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HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY

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## NEW DIRECTOR FOR YOUTH AUTHORITY



Pearl S. West and Allen F. Breed

Pearl S. West, vice chairperson of the California Youth Authority Board, is the Department's new director, succeeding Allen F. Breed. Ms. West's appointment was announced Oct. 4 by Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. who personally administered the oath of office the following day.

Breed, who had served as director of the Department since March, 1968, has accepted a Fellowship with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in Washington, D.C.

Ms. West, a long-time resident of Stockton, Calif., joined the Youth Authority in February, 1975, as a member of the Youth Authority Board. She was named vice chairperson a year later.

As director of the Youth Authority, she also serves simultaneously as chairperson of the Board, which determines program for offenders committed to the Department, sets parole and determines revocation of parole.

Prior to her appointment to the Youth Authority Board, Ms. West served as special consultant to the California Council on Criminal Justice for all but two years of its existence and has many years of experience on state-wide task forces on juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.

She was a member of the Juvenile Justice Commission of San Joaquin County for eight years and chairperson of the Commission for five. She also was a trustee of the Lincoln Unified School District in Stockton for eight years.

## VOLUNTEERISM, A FORM OF SHARING

BY JUDITH EMBREE

*Ms. Embree, administrator of the Youth Authority's new Citizens Initiative Parole Re-Entry Project, is a former volunteer who recently developed a master plan for the use of volunteers for the CYA's Parole & Institutions Branch.*

Volunteerism is important to the Youth Authority and to the youthful offenders committed to the Department. Volunteers furnish a special ingredient in a correctional system which sorely needs the human touch that people from the community can provide.

Sharing is the essence of volunteerism, it manifests itself in activities as varied as volunteers themselves. This issue of the Quarterly is a sharing of those experiences focusing on volunteer services in the Youth Authority for several reasons: in recognition of the thousands of people who have touched the lives of wards and staff alike, in an attempt to encourage staff to involve volunteers in all phases of YA service, and to reinforce the commitment the department has made to the community to increase their involvement in the correctional process.

For those of us who daily dwell in the land of volunteers, the preceding objectives are more than lofty sentiment. They are the guidelines by which we plan programs, they legitimize the efforts of every staff administrator and supervisor who has created a volunteer coordinator "out of hide." Presently there is no budget, no legislative fiat re-ordering department priorities to mandate volunteer service. In fact it creates an additional burden on an already overloaded system.



TUTORING HELP—Volunteers can come from all walks of life. Here, a nun tutors a ward at the Youth Training School as part of the school's "Beat the Odds" program of using volunteers.

But the rewards! Take the time to read the following articles. Each person has a story, each person in his or her own way was influenced and changed by a voluntary process that required trust, risk taking, time and determination.

The results of all this effort may never be known, seen, measured or shown. Seldom does a volunteer receive direct feedback from the wards, there are few thank you's, and still fewer dramatic changes in behavior. The motivation to continue as a volunteer must be strong and directly associated with the values and goals of the department. As staff it is important that we clarify for ourselves the reasons we have for involving volunteers. The paid staff person receives even less thanks for their work with volunteers; the hours of training, planning, organizing and counseling are easily overlooked. If our work in preparing and supervising the volunteer staff has paid off with effective and consistent volunteers—they get the credit for the positive results seen in wards. It's clear that paid staff and volunteer staff need and want recognition for their work, they want specific guidelines for their working relationship, and they want their work to "make a difference", to have impact. Feedback is a two way process and a necessary one to improve the quality of volunteer and staff services. Hopefully the following articles will encourage greater sharing of ideas, resources and feelings.

In an age where non-commitment and un-involvement are popular, we witness, in volunteerism, a statement of people caring for people—perhaps the most important element in that long road called rehabilitation.



FOR VOLUNTEERS—Guy David, coordinator of community services at Youth Training School, displays a trophy that is given to volunteers after a substantial period of service at the school. YTS, the Youth Authority's largest institution, conducts a "Beat the Odds" program which relies heavily on the use of volunteers to work with the ward population.

## FOSTER GRANDPARENTS AT NCYC

COMPILED BY HOWARD PARKS

*Mr. Parks is project director of the Foster Grandparent program at the Northern California Youth Center. Programs are carried out at the O. H. Close and Karl Holton Schools, both a part of the youth center.*

Two foster grandparents report on how they feel about the young men whom they work with, as well as how they feel the young men react to them.

### This Is My Grandma

Four years ago I became a foster grandmother at the California Youth Authority. I have found it to be a most rewarding position.

Many of the wards are at the door to greet us when we get to our hall at three o'clock, and are anxious to play cards or dominos with us or to shoot pool with the grandfather.

One of my assigned grandsons usually stays at my table after dinner for a few minutes so he can talk to me alone. He lets me read his letters from his real grandmother and tells me when he gets letters from his "chick," but he informs me that I would not want to read these because the language is bad. He likes cherry lifesavers so I try to keep a supply on hand just for him. When he sees a counselor or a new ward he will put his arm around my shoulder and very proudly say, "This is my grandma."

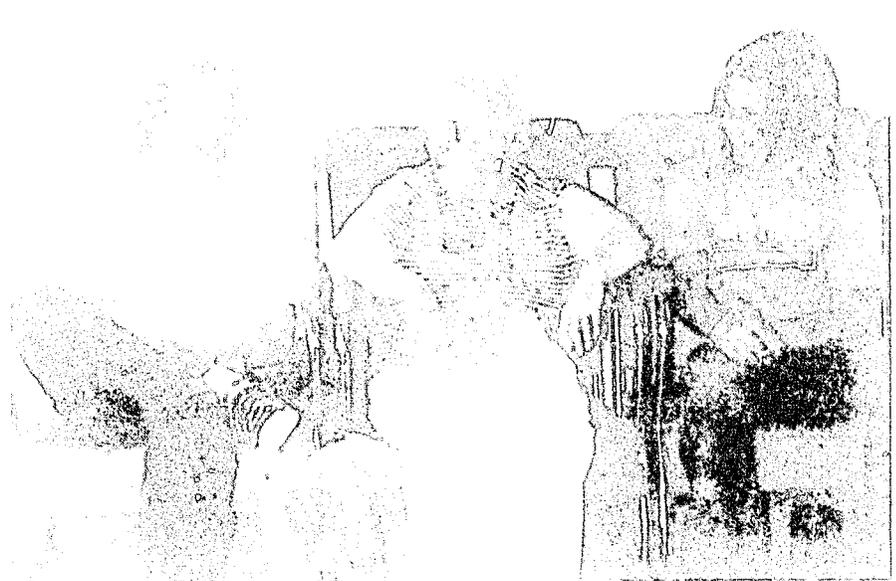
Several years ago, in fact when I first started, one of my assigned grandsons and I got to be real good friends. I met his parents, and his mother later wrote to me to thank me for being so good to Bob. After he was paroled he also wrote to me and told me he was joining the navy.

