furniture donation.

My Sister's House started in 1981. It provides services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in Nash and Edgecombe counties. Kimberly Cofield, execu-

tive director of My Sister's House, said, "With the assistance of our communities, we are able to fulfill our mission and vision for the counties we serve."

My Sister's House assists victims seeking protection through the judicial system, operates a 24-hour crisis line and an emergency shelter for those who are fleeing abuse, and runs a resale store. Currently, My Sister's House serves between 700-800 women annually. They provide all services confidentially and without cost, regardless of age, race, nationality, or income.

The furniture project was one of two things happening at Nash in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Kwame Teague and the Humanism community organized a cosmetics drive from February 5 to March 6. They col-

lected over \$250 worth of cosmetics, which were also donated to My Sister's House.

Seaman loves building anything that will put a smile on someone's face. For Johnston, the opportunity to be involved in this particular build was a "humbling experience." As a child, he witnessed his mother suffer abuse and violence on multiple occasions. "We didn't have a place that helped or people who cared," shared Johnston. "I'm glad there are places now, but I am also sad there is a need."

As the cabinet was loaded onto a furniture dolly, Seaman smiled, reflecting on his work. Johnston also smiled, but then he sighed, remembering his mother's suffering and connecting those painful memories to the women his work would benefit. **TNN**



PHOTO BY KALAB LACKEY

2023



2024



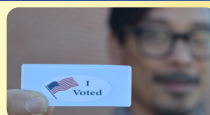
TNN holds the 2024 Mock Election, the first prison mock election held in NC history.

2025



TNN helps build and launch NC's statewide prison newspaper, *NC Prison News Today*.

Timothy Johnson replaces Phillip Smith as Editor.



In February, TNN's editors interview Secretary of DAC Leslie Cooley Dismukes for NCPNT. In June, the staff of TNN interviews First Lady Anna Stein. They were the first known interviews of an agency head and government official by a prison publication in the state's history.

SECRETARY DISMUKES VISITS NASH CORRECTIONAL



By CRIS GARDNER

THE RESUME OF THE newest Secretary of the Department of Adult Correction (DAC), Leslie Cooley Dismukes, reads like a Stephen King horror novel to the incarcerated: Assistant District

Attorney (ADA) in Mecklenburg County, Assistant United States Attorney, nearly six years as Deputy Criminal Chief and Criminal Chief at the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina, seven years as Criminal Bureau Chief at the North Carolina Department of Justice. Scenes from *The Shining* are far less disturbing.

As the head of the state's largest agency, Secretary Dismukes is responsible for overseeing the custody and rehabilitation of nearly 31,000 incarcerated individuals and 75,000 parolees and probationers, as well as the management of thousands of correctional officers and support staff. She takes over a department plagued with chronic staffing shortages, an aging infrastructure, a "graying" population, a flood of people with behavioral and physical health needs, a drug epidemic, and an agency still recovering from the aftereffects of a hurricane.

Secretary Dismukes visited Nash on February 13, 2025. The visit was the ninth stop on her tour of the state's 55 facilities.

After touring Correction Enterprises' optical and print plants, Secretary Dismukes sat down with the editorial team of *The Nash News* for an interview to be printed in *NC Prison News Today*.^{*} It was the first known interview of the head of a state agency by a prison publication in North Carolina's history.

"Everything that I have done in my career has been with an eye towards public safety," Secretary Dismukes began. For her, reentry has always been an integral part of public safety. This will be the first time in almost 20 years that she will not serve as a prosecutor. She has never worked in corrections, but she believes her previous job experience gives her a unique perspective in leading the DAC.

As ADA in Mecklenburg County, Secretary Dismukes worked with mental health and drug courts from their emergence in the early 2000s, and she worked in early versions of reentry court. While working as a federal prosecutor in North Carolina's eastern district, she and her team went to Butner, North Carolina's federal prison, to meet with individuals who were within six months of release to determine what resources they needed to succeed after release and how best to connect them with those resources.

Secretary Dismukes believes rehabilitation begins with getting the incarcerated into reentry programming from day one. She and Governor Stein worked together when she was a prosecutor and he was the attorney general. Much of the work they did was centered on reform to the criminal justice system. "A big part of that [work] is the belief in rehabilitation and providing opportunities for training, vocation, and education," she said.