A few years back some of the grandparents were given a course in adult reading (Laubach Literacy System). We taught some of the wards whose reading was very poor. I had a black ward that I taught and sometimes I would help him to write a letter to his mother. This he could never have done on his own. I used to write a little note of my own at the end of his letter telling his mother how well he was doing and it pleased him so much. It takes so little on the part of the grandparent and means so much to the ward.

We were taught to ask a ward's first name and when there are approximately 50 wards to a hall, it becomes very difficult to remember them all. Therefore, I carry a small book in which I write their names when I first talk to them. Until I memorize them, I just look in my little book and I find that in two or three days I can call them by name. I know this makes them feel important to us and they know we care enough about them to remember their names.

The foster grandparent program helps the grandparents as well as the wards. Many times we would be sitting at home thinking of our aches and pains but when we come to CYA we became involved with the wards—whether it be playing a game with them or just talking to them, and more

*(Continued on page 8)*



important—listening to them, and seeing the appreciation for a cigarette or a couple of cookies or candy, life becomes very worthwhile to this grandmother.

*Marion Field  
Mono Hall  
O. H. Close School*

### They Need Me The Most

I'm a "Foster Grandparent" and like all grandparents I like to talk about my "grandsons" and our experiences and fun. Like this year—my vacation kept me in Dallas longer than I planned, trying to settle my late son's estate. My grandson on the hall said "Grandma, when you stayed longer than you planned, I cried, cause I thought you were not coming back." I said, "well, why are you crying now" and he said, "I'm happy!"

There is also one who thought he knew all he would ever need to know, because he planned to go back to the mountains and spend the rest of his life "loafing." He was such an intelligent guy, his counselor and I kept at him until he got interested in learning and several weeks ago he visited some friends here in Stockton and went across the street to where he knows I have a friend and ask her to please tell Grandma Christensen that he was in his second year at Fresno State and was happily married.

It was not all clear sailing, however. Many boys have ended up returning to CYA and even worse, to Preston or DVI. Also, I was afraid for one night I had maybe ended it all for myself. A big white boy (about 235 lbs.) asked me to mend his shirt. A tall, skinny black boy kept saying in a falsetto voice "Grandma, will you sew my little shirt for me? When we ignored him he came over and stuck his face between mine and the other boy's and repeated the sentence. Well, I didn't intend to or know I was going to, but I just hauled off and slapped his face. Both of us were thoroughly surprised. He was locked up and threatened to "cut my heart out and have it for breakfast." But we made up and after he was later sent to Karl Holton and anyone from our hall went over there he always said, tell "Grandma Christensen hello."

I particularly feel sorry for them all on Christmas so we have one big project that many can help with like one year we taped hundreds of colored oak leaves from strings to the ceiling. Last Christmas we made bells out of the cups of about a zillion egg cartons. We started early in January and every few weeks we would go back to our Christmas bell cutting. I spray—painted them green, red, gold and silver. Then we strung them from threads and taped them to the ceiling. They were gorgeous. One of my "grandsons" said 'Grandma, I never want to see another Christmas bell as long as I live.' But he kept threading and taping.

We always have a few doing some crocheting. One now is making two 15 inch sofa pillows in red, white and blue for the Bicentennial. One year one boy crocheted 31 hats from two-strand wood thread. His mother had a gift shop and they planned to sell them when he got home. We were all disappointed that he never wrote to us to tell about selling them.

All the boys say and mean to write when they get out. Very few do,

however, and I can understand that it is usually something they want to forget. But I do get several letters and cards each year. One boy sends me a card from Alaska.

I buy snacks for the guys at a market on the way to work and sometimes see an ex-ward who was one of our best "monkeys." He was always clowning and cutting up. One day I said, Randy, you are incorrigible, and he laughed and said "No, I ain't, Grandma, I'm illegitimate." And he is, but it is no big deal to him!

So you see why when my own grandson said this summer, "I believe you love those delinquents the most." I told him, no, but they needed me the most! And their hugs, pats, yells, waves and big smiles proved it.

*Jimnie Christensen  
Butte Hall  
O. H. Close School*

## FOSTER GRANDPARENTS AT NELLES

COMPILED BY CLARE ELDRED

*Ms. Eldred is project director of the Foster Grandparent program at the Youth Authority's Fred C. Nelles School.*

This article introduces contributions by the Foster Grandparents who report candidly on how they have helped wards at the Nelles School as well as how the program has benefited the Grandparents themselves.

It is unique to a correctional setting to have Foster Grandparents working with teenage boys. At Fred C. Nelles the Foster Grandparent Program was started in 1972. The Foster Grandparent concept was developed in 1965, jointly with HEW (The Administration On Aging) and OEO. The purpose was to take seniors and pair them with juveniles to seek how this relationship would work. For 11 years it has worked and it will continue to work.

The relationship between a teenager and a mature adult is compatible because the competition and authoritarian roles are diffused. It is easier for teenagers to discuss a lot of personal data when they know they will not be disciplined for it. The Grandparents cannot use the force of doing anything to accomplish their goals. Our teenage boys may have viewed the seniors with positive feelings or had significant relationships with them. Others may have paid little or no attention to them on the streets. A few may have viewed them as old, vulnerable, and easy targets or victims to be robbed and taken advantage of at will. To sum up, each has their own point of view about this junior-senior relationship.

A common trait we look for in Foster Grandparents is being a good listener; that "act" is important to allow the easy, difficult, real communication from the ward; to talk about themselves to a safe person who will not judge his communication. Identifying with heroes in the criminal world is not unusual for our wards and to find a Grandparent who lived through the gangster era in Chicago with the Dillingers and Capones and who gives a less glorified view of those days has meaning to some. There are many life experiences from olden times that are talked about and are part of today's history that the wards like to know about. It is the verbal transmission of our cultural past.

A fringe benefit for the Foster Grandparents is the social interaction that goes on between the Grandparents. It is a supportive, stimulating, motivating Program which provides a purpose of inner satisfaction because life goes on in an energetic way. There is no retiring from where it's

happening and they are the cause of activity as well as the recipient of it. It is the counseling, talking with, listening, giving space to another, playing games and acknowledging each other that matters and this is what the Program is all about.

*Clare Eldred  
Project Director*

### GRANDPARENTING

Each day is an exciting challenge—This day started with a search for a 1974 calendar for Jeff. He's counting the days he's been here. I've been an "audience" for his guitar playing for long time—he is now apprehensive regarding the outside. I've tried to encourage and inspire him to have a goal and remake his life. Joe asked for help to put his radio back together (with the help of my nail file)—he too, told me of his worries regarding plans for the future.

David, a lad part Indian, told me of his plans, he's to go to Alaska and knows nothing of it, except that his mother is there—his father was in the Air Force and married his mother in Alaska. I brought him some pictures of Alaska, Mt. McKinley, the glaciers, city and country side. My good wishes and prayers go with these lads as they go home.