One of her goals is to expand work release programs to offer incarcerated labor to communities in need. She spoke specifically about areas still recovering from Hurricane Helene. "There are needs in that community," she said. "What could we do for the custody levels out there to provide work release and BRIDGE [A program that trains the incarcerated in wildland fire fighting and aids in natural disaster relief] opportunities that would help the citizens, locally, to recover from the hurricane? Could we make, for example, Craggy a work release prison?"

Secretary Dismukes also wants to see improvements in prison healthcare. One area of focus is the expansion of medical assisted treatment to those with substance use disorders through medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) programs. As of the date of publication, under Secretary Dismuke's tenure, MOUD has expanded to 17 North Carolina prisons.

A report in the 2022 American Journal of Public Health shows that the formerly incarcerated of North Carolina are 40-50 times more likely than the general population to die from an overdose within the first two weeks of release. Expanding access to MOUD programs prior to release is proving successful in greatly reducing those numbers. After expanding MOUD statewide, the Rhode Island Department of Corrections saw a 61% reduction in postcorrectional overdose death rates in the first year.

Secretary Dismukes wants to see MOUD programming at every prison in North Carolina.

Secretary Dismukes knows the cycle of recidivism is fed by lack of housing, transportation, and job opportunities. She believes getting funding to expand the reentry efforts, set forth by previous Governor Roy Cooper in his historic Executive Order 303, will involve being creative due to the structure of the current state legislature. "There is not going to be a lot of money. And the General Assembly is going to want to fund things like staffing and infrastructure," she said. To get funding, she believes her agency will need to leverage private resources and stakeholder groups, as well as to apply for state, federal, and private grants.



After the interview, Secretary Dismukes continued her tour of Nash. She stopped by the seminary school, a unit barbershop, and the Humanism service. At each stop she took the time to ask and answer questions. She put residents at ease with her genuine concern and calm demeanor.

In many other states, the head of the prison agency will not walk the yard without a security detail surrounding them. "I might be a security threat," she joked. "I love to sit down with folks." She said the visits she is doing now are more frenzied than she would like, but that is because she is trying to visit so many institutions quickly. "I would love to come back and sit down to hear what the challenges are. What are the ideas? That is something I did as a federal prosecutor, and that is the kind of thing I'd like to do now. But we may have to save that for the second visit to every location."

Before she left, Secretary Dismukes was asked what message she wanted to send the incarcerated. "We're all people," she said. "No one is a lost cause."

Despite the initial impression of the Secretary's resume, those who met with her came away feeling she was more than a typical prosecutor. Secretary Dismukes answered the questions posed to her with frankness and respect. While meeting and listening to her assessment may not have had the same calming effect of a parent checking under a child's bed to ensure there are no monsters lingering, it did, at least, make us feel a little better about our future. *TNN* * Be sure to check out NCPNT Volume 1, Issue 2 on Hope University & Edovo for a transcript of the Secretary's interview.

ALWAYS A TIME FOR HOPE AND CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY



BY TIMOTHY JOHNSON

VANDEL NORMAN stepped through the maroon curtains and walked to the microphone. He scanned the audience, pausing to capture their attention. Once everyone in the gym bleachers was watching, his baritone

voice bellowed: "I Still Have a Dream." Martin Luther King, Jr.'s familiar words, delivered from a voice worthy of Dr. King, churned up the listeners, some of whom mouthed the speech in time with Norman. Adding the word "still" to the speech proclaimed that although the dream has not been fully realized, it is still very much alive.

With the speech's final words, "Free at last, free at last; thank God Almighty, we are free at last," echoing through the gym, Norman was joined on stage by the program's other participants to perform James Weldon Johnson's "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

The speech and song began Nash Correctional Institution's 2025 Black History Month celebration on February 28. The resident-created and -led program featured cycles of music, drama, speeches, and trivia. Associate Warden of Programs Wilson said she was especially impressed by the contributors' ability to put it all together in only two weeks. Show Supervisors Ms. McDaniel and Mr. Howard agreed



Above: Jamaal Lucas; Below left (left to right): Deleon Gabriel, Will Owens Jr., Marcell Williams, Reand Rivera (obscured), and Brandon Blakeney in a scene from the Birmingham Jail. Below right: Zachary Oaks

with that sentiment.

Black History Month received federal recognition in 1986 when the United States Congress passed, and President Ronald Reagan signed, Public Law 99-244. But the celebration of Black history began long before it received official support.