John and Dennis requested beanies, John, a red-white-blue one. They'll have them in a day or so.

Dan told me of his wife and baby, seeing I was interested, went to dorm and returned with picture of baby.

John and Joe played a game of dominos and then lost interest, they would rather talk! John proudly told of losing five pounds.

I've been asked about my age, do I drive, what make of car, children, grandchildren, what was it like in my youth, no question is taboo!

I enjoy going to dinner with wards and find it a subtle reminder that we eat and enjoy the same food. I return home helped with the feeling of some usefulness. From experience it seems when we finish one thing, before we know it there is suddenly something else on the horizon.

It is like yesterday, I retired to find I had no interests, was bored with the rocking chair, poor and lonely.

I heard about the Foster Grandparent Program, applied and was accepted at the Fred C. Nelles School.

The wards are young men, 12 to 18, some married, some fathers. They accepted and welcomed us. We reach out to them hoping to strike a responsive chord. We share their dreams, problems, frustrations and achievements. We also listen a lot, play cards, knit for them. We try to comfort them when spirits are low and restore their self-esteem. Should the language become offensive, we merely tune out.

Tutoring is an integral part of the program as so many of the wards are non-readers or at first grade level. This is a most rewarding task as we have the satisfaction of instilling a desire for better things.

A ward was released on a pass to attend a funeral. Upon his return he

said he was embarrassed because he didn't know how to respond when his father said the Rosary. I helped him to know what it was all about.

Another ward asked me to explain the responsibilities of marriage, his and hers. I did, so far as I was able, but a "Dear Abby" I am not, so I went to the church of his choice and found some reading material which would answer his questions. He is planning a wedding.

Another ward asked if he could tell me something. He said, "When the officer brought me to the cottage and locked me in, I took one look at the grandmothers sitting in the corner knitting, and thought, what in H--- did those old dames do to get locked up." If I remember correctly, his words were "busted." I laughed until tears came.

The program is truly God-Sent for it enables us to get exercise by walking in pleasant surroundings, having a nutritious meal, and the financial help allows us to function with reasonable independence.

When day is over, we leave for home, tired and with an inner peace that comes and stays. One cannot explain, but nonetheless its there.

*Esther M. Wright*

### I AM A FOSTER GRANDPARENT!

I am proud to be a Foster Grandparent—to be of service to the youths, large and small, whom come under our jurisdiction, and most of all—I am deeply, humbly grateful for the changes it has wrought in my life! Three years ago I was an old woman, a widow, her family raised, no interests in life and steadily becoming more and more of an introvert losing interest in practically everything.

I am a "Down-East Yankee," a State of Mainer—of English and Scotch antecedents way back. Received my education there, and the friends I grew up and went to college with are back there. In the process of raising six children and helping to raise three of my grandchildren I did not have much time for making friends. Acquaintances—yes—real friends—no! The few real friends I did make are scattered far and wide. So I was lonely.

Today, I am a member of a hard-working organization, doing a job I like, using the knowledge and skills that I acquired the hard way, bringing up my large family; working with people in my own age-range whom are my friends—friends I never expected to have, and last but not most important—working with the young people who need us so desperately—some have never had the love and interest they need, have problems they keep bottled up in their minds that need to be brought out, talked over and reasoned out. There are things some of them come to us about that they would never take to their caseworker. And some of them need just plain mothering.

They need us and we need them.

*Eleanor Weymouth*

### AMBASSADOR OF LOVE

I am tardy with my report mainly because of arthritis in my right hand, which is my support in writing. Please pardon!

I have attempted to summarize my activities and give you a view of what a day is like at the cottage. When they are in assembly, they more or less express themselves, how they feel about life in general and what has happened to them, the reason they don't "fit," in society. At this moment, they are sincere and I do not interrupt with what they would term my idealism. They differ but do not become bitter, not as bitter as "we" do when someone disagrees with us. From one to one, they discuss what it all amounts to, life.

When they have completed and are sure that I am not trying to monopolize, I begin very calmly to go into the problems of those I deem necessary. Generally, they all total the same, therefore, it is not necessary to individualize. They accept portions of what I say, because they have confidence that I am not going to mislead them.

I make caps for them, which increases their belief that someone cares. They are a group who has been brainwashed with "I don't care," and they have developed a negative attitude.

It has been said, "love is our human rose." It is so beautiful for us to look at our young adults in our care, and try to find some way to reach out to them, with love.

It is my opinion they will not respond to anything but love. That is why, as I've said before, my work with them shows care.

They are infants as far as care is concerned. They have never had care, that is why they are in this condition today; one reason why we must try to reach them and show them we care. One of the volunteers was told during class period, when she was trying so hard to get something over, "You will get your money even if I don't study." So many of them feel the same.

We must collectively work for inner peace and always be Ambassadors of Love. Once we have established inner peace, we will see a more positive attitude.

*Lillie Williams*

### IN THE MAINSTREAM OF LIFE

This is the beginning of my fourth year as a Foster Grandparent at Nelles School. Words can't express my appreciation for this wonderful program that gives the older American the opportunity to be in the mainstream of life. The benefit is two-fold for it fulfills needs of the young and young at heart, which is so important to both.

Our program differs somewhat from others in that we work with young men 12 to 18 in a correctional institution. Although not physically or mentally handicapped they desperately need to know someone cares and has an interest in them, for many have not had this in their lives. We become very good listeners, help in writing letters, knit or crochet a cap, sew on a button or mend a tear, play cards and games, bring little treats on a special holiday and whatever else maybe needed.

Of special interest to me is our Laubach Tutoring Program, which I coordinate. The grandparents that participate in this program were trained by Laubach instructors and periodically receive additional instruc-

tion from the head of the reading department at Nelles School. Most of the young men we tutor are in the first to third grade reading level. It is a very rewarding experience to think we may have helped toward making them more self-sufficient when they return to society.

My opportunity to become a Foster Grandparent came at a time when I found myself alone, bewildered, hurt, and in need of financial help to live. I was past the age when one is considered productive in our society and did not know where to turn. I saw an advertisement in our local newspaper for Foster Grandparents. That was my beginning to a beautiful relationship. My life is full and happy with our activities and many friends. I look forward to each day with joy, and most important, I feel wanted, needed and loved.

*Alice A. Hendricks*

#### A GOOD LISTENER

So you want to know what I do, in the cottage. First of all, I am a good listener. Kevlin, tells me about his mother, Tommy, tells me about how he came to using marijuana and how it relieved his depression.

They like to hear my stories about Al Capone, whose mother, was my mother's neighbor in Chicago. About my driving a car, when I first learned because there were no starters on cars at that time. Then they tell me about Dillinger and Al Capone. They have read these books about "these greats." Our stories do not agree but they listen to me because I was there. This brings on a guessing game about how old I am!

I like to play cards, so does Manuel, Clay, Tony and Kevlin. At first they try to cheat a little. Those who like to play that way find their level of partners. If they play straight they enjoy themselves playing with us.