In 1926, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, led by activist Carter Godwin Woodson, designated the second week in February as a time to celebrate the role of Black Americans in history. Woodson emphasized, "If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world." That week was selected because it includes the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. The celebration was extended to the entire month in 1972.

For Nash's celebration, a play, *In the Jailhouse with Dr. King*, was one of the event's main features. The play's prologue and two scenes were spread across the program's other performances.

The drama chronicled the struggles of a young Black teen named Emmitt (played by Deleon Gabriel). His later-in-life narrator revealed, "People always colored me bad." Since he felt colored bad, Emmitt decided acting good was pointless.

In the Birmingham jail, an encounter with Dr. King (Will Owens, Jr.) forever changed Emmitt's perspective. Dr. King told Emmitt, "You're as good as anyone." Those words, along with Dr. King's smile through adversity, shifted Emmitt's attitude.

Learning from King's words and example, Emmitt professed, "Because the Reverend chose to color himself peaceful, he created peace." The teen learned to recolor himself, based not on what others think or say, but on knowing he can do good because he's already good enough.

Gary Hayes invited the audience to travel with him through Black music history. He told the story of Black music and its significance through a blend of historical information and musical selections. The journey began with the





Above (left to right): Mr. Howard, Vandel Norman, Reand Rivera, Renwick Gibbs, Deleon Gabriel, Brandon Blakeney, K'wada Temoney, Kenneth Bell, Jamaal Lucas, and Will Owens, Jr.; Below left: Kenneth Bell; Below right (left to right): Marcus Burnette, Marcelle Williams, and Quinten Massiah

Harlem Renaissance and the Jazz Age, then moved on to St. Louis Jazz, with an excerpt from Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit." Next came a jazz piece from Ella Fitzgerald, followed by the blues of B. B. King and soul from Sam Cooke. The journey continued with songs that had political themes and influence, such as "War" by Edwin Starr, "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud" by James Brown, "In the City" by Marvin Gaye, and three songs from Bob Marley. Hayes finished by explaining how *Soul Train*, the Black music show nationally syndicated from 1971 to 2006, made Black a symbol of power and of being cool.

Hayes said, "As an African American man presenting to my peers, I wanted to show what was achievable, so that in the future other African American men can step up and present to me what they themselves are passionate about." He felt rewarded by an audience member who said he'd never heard Holiday's "Strange Fruit" but was going to go search for it on the Sting-

ray music app to hear the rest of the song.

Another show segment was "Guess Who," where a presenter read facts about a Black historical figure and challenged the audience to solve the clues. Three presenters gave clues for three figures. First, Zachary Oaks described A. Philip Randolph, who is considered "the foremost architect of the modern Civil Rights movement," because he urged the boycott strategy and nonviolent resistance decades before King. Second, Jamaal Lucas described James Forman, who helped lead the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) from a novice organization into a force for change. Third, Reand Rivera described Frederick Douglass, who despite being born a slave became a great speaker, writer, and renowned advocate for freedom and human rights, insisting the Declaration of Independence's ideals applied to everyone, regardless of race or sex.

Oaks also played the keyboard for all songs and led the singing of "Wade in the Water."

He said, "The Black History Month program is important to me; Black history is American history. It should be fused and celebrated together." He also said, "The more we learn about where we came from, the farther we will go as Americans."

K'wada Temoney highlighted the same message of learning about the past to impact the future in a speech about the history of Fisk University and Black resilience. "Black History Month is a time to celebrate our ancestors' past

hopes, our future hope as their descendants, and the unity that is now shared within humanity," he said. "Black history programs provide a platform to raise awareness of our current cultural identity as a people and strengthens the bond of unity that the month was founded upon."

Marcelle Williams led the program's final performance. Surprising the audience, the bleachers rumbled and a bassline reverberated through the gym. It took audience members a few beats to locate the source. Williams and several other performers had planted themselves strategically within the crowd. The soundwaves from their rhythmic boot-stomping rose from the bleachers to the gym's roof, like the rising of Black people and Black culture in America—with glorious rhythm and relentless force.

The closing lines from Temoney's speech captured the day's message: "It's always a time for hope. It doesn't matter your race, your religion, your ethnicity, your economic status. It's always a time for hope." **TNN**



PHOTOS BY KALAB LACKEY

ARTISTS IN BLOOM AT THE 2025 SPRING ART SHOW



By STEVEN BLUE

Stunning portraits, pastoral landscapes, and riots of color decorated the gym walls. The show allowed Nash's artists to showcase their budding talent.

Guests Amanda Henderson and Morrie

As the winter Achill faded away and the grass returned to its native green, Nash Correctional busied itself with its own sign of spring: the 2025 Spring Art Show.

Minges judged this year's show. Minges studied art and education at UNC Chapel Hill before representing the Tar Heels at city schools in Rocky Mount. She isn't an active artist, but she works at a frame shop with her husband. Her experience in framing artwork allowed her to judge from an art gallery's perspective.

Henderson majored in art at Western Carolina University. She paints portraits of pets in pastel and watercolor. Having her own work in galleries and framed by Minges shaped her evaluations of the art on display. "You can see those who have mastered their media," she said, "but also those who are on their way."

Both judges were awed by the sheer amount of talent Nash had to offer. They encouraged the artists that didn't place to keep working on their art and to master their skill. "It's all about the light, how you see the light," Ms. Henderson said. By focusing on colors and lighting, artists can invoke specific emotions in the viewers.

The judges were surprised by the quality of work done without resources that many artists take for granted, such as oil paints and palettes. "Now that I know about the limitations Nash artists have to work with, I'm even more amazed with the work done here." *TNN*

1ST PLACE



1949 CHEVROLET PICKUP
TOMMY THOMPSON

ARTS & CRAFTS

2ND PLACE



NASH ART PALLET
CHRISTOPHER BUFFALOE

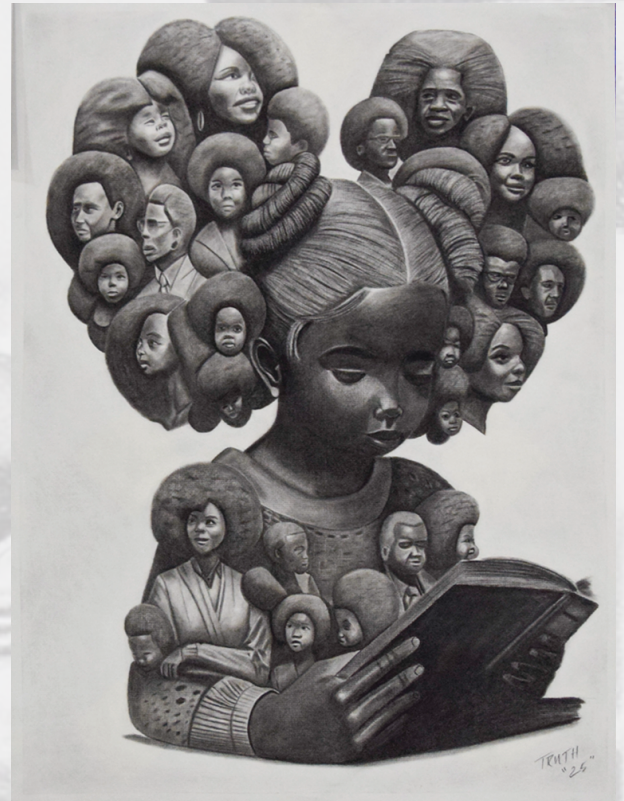
BLACK & WHITE

1ST PLACE



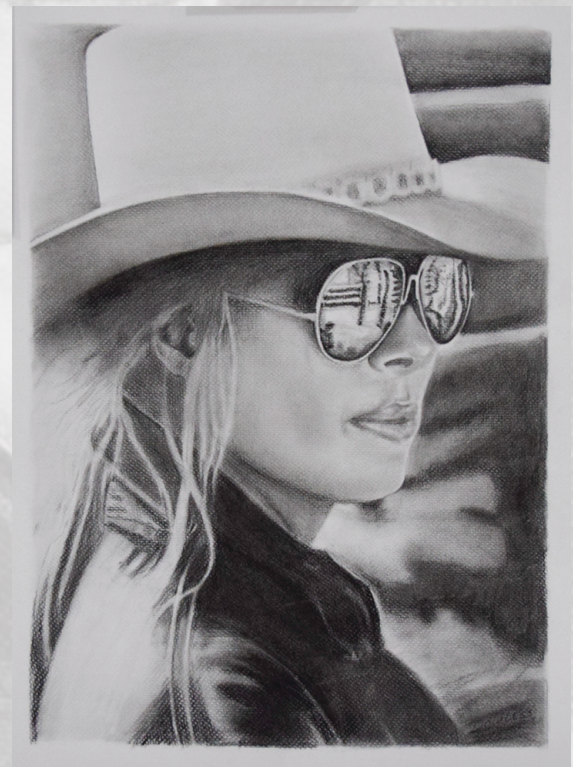
E5
ERIC LYNCH

2ND PLACE



BLACK HERITAGE
RODEGUISE CALHOUN

3RD PLACE



MONTANA
RICHARD DOWLESS

1ST PLACE



BLUE MOON & TUSKS
JOEY OWENS

2ND PLACE



BOB MARLEY: LOVE
ERIC COX

ACRYLIC

3RD PLACE



SUNSET
JOEY OWENS

PORTRAIT

1ST PLACE



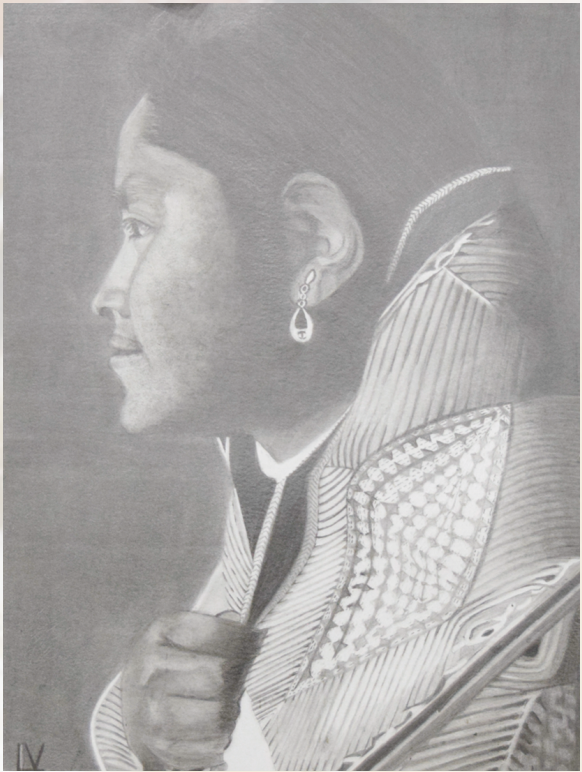
UN BESITO DE PERRITO
HOWARD ASHLEMAN

2ND PLACE



INDIAN GIRL
RICHARD DOWLESS

3RD PLACE



COZY
LONNELLE VAUGHN

1ST PLACE

WILDLIFE



E4
ERIC LYNCH

2ND PLACE



ELEPHANT
TRAVAS WILLIAMS

3RD PLACE



THE CHASE
JOSEPH LEE

1ST PLACE



LANDSCAPE

TURN TO FACE THE RISING SUN
PAGE WARNER

2ND PLACE



A WAY OUT
BARRY MINTZ

3RD PLACE

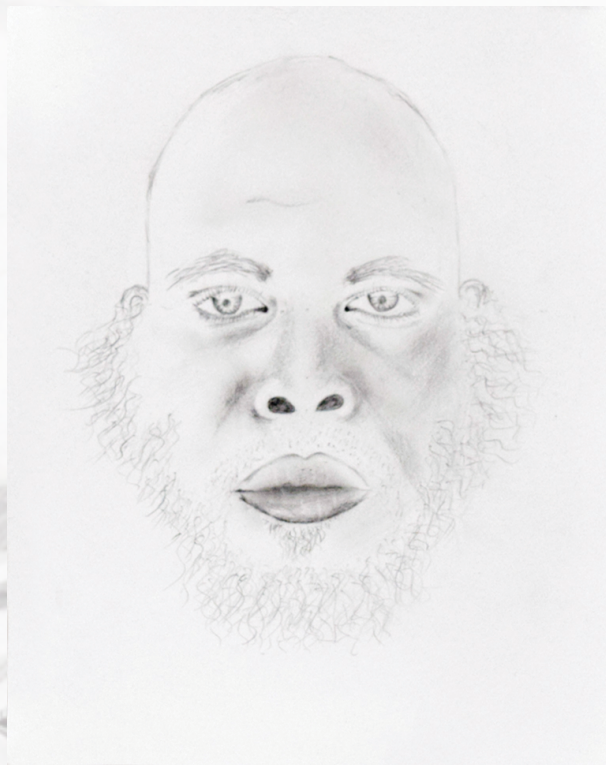


DOWDEN'S HARVEST
JOSEPH LEE

1ST PLACE

*JAMAR GORDON***BEGINNERS**

2ND PLACE

*K'WADA TEMONEY*

3RD PLACE

*CHARLES TEAGUE*

1ST PLACE



*ROB'S CAMARO
ROBERT DAVIS*

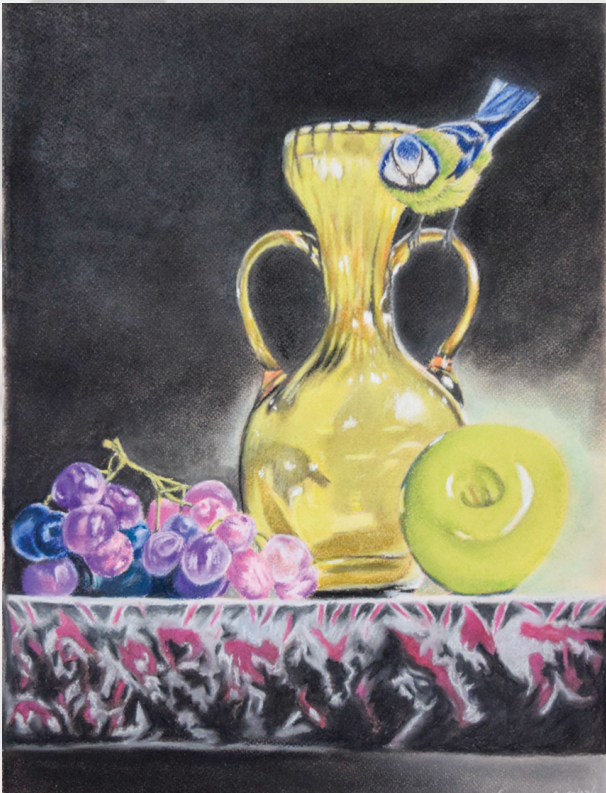
MISCELLANEOUS

2ND PLACE



*A.J. CONCORDS
THELDON WILLIAMS*

3RD PLACE



*MY VASE
ARMANDO VILLAREAL*

1ST PLACE



MOM
TYLER BOWMAN

GRAPHITE

2ND PLACE