Last but not least, I sew. Buttons come off, seams rip, new gift trousers need to be lengthened or shortened.

It is pleasant and I love it. I'm so glad I've been able to join the Foster Grandparents, it has done as much for me as I am able to give of my time to a good cause.

*Marie Dowd*

## VOLUNTEER TUTORS AT ESPERANZA

BY CAROLE GONZALES AND DOLLY GARCIA

*Ms. Garcia and Ms. Gonzales are volunteer tutors at the Esperanza Community Parole Center in East Los Angeles.*

The Esperanza Community Parole Center in the East Los Angeles area carries on an intensive education program for parolees—some of whom can barely read; some of whom, at the other extreme, are ready to enter college. Maria Elena Rillo, the teacher, constantly searches for volunteers, both in the community and in nearby colleges, to help her carry on the program.

We went to the Esperanza Parole Center in the beginning for the three units at Cal State University, Los Angeles where we are students. We had not even considered getting involved because so many programs that involve Youth Authority parolees, gang kids and barrio kids in general always seem to help everyone except the kids.

Our first impression was one of surprise to see the kids really studying for the education they lacked getting while in high school. We met the head of the project, Mrs. Maria Elena Rillo. We understood. She was like a mother hen with these kids and probably the mother most of them don't have. She thinks they could all be geniuses with the right education or maybe even President. If she had her way, there wouldn't be one barrio kid without an education.

As time went by, we got hooked! It is a pleasure teaching these kids, as they really want to learn. As they learn, they get more proud of themselves and you can't help but feel proud, excited and happy along with them. It's a great feeling.

There are sad times too, but it's not as bad when it's felt by all of us. When a boy gets killed, or when one steps and goes back, or even when one graduates and leaves us. The accomplishments in education and attitude is worth all the bad times.

Another point that should be brought out is we not only tutor these kids but we help them in different things such as getting their driver's license and identification cards. Also, there are tutors that help them with projects to help keep them busy such as art projects of different kinds. You wouldn't think that a parolee or gang-oriented kid would get involved in such projects but once they get started, they don't stop until they complete their projects and they are so proud of what they have accomplished. We were surprised to see that these kids would find all the enthusiasm they showed in all of their different projects. It is a real pleasure to find that parolees and gang oriented kids are not always what they seem on the outer surface.



**ESPERANZA VOLUNTEERS**—Maria Elena Rillo, teacher at the Esperanza Community Parole Center in Los Angeles, rear row center, is shown with a group of volunteers who help her with the center's teaching program. Most work as tutors on a one-to-one basis with parolees. Ms. Rillo canvasses colleges and the community for volunteer prospects, telling them "If you have nothing to do, come here. There's plenty to do here."

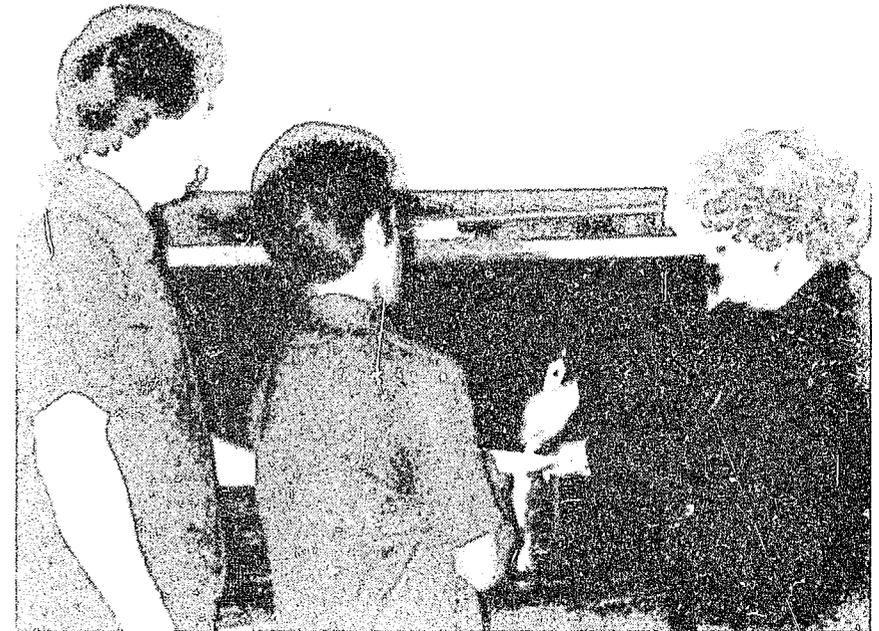
One disappointing factor is that our kids never really receive the education they should have while in high school. We found that they could not read or write very well. Math was also a problem for them but even though they did learn all of these things in high school, they tried and kept trying until they are now learning all the essential things they should have learned a while back.

We hope that in the future we will be able to have a small input in helping more of the kids as all they need is patience, understanding and to be taught that a certain amount of self-discipline will help to go further toward their goals for education. Mrs. Rillo has been very successful in teaching them all of these qualities and we only hope to help with these points.

## STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE

*John, the parolee involved in this article, is unable to write and the information which follows was prepared by Maria Elena Rillo.*

John views the volunteer program in a very positive way. He believes the program "helps you stay out of trouble." His sponsor, Deputy Public Defender Carlos Moreno, is someone with whom he can talk to discuss personal problems and interests. According to John, Mr. Moreno has taken him out to lunch, to Dodger baseball games and has invited him to participate in other recreational activities such as bike riding and hiking.



**KITCHEN HELP**—Volunteers work with wards in the kitchen at the Esperanza Community Parole Center. Kitchen activity helps give wards experience with disciplines required for working in the community.

Regarding the volunteers in the school program, John sees them as extremely helpful to him, particularly in the area of reading. He proudly described his progress in reading and reports that he is now able to read signs along the streets and in stores.

John spoke highly of Mrs. Isabel Herrera, who began working here as a school tutor last week. He mentioned particularly that she fixed lunch for the students and that she provides discipline for the younger boys when they become rowdy. In discussing the volunteer program, John sees it as another beneficial component of the total Parole Center program, which helps him stay out of trouble.

While at YTS, John was visited twice by a man who John described as in his late 50's, whose name he was unable to recall. This was another positive experience which was terminated when John was transferred to a camp.

## A VOLUNTEER'S VIEW OF FEMALE WARDS

BY DANIEL MANDEL

*Mr. Mandel, who worked for 11 months as a volunteer at the Northern Clinic, is now employed as a professional counselor at a halfway house for adult offenders in Woodland.*

The author, like many volunteers, was involved in his non-paid activities while a student—and as a student of corrections he took a comprehensive look at the problems of female offenders.

For 11 months through mid-1976 I worked in the girl's program at the Northern Reception Center-Clinic. I have enjoyed my experience with the girls, and learned a great deal. I've found the staff members to be sincerely concerned individuals. Many aspects of the program, which I questioned at first, have proven to be vital to helping the wards.