DELIGHT FALL
AARON JOHNSTON

3RD PLACE



HARLEY QUINN
JASON PARDUE

2ND PLACE

CHARCOAL

1ST PLACE



KOBE
TERRY EDWARDS



JERRY CANTRELL
TERRY EDWARDS

3RD PLACE



OLD HIPPIE
SAVEUN CHHIT

1ST PLACE



UNTITLED
CHRISTIAN PASCASIO

3RD PLACE



CRIED FOR YOU
JESUS ANDRADE

2ND PLACE



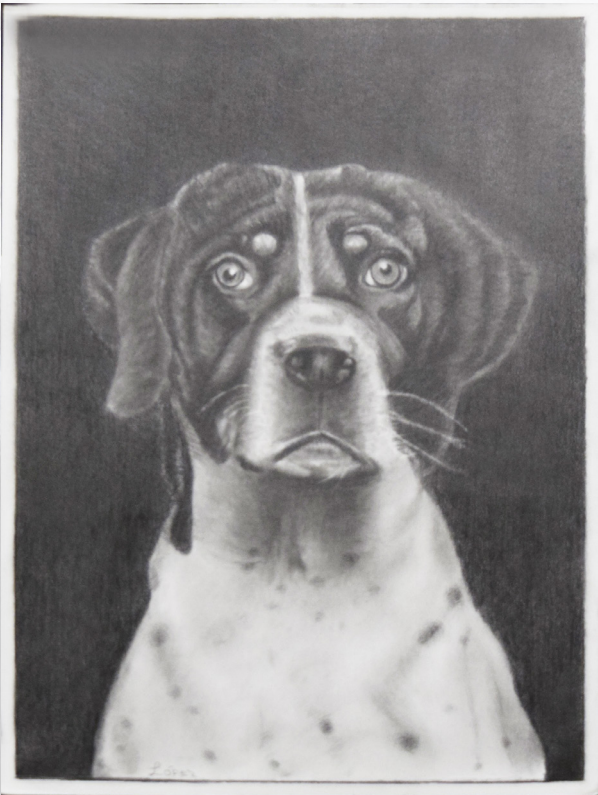
YOU CAN'T SEE ME
CHRISTOPHER BUFFALOE

COLOR THEORY

HONORABLE MENTIONS



THELDON WILLIAMS



*VICTOR
JAVIER LOPEZ*



*NATIONAL TREASURE
RICHARD DOWLESS*

HONORABLE MENTIONS



MIDNIGHT SHOWER
ERIC COX



PACIFIC HARMONY
JOSEPH LEE

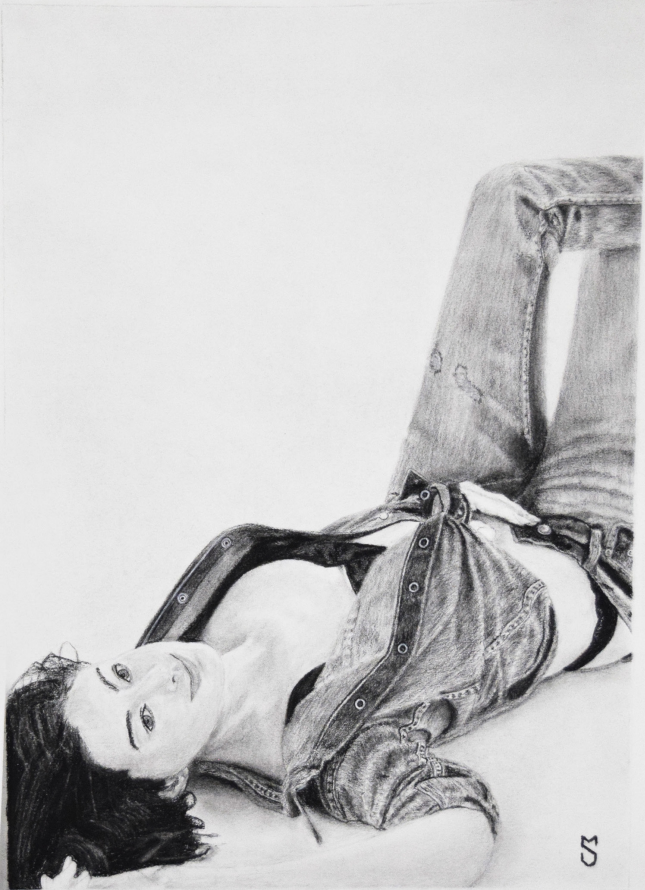


IN BEAUTY MAY YOU WALK
JOEY OWENS

HONORABLE MENTIONS



LADY IN RED
ERIC COX



BLUE JEAN BABY
MICHAEL SLEEMAN



WEATHERMAN
ARMANDO VILLAREAL

HONORABLE MENTIONS



PARADISE
ERIC COX



TRANQUILITY
MICHAEL SLEEMAN



UNTITLED WOMAN
CHARLES TEAGUE

THE RUB



BY LARENCE PROFFITT

THE DAY I ARRIVED at Nash, someone slid a copy of *The Nash News* under my door. I was immediately impressed by the visual quality of the magazine. I had seen other prison newspapers over the years but never something so professionally done. The reader-contributed art was stunning, and the articles gave me a good baseline of current events at my new prison.

Within the next two months, I entered and won a TNN short story contest and was offered the commentator position by Gary Farlow, the editor of TNN at the time. To be honest, though I was happy to have the position, TNN was too new to me for me to fully appreciate the opportunity. Over the next year, as I wrote and interacted with the rest of TNN's staff, I slowly grew into the position. I enjoyed having the opportunity to speak my mind to the prison population. But it wasn't until the first group of seminary interviewees arrived in 2017 that I fully realized the power and responsibility I had lucked into.

I was at Medical when some stranger heard my name and responded to me with enthusiasm. He told me he had read my column, "The Rub," and how it had positively affected his life. While I had received some feedback from other residents here at Nash, this was the first time I experienced the reach of TNN. I learned from this encounter, and others over the years, that copies of TNN are eagerly sought by the incarcerated at other prisons, sometimes being read

by dozens before the owner can get their copy back.

Now, almost 10 years have passed, and we are celebrating 20 years of TNN. These achievements seem almost unreal to me. I never imagined I could still be writing my column for this long, and I doubt Mark Pieczynski and Brian Scott, TNN's founders, knew what they were creating when they sought approval to start the whole thing.