Although the scope of my experience is limited: I had a desire to study female delinquency as an undergraduate student at the University of California at Davis, majoring in sociology. In winter quarter, 1976, I decided to begin an independent study project on female delinquency.

The basis of my research has been case histories, as told to me by the wards themselves. I realize this is not a very dependable source. I've therefore decided to widen the scope of this study and vary the methods of gathering information. This study will not be complete for some time.

The paper that follows is a preliminary report. I do not consider it more than a preview, since it only pertains to the wards whom I have worked with at the Youth Authority. I consider this paper to be an outline, to direct my future research. This paper sketches out the areas of significance. It uses brief case histories to show the importance of each area.

The areas discussed in this paper are; recidivism, the family and the women's movement. Recidivism is a rather old and popular theory. The family is considered important for all delinquents, but it would seem even more important to females. Females are trained to be more dependent than males, so logically females should be affected more by changes in the family. The section on the women's movement is written to investigate the speculation of increasingly violent crimes among females being a by-product of women's liberation.

The changing trends among female delinquents were important to the initial study. My work revealed an increase in violent crimes for female delinquents. This work constitutes the first section of my paper.

### Increase in Violent Crime Among Females

Many articles are being written on the increase in violent crime among females. On Jan. 30, 1976 the San Francisco Chronicle ran a full page

article on the increasing violence in female crime. There were no statistics to substantiate the thesis of the entire article. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency, however, published a study showing a decrease in violent crime among adult females, since 1965. Therefore, if any statistical increase is observed for females the difference must be accounted for by the juvenile offenders.

In 1974, the state of Massachusetts held a special conference entitled "The young woman in the criminal justice system—why is she there?"<sup>1</sup> The conference members noted that in 1974 70 percent of the females arrested were status offenders. (i.e. runaway, truancy etc.) Concern was expressed, however, about the increasing trend toward the more violent offenses. Sen. Birch Bayh, a member of the board of advisors for The National Research Center on Female Offenders, strongly urged more research on the female juvenile offender.<sup>2</sup> Many researchers have ignored the female offenders. However, since the rate of violent offenses has increased from 4.90 percent to 8.81 percent in a period of five years, it is obvious that this problem can no longer be ignored. In addition to the overall increase in violent offenses it is also worth further noting the change in types of offense, with felony and misdemeanor assaults increasing substantially. The only other category to show a really consistent increase is forcible rape, a category with no arrests recorded before 1973. These increases indicate a new personality emerging for the female delinquent. In personality and values the female delinquent is increasingly resembling her male counterpart.

### The Impact of Recidivism

There is no simple answer to what is changing the female delinquent; the answers are vast and complex. A popular theory is that the increase in violent crime results from initial involvement in the criminal justice system.

**"Typically, the young woman's first offense was non-criminal (i.e. runaway, truancy), but later she became involved in serious offenses as a result of inappropriate response to her problem."**<sup>1</sup>

Senator Birch Bayh touched on the same topic in his article in reference to females being arrested for non-criminal offenses more than males.

**"Such arbitrariness and unequal treatment, at a minimum produces more criminals. It is well documented that the earlier a child comes into the juvenile system, the greater the likelihood that the child will develop and continue a delinquent and criminal career."**<sup>2</sup>

My experience with California Youth Authority certainly showed this phenomenon in a number of cases. One case in point is that of a young woman named Jeanie. Jeanie was arrested as a runaway in 1974. She was

<sup>1</sup> "State Profile: Young Women Offenders in Massachusetts" by Catherine Pierce "The Female Offender" October 1974 Published by: N.C.C.D.

<sup>2</sup> "Girls in Trouble: "Second Class" Delinquents" by Senator Birch Bayh "The Female Offender" February 1975 Published by: N.C.C.D.

committed to her county Juvenile Hall. She attempted an escape from the facility and was committed to California Youth Authority. She was a model ward at Youth Authority and was held in high esteem by the staff. She was released in July, 1975. Three months later Jeanie returned to Youth Authority charged with burglary and assault with a deadly weapon.

Another illustration is the case of Vanessa. She was first arrested as a runaway at age 12; she is now 16 serving time for assaulting an officer. Since she was 13 the longest Vanessa has been out of a detention facility is eight months.

A child who runs away from home or regularly gets into trouble is desperate for help. If that plea is unanswered the child seeks other alternatives. Vanessa was seeking security outside of the family. The solution was a new home with the Youth Authority. She feels safe and secure there, with adults who she feels really care. In addition to her new parents, she has also found a peer group which gives her recognition for being violent and disruptive. She now passes this subcultural value system on to the new wards like Jeanie, just as she received it years ago. She feels fairly confident now that she will be in jail or some form of protective custody for the remainder of her life.

Jeanie is already beginning to show resignation similar to Vanessa's. The peer pressure to become a criminal is fairly apparent in the dorm; many of the incoming wards lie to each other about their offenses to gain status and recognition.

Diversion programs seem to be the most likely solution. If a runaway is locked up and an armed robber is what is returned to the streets I see no reasonable benefit to society. The foster home seems to be one fairly good alternative. With the new practice of placing the juvenile with a blood related foster parent there seems to be even greater chance of success. However, the child doesn't always respond to the foster home. Therefore other diversion programs are needed.

### Impact of the Family

The female delinquent principally comes from broken families.<sup>1</sup> How the specific mechanism works, I'm uncertain, but the pattern seems definite. The girls seem without exception to have begun getting into trouble when the parents first broke up. This can be substantiated by a variety of cases I've worked with. For example, Vanessa first ran away at the age of 12, the same year her parents divorced.

Kelli found out at the age of 8 that her mother divorced and remarried when she was an infant; her real father was in jail at that time. Kelli ran away from home, was taken in by an older runaway affiliated with the Hell's Angels. Kelli has just had her fourth miscarriage now at the age of 15. She is in California Youth Authority serving time for robbery. Kelli's major problem seems to be alcohol. Kelli first began drinking at the age of 8. She now sits in her room at Youth Authority with fantasies of drinking herself to death.

<sup>1</sup> In 1974 71% of the female wards of Youth Authority were from broken homes. According to Youth Authority "Annual Statistical Summary."

The mean of separation is not always divorce. Doris left home at the age of 15, the year after her father died. She went to live with her boy friend, a heroin dealer. They both spent their time in and out of jail and they are both in custody now. Doris is 21 and her sentence will soon be up; she is uncertain of her future except that she has decided not to go back to the same boy friend. However, whether or not she will wind up with the same type of man remains to be seen. In Doris' case it seems that she has been looking for a man to take her father's place. She likes a man who "keeps me in line," and she prefers older, more independent males. What causes the misbehavior is uncertain; why a loss of a parent has the effect it does is uncertain. In some cases like Doris, the ward seems to be trying to replace the missing parent.

In other cases the apparent problem seems to be that the single parent cannot properly supervise the child along. Some wards seem to feel unwanted as a result of long drawn out custody battles and they look for a place of acceptance. I would like, however, to find out why other adolescents don't react the same way. Their solutions may be helpful to future cases. I think it will also be interesting to note the impact of the no-fault divorce law now in effect in California. This may become important since it changes the former need of hostility between the two parties. Now parties mutually agreeing that they are incompatible can file for dissolution of marriage without the burden of proving blame. By easing hostility, no-fault divorce may create an easier transition for the adolescent children.

Again the foster home seems to be a logical alternative for helping the child and to give children from broken homes a more stable home life. From all indications, the placement with blood relatives also seems to be helpful since the child will probably tend to feel less like an intruder coming into a stranger's home.

The family environment seems to be fairly important. Most of the wards I've worked with seem to follow the same patterns as their older brothers and sisters. When I first met with Barbara she had two older brothers in jail and one younger sister in a group home. While Sue was in Youth Authority her younger sister Kathy was transferred there for temporary detention, from juvenile hall. It would seem likely that the siblings are reacting similarly to the same factors of socialization. While there seems to be a strong closeness between the siblings, they seem to feel a tremendous amount of guilt and disappointment that their brothers and sisters are sharing the same fate they are. When Sue's sister Kathy first arrived at Youth Authority she went through a long period of self-recrimination over her failure as an older sister. She felt her younger sister was emulating her. Kathy on the other hand felt the same disappointment in her older sister although she didn't seem to feel any personal responsibility.

### Effects of the Women's Movement

There has been a tremendous amount of speculation lately on the relationship, if any, between the changes in female delinquency and the women's movement. The articles in both directions seem to be vague and

poorly documented. While there may be some overall societal shift that is becoming an obscure influence, it seems unlikely that these girls are really being changed in any direct manner. Many of these girls have ambitions of being housewives. They sneer at the feminist movement and they seem to want a stronger man to keep them under control. There may be some pressures that aren't readily visible, although further research will definitely be needed to uncover them. It could be that they are not in favor of the women's movement because they hate their present life style which is already fairly liberated. Therefore they feel that they want to lose the responsibilities of liberation, without realizing that the freedoms would go with them. For the time being I would have to conclude that the impact of the women's movement is apparently minor.

### Conclusion

Female delinquents are changing. The girl's program at the Northern Clinic is changing with them. Research will be an important key in making changes, and that will help. In the dorm team meeting, I've heard staff members list new possible programs. Many of these will be difficult and expensive to implement. Being able to structure these programs, to offer the best potential opportunities, will be vital.

I have enjoyed my work at Youth Authority. The experience I've had to date, makes me feel the problems of adolescents is a field I want to continue in for many years to come.

The female delinquent is a special interest, and I hope to study it much further. This paper is barely a scratch on the surface of a complex intricate topic. Many more are needed to work in this area. Research can no longer be predominantly male oriented. The female must be included. Youth Authority Research Department has been one of the few sources to include the female. I can only hope this study will be a part of a coming wave of research to finally deal with the female delinquent.

Finally, I give you Senator Birch Bayh's conclusion since I've never heard it said better:

"We must see to it that the preponderance of delinquency research and study is no longer exclusively male in its orientation, for it is essential that we know more about what can be done to prevent the personal tragedies involved in the ever increasing contribution females are making to the escalating levels of delinquency and crime. Some assert that the proliferation of dangerous drugs and their epidemic level of abuse is responsible; others cite society's gradual adoption of egalitarian attitudes devoid of sexism as the explanation; and several argue that modern, more efficient methods of collecting and keeping female crime statistics are the answer. Perhaps all of these are contributing factors, but it is certain that we know far too little."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Girls in Trouble: "Second Class" Delinquents" by Senator Birch Bayh "The Female Offender" February 1975 Published by: N.C.C.D.

## VENTURA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

BY JEANNE WOLGEMUTH

*Ms. Wolgemuth is coordinator of volunteer services at the Ventura School.*

The Ventura School was one of the earliest Youth Authority institutions to make substantial use of volunteers and it carries on a comprehensive program.

The Volunteer Program at the Ventura School was created in 1963 as a result of one of our young ladies having a problem establishing her own identity and accepting herself. Staff, recognizing her need to establish a relationship with a non-authoritarian person who would understand those problems uniquely her own, found a young housewife who was willing to come to the school once a week to visit this young lady, and soon they became very good friends.

And so, the launching of the Ventura Volunteer Program.

### Ventura Volunteer Visitor

The Ventura Volunteer Visitor (referred to by our students as their 3-V) program now involves approximately 130 volunteers (on a one-to-one basis), both men and women, who visit students one hour each week. Because of the lack of sufficient male volunteers to match with our waiting young men, we sometimes match female volunteers with these young men. This has proved to be quite successful. We average 10-15 students on our waiting list for volunteers, while we are constantly attempting to recruit new volunteers to fill our students' need for a visitor.

It is always interesting to anticipate a new 3-V. Appointments are made for a prospective 3-V to interview the Coordinator of Volunteer Services. The reasons why people apply for volunteer work is discovered through these interviews, and range from the forthright, sensible, helpful, healthy, cheerful ones to the good-humored ones. It is also through these interviews that we screen those whose needs cannot be filled in our program; the over-zealous in their religious approach, and the do-gooders. We are constantly searching for volunteers who will be good role models, have very stable personalities, and show a sincere warmth for young people. It would be useless to say that we don't miss in our judgments sometimes of those we thought would meet our criteria, but very often they screen themselves out. Occasionally we may have a volunteer who is uncooperative about institution rules or is unable to establish a comfortable rapport with the student.

The Coordinator of Volunteer Services maintains an open door policy with the volunteers to assist them in solving their problems in learning to deal with their student, their ethnic background, their family background, their offense, or institutional behavior.

Because a 3-V is not a paid staff member, a newly recruited volunteer

is given an overview of the California Youth Authority and the Ventura School, and knowledge of policies and procedures within the institution. This overview is presented at a mandatory orientation at the beginning of their services; thereafter, a 1½ hour training session is presented for all volunteers once a month on a regular basis. These sessions include a morning or evening training session to accommodate working volunteers in conjunction with their regular visiting hours. This training not only includes assistance with ongoing problems that volunteers find with students, but also some communication skills, recognition of sub-cultures within the institution, different modes of counseling, and how to avoid over-reacting when subjected to some highly skilled manipulation.

After a volunteer has visited the student at least eight times, and the student has been granted off grounds privileges once a month, they may plan a four-hour trip to a nearby community in Ventura County for shopping, walking on the beach, or a stopping for a hamburger. This is a very happy moment for the student and the volunteer when they walk out the door of the institution together. The relationship established between student and volunteer has been such that the escape record is only two in 12 years. This is unbelievable when you think about the number of students who go off grounds each month. It is a rare occasion when anything but a good time happens, as the students appear well-behaved and reluctant to do anything to jeopardize this opportunity.