It isn't often such a diverse group, as the team of TNN's writers and editors, manage to succeed so well for so long, especially in a prison setting. Yet, members have managed to put aside their personal agendas and work together to keep bringing to the prison the quality magazine we have come to expect.

Equally amazing to me is that, despite frequent changes to the publication staff, TNN has continued to prosper. I have served under three editors, five assistant editors, and with more journalists than I can count. Each of them contributed in some way to making sure TNN didn't simply rest on its laurels, but rather grew better, reaching for excellence and, in my humble opinion, grasping it.

While remarking on the continued success of TNN, it would be negligent not to mention the prison administration. I have served time at Nash under six wardens, each of whom reviewed TNN for content before publication. Each has supported the publication, recognizing its value to both the incarcerated and staff. During one troubled period, when changes in the billing practices at the Correction Enterprises print plant made supplying paper free of charge nearly impossible, one warden even offered to pay for our printing costs out of his own bud-

get. Thankfully, that didn't prove necessary, but it did demonstrate the value our administrators place on TNN.

Regarding the print plant, each plant manager, over the years, contributed to our success by providing the paper, ink, and press time on multiple machines, as well as billable worker hours, at no cost to TNN or Nash. To say that we could not do it without them is not hyperbole; it is simply a fact.

Last, but certainly not least, of those responsible for the ongoing success of TNN is our unsung hero, Ms. Walyko, managing psychologist here at Nash. Ms. Walyko joined TNN in 2015 as staff advisor, eventually taking over as staff coordinator. Despite an ever-increasing workload, she has been instrumental in bringing each issue to fruition. From checking facts to spellchecking, researching articles, managing all our diverse personalities, and coordinating with the administration, she has spent countless hours of her personal time at home to review each and every word written for ten years. And she is still going strong. Through the stress and joy, the laughter and the very real tears, she has championed this cause like no other ever has, or likely ever will.

Forgive me, as I have misstated something. Though I mention them last, the most important member of TNN is you, the reader. Without your anticipation of the next issue and feedback on articles, TNN never could have become what it is today. We write this for you and will continue to do so for as long as you keep asking for it. There have been bumps in the road, and there will be more in the future, but tighten your seatbelts, because the next 20 years are going to be even better than the first 20. *TNN*

BLAST



FROM THE



PAST



Many Nash residents served multiple years on TNN. Gary Farlow, for example, served 16. These faces are just a few of many. Left: Durwood "Disco" Thorpe served as TNN sports reporter from 2012 to 2024. Center: Larence Proffitt's "The Rub" premiered in the fall of 2016. Right: Jason Williford, TNN illustrator and author of Gamer's Corner, has been on staff since 2017. This is a look at how much they have changed over the years. Or, in Disco's case, how much his hat has changed.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO TNN

BRIAN SCOTT
MARK T. PIECZNYSKI
CAPTAIN E. C. CONN
DAVID HORNE
ROBERT A. AUTRY
BRIAN HARKINS
CHRIS N. MOSS
DAVID N. MCNEIL
R. THEODIS WIGGINS
TERRY DUMAS
GARY FARLOW
WILLIAM "BILLY" JOHNSON
JUSTIN K. DAVIS
HENRY T. LEE
GENE POIRIER
SEAN JENKINS
CONNIE DREW
RICHARD HOEY-BEY
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MICHAEL WILSON
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JIM ROSS
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MURRAY A. COATS
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SAMUEL E. HILL
MR. BOONE
CAPTAIN RICHARDSON
JOHN HERRING
ANTHONY WILLIS
MR. KEN RIPLEY
DURWOOD "DISCO" THORPE
ROBERT H. YURGEL
JOSHUA STANCIL
PATRICK ALLRED
WILLIAM BOYCHUCK
MIKE GUIN
JERRY AGEE
RICKEY BRIGHT
LEWIS WHITMIRE
MS. WALYKO
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LARENCE PROFFITT
CHASE SHANLE
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PHILLIP SMITH, II
HOWARD UTLEY
TYRON DALY
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JASON WILLIFORD
SGT. JULY
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MICHAEL SUTTON
TONY JOHNSON
BRIAN JONES
STEVEN BLUE
MR. DRUMMOND
HOWARD ASHLEMAN
TYLER BOWMAN
JON ADAMS

HERE'S TO MANY MORE

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