### Community Volunteers

Another volunteer program in full swing at Ventura School, and an extremely helpful and supportive one, is the Community Volunteer program. These are community groups assigned to a specific cottage and visit once a month on the living unit for a low-keyed social interaction between the students and the volunteers. Community volunteers bring to our students a line of communication from the communities to help them become aware of the activities common in the outside world. They do not necessarily have any special skill—just a warmth and caring for our young people. They share with the students experiences in family life, homemaking activities, community involvements, social skills, and also job skills. Each of these groups is comprised of adults 21 or older. The chairperson of each group works closely with the Coordinator of Volunteer Services and the Senior Youth Counselor of their respective living units in discussing plans, entertainment, guests, refreshments and activities for the evening. The groups may bring a planned program for part of the visit, with guest speakers or entertainers. Sometimes the students provide the entertainment or program, and whenever possible, coordinate cottage decorations with the theme for the evening. A large portion of each visit is given to just natural friendly chit-chatting among students and volunteers. The evenings are designed with flexibility—tapping the creativity and innovative skills of the volunteers or students.

Community volunteers also undertake a number of additional activities. For example, in anticipation of Christmas some groups like to provide a small gift for each student on their respective living units. Through many years of experience we have found that there are usually about 20 students on each living unit who are without family, relative or friendship support

and, consequently, will not be remembered at Christmastime. It is for these students that the Community Volunteers are asked to assist by making up 20 boxes, or shopping bags, of various small, individually wrapped gifts. Funds to purchase these gifts are made available to each group through donations from the community to the institution. In addition, these are sometimes supplemented through gift donations also from the community.

Community volunteers are also expected to attend the monthly training sessions.

### Activity Volunteers

The Activity Volunteers are those people who specifically enrich our existing programs by providing special outside entertainment for our students. They volunteer their time and talents in many areas, some of which include: special ethnic programs in which our students participate, arts and crafts, physical fitness, entertainment, small musical groups, dancers, instrumentalists, and to fit any particular need the cottage staff might feel they could use to enrich their program.

### Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee of the Ventura School is a voluntary organization composed principally of citizens from Ventura County who are interested in the welfare of our students. This committee meets once a month with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. The purpose of the Citizens Advisory Committee is to act as liaison and assist in creating a better rapport for the Ventura School with the citizenry of Ventura County and adjacent counties. In addition, they assist in publicizing and promulgating the activities and accomplishments for the school and staff.

All volunteers join in a group effort to see that the students at the Ventura School enjoy a bountiful Christmas. They devote many hours in wrapping gifts and stuffing stockings weeks in advance of Christmas. Staff and volunteers together make every effort to provide a cheerful Holiday Season. In fact, it is a year 'round project for volunteers to help make the students at Ventura School feel that they are not forgotten—that someone indeed really cares about them.

Mrs. Mary Rutherford of Oxnard, 3-V Chairperson, and Mrs. Orca Huxley of Camarillo, Community Volunteer Chairperson, have this to say about the Ventura School Volunteer Program:

“Though we are a loosely knit organization in the sense that we have no formal list of officers, we have many very willing and tireless volunteers who respond willingly and readily to the needs as they arise and work together and separately to produce a very fine program. Some have been involved since the inception of the program, and are just as enthusiastic and challenged as ever. This speaks very well for the staff, from the Superintendent on down, for they set a tone of friendliness, interest and sureness that inspires the volunteer to recruit and increase our numbers, and to contribute to the enthusiastic spirit of the total picture.”

## THE STORY OF ROBYN

BY GREG DABEL

*Mr. Dabel is business manager of M-2 Sponsors Inc., which is in the business of matching community people with institutionalized persons with the objective of enhancing the ex-offender's successful reentry into the community.*

The plight and the prospects of a youthful offender may seem hopeless. Sometimes, the involvement of a concerned and warm person from the community can change all that.

This is a true story about a special relationship between two people, who were willing to take the risks of getting involved in each other's lives, to share their fears, joys, weaknesses, and above all, their friendship. This is the success story of Robyn and Cameron who entered into such a relationship as strangers and who grew to become "sisters."

Robyn was first institutionalized when she was 11. It wasn't that she was a real problem child, but she was left on her own enough so that it wasn't hard to find ways to get into trouble. It was 1971 when Robyn was put into Juvenile Hall on a charge of petty theft. When she was released she found life at home had not changed so she decided to run away. It had only been a few months after her initial release when she was sent back to Juvenile Hall because she had run away from home.



TAHOE-BOUND—Robyn, left, and Cameron get ready to leave together for a weekend of relaxation at Lake Tahoe.

For the next five years Robyn was a "runaway." It became a part of her life-style over those years: Each time she was sent home to her family in Redding or to a foster home, she would run away again within three to four months. Attempts to keep her home always proved unsuccessful. She admits that her home life was not what drove her away time after time, but, at the same time, it didn't hold her. To Robyn, home never seemed to be an inviting place. For all those years she never felt settled and she always had the desire to get out of the house, to travel and to see places she hadn't seen before. Looking back, Robyn says she never understood why she felt unsettled and restless, but she admits there wasn't much to motivate her at home and that she felt very little responsibility to her family.

Constantly on the run, Robyn hitchhiked through several western states and through most of California, always trying to stay ahead of the authorities who would take her back home. She spent most of her time in the San Francisco Bay Area staying with people she would meet while hitchhiking. By this time, when the authorities did catch up with her, she refused to go back home because she realized the shame and unacceptance she would have to face. Finally, she was placed in a foster home. But Robyn's unsettled feelings hadn't changed, she quickly grew unhappy with her foster home environment and ran away from three different foster homes in one year. In the end, because of so many failures to keep Robyn either at home or with a foster family, she was committed to the CYA and sent to the Northern Reception Center-Clinic in June 1974.

It was at NRCC that Robyn met Cameron, her M-2 Sponsor, for the first time. Cameron was a young, outgoing woman who had heard about the M-2 program and had responded with immediate enthusiasm by volunteering her time to visit someone in the institution. Robyn, still without much direction in her life, heard about M-2 and decided that having a "friend" visit her wasn't such a bad idea. The two were "matched" in October and they took an immediate liking to each other, but they didn't have much time to get acquainted as Robyn was paroled from NRCC in December.

This time Robyn decided to try living with her father in Los Angeles. Even though she loved her father she quickly became dissatisfied and restless, and took off again. This time, when the authorities arrested her in Oakland, she was sent south the Youth Authority's Ventura School.

While at Ventura, Robyn began considering the isolation and loneliness of an institution. Robyn felt that there was no one who would visit her, no one on the outside who seemed to care, except for the woman who had visited her for two months when she was at NRCC in Sacramento. She wanted to renew her friendship with her M-2 Sponsor, Cameron. It took a month, but Robyn finally persuaded the officials at Ventura to send her back to NRCC. Her request was granted because the officials felt that if she was closer to home and to her friend Cameron, she might have a better chance of getting "settled."

One of the first things Robyn did when she returned to NRCC was to contact M-2 and ask to be rematched with her friend Cameron. The match

was reinstated and this time, it lasted for eight months, Robyn's length of stay, during which time they grew to be close friends. Cameron visited as often as she could, usually twice a month. And since she lived close to Sacramento, she would telephone Robyn on the weeks she didn't visit. Cameron began to notice some attitude changes in Robyn. The first was Robyn's relationship with her mother. Robyn was learning to sit down and talk with her mother. Also, before Robyn knew Cameron, doing time at CYA institutions had provided all the security she seemingly wanted. But after their friendship began to develop, Robyn began to recognize that there were better alternatives in life than just hiding her head in the sand at an institution. Robyn was maturing and learning to cope.

Eight months was a long time for Robyn. And with her thoughts and attention directed outside the institution more and more, she was, at times, despondent and depressed with her situation. But with passes on the horizon she began to perk up a bit. As soon as it was possible for Robyn to go out on day passes, Cameron would take her for the entire day on weekends. On their first day out together the two girls spent the entire day just shopping. And in the months following, Robyn used her day pass privileges to be with her friend Cameron. Together they would go on picnics, to the movies, or just relax at Cameron's home by the pool. Robyn looked forward to the days out of the CYA facility. They not only gave her a chance to escape from the cold, sterile life on the inside, but she looked forward to her woman-to-woman talks with Cameron.

Robyn remembers that the CYA counselors were frequently too busy to just sit and talk with her. And many times she felt the need to talk with someone older than herself to discuss her problems. This is where the M-2 Sponsors program met Robyn's need. M-2 provided an opportunity for Robyn and Cameron to develop a one-to-one relationship. Their relationship grew in love and respect for one another and Robyn began to sense that her life had worth and that she should take seriously the privilege and responsibility of freedom.

Robyn and Cameron often kid each other about really being "sisters" and in many ways, they are. Robyn says she's done a lot of growing up since she first met Cameron. Cameron, like many M-2 sponsors, says that she has learned a lot herself. They've both learned from their experiences with one another and it's hard to say who has really benefited the most. Cameron had originally wanted to help by volunteering her time with a person in need, and found herself helping a friend make it through a tough spot. Robyn's attitude changed from one of a whimsical young girl into that of a young woman with some definite plans, goals and hopes. Robyn was paroled in August of 1975 as her attitude changes were obvious to her counselors. She appeared to be much more "settled" and capable of handling herself at home.

Robyn has been out of the CYA now for a year and is still living at home with her mother and stepfather in Redding. She still has her problems, but they are far fewer than in the past, and she is demonstrating her capability to solve those that do arise. She has re-enrolled in high school and, for the first time in her life, is doing extremely well there too. Her mother and stepfather are happy with her. The feelings at home are those of coopera-

tion and trust, two attitudes that did not exist five years ago. Her mother feels that Robyn's motivation and positive attitude are the result of the constant encouragement of her M-2 sponsor, Cameron.

Robyn is even getting excited about the idea of becoming a writer. She plans to take more English courses in the fall and she would like to share her life story with other young people who are experiencing the same feelings she felt while institutionalized. Now she knows that life is more than sitting around looking at four walls and waiting for someone else to change your situation. As Robyn puts it, "You must have the desire to change and the will to carry through that desire before things can begin to change." Recently, Robyn applied for volunteer work at the Probation Department in Redding.

Cameron is now "matched" with another girl at NRCC but still keeps in close contact with Robyn. They keep in touch by telephone and letters and they even plan weekend trips together. Whenever possible Robyn takes the bus down to spend a weekend with Cameron and her family. The two usually spend most of their time relaxing and talking girl-talk. Their latest weekend trip together was up to Lake Tahoe where they spent the day shopping and sunbathing at King's Beach. Then they came back to Sacramento for dinner. The following morning was spent relaxing at Paradise Beach on the American River, followed by more shopping downtown. That evening Cameron invited friends over for a barbecue and by the time Sunday evening rolled around they were exhausted, but happy. It's not surprising that among Robyn's favorite things she lists, 'visiting her "sister", Cameron.'

Neither of them expected the relationship to be what it is today. In the beginning they had both been cautious about their relationship, but now they find it easy to rap, share problems, even cry together. As an M-2 sponsor, Cameron wasn't a counselor, a mother, a social worker or a psychologist, but simply a "friend" who ended up a "sister." That's why Robyn's story is now a success story.

## THREE WARDS' IMPRESSIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

*Compiled by Manuel Roman*

*Mr. Roman is a staff member at the Northern Clinic.*

Volunteers are widely used at the Cheyenne Lodge in the Northern Reception Center-Clinic. Here, three wards anonymously tell how they feel about them.

Volunteers involved in the Cheyenne Co-Ed program have had a good effect on my script for the future.

In the Cheyenne Co-Ed program at this time, we have 32 volunteers. They are good people and very considerate to take the time to spend with us. They listen to our problems and help plan programs with the counselors for which I want to thank them. We feel comfortable expressing our deep feelings about problems that we aren't able to tell our counselors. Most of them can be trusted to not spread private conversations to other people, which helps me to trust people more.

Seeing volunteers my own age (22) who are making it in college or in jobs, helps me to believe I too can make it. They made me realize that there are better ways to make it on the outside than living in crime.

I feel, myself, that this program would not be as good as it is without the hard work of our volunteer coordinator, Manuel Roman. Because he took the time and cares, he made it possible for me to go on many different activities and field trips where I got to know the volunteers better. It relieves the pressure of everyone interrupting your conversations with the volunteer when you can go out on field trips and be on a one to one basis.

The time I have spent in this program has allowed me to get to know several volunteers. They have helped make my time very useful in helping me prepare my state of mind for when I do leave this institution.

I have had a lot of good experiences with a lot of the volunteers in the Cheyenne Program. I have gone on many outside trips with them. But one thing that I have learned from a "special volunteer" is I learned more about God! I still have so many more things to learn, but the volunteer has helped me turn my life to God! This "special volunteer" has also been appointed my M-2 sponsor because she cares! I'm not writing many lines in this paragraph, but there is a lot of love and care showing in this paragraph.

Ever since I've been here at the Northern Clinic, I've noticed that there are a lot of college students coming into the different dorms and helping the wards with some of the problems they might have. I think this is really

great. Here these people are giving up their free time to come and be a friend to someone they don't even know. I mean if there's something bothering you and the counselors just don't have the time to listen to what you might have to say, you'll always find that these volunteers are more than willing to listen to you and give you some good sound advice about what you should do to solve whatever is bothering you. It's nice to have someone who cares and these volunteers really do care. They're the best kind of friend you can have in a place like this or anyplace else for that matter.

To me these people are the greatest. I guess all I can really say is that I am glad they are here and I want to let them know that I am very thankful to them for giving up their free time to be a friend to me.

**END**