

# Camp Monterey gives troubled a second chance

**THE ISSUE** | Incarceration and alternatives to incarceration.  
**OUR OPINION** | Prisons like Camp Monterey and programs that help nonviolent offenders stay out of jail and turn their lives around ultimately benefits everyone.

It may seem a bit odd to celebrate the 20th anniversary of a prison, but then again Camp Monterey is no ordinary prison.

It more resembles a military barracks, save for the barbed wire fencing, than it does a traditional big house. Last week the camp turned 20 and the reason to celebrate had more to do with what the facility has achieved than its actual age.

It's a prime example of using an alternative method to not only warehouse prisoners, but rehabilitate them and save the taxpayers money, too. Recidivism of those who graduate from shock incarceration facilities like Camp Monterey is lower than those released from mainstream institutions.

Also, the four shock camps that now operate in New York state have saved taxpayers more than \$1.1 billion. In addition, these non violent prisoners have performed millions of hours of community service performing important jobs at little expense.

Unfortunately, the camps have been the exception rather than the rule when it comes to the state's prison system.

According to a study by the Center for Constitutional Rights, there has been dramatic growth in the number of people held in local jails in New York state in the last decade, with the total capacity of jails in upstate New York and Long Island increasing by 20 percent, to a total of 19,984 beds in 2006.

By the close of 2007, over 30 counties in New York state will have built some 6,000 new jail beds, 2,976 of which

are currently either under construction or are in the planning stages.

That includes expansion at the Steuben County Jail, which is adding 96 new beds at a cost of nearly \$17 million with taxpayers paying about half.

Overall, new prison construction is costing taxpayers about \$1 billion. Oddly, the need for more cells is not from a rising crime rate. In fact, crime has gone down statewide in the last decade.

Rather, the need stems from regulations from the state Commission of Corrections, a trend of sending more low-level offenders to jail, a rising number of people being held who are mentally ill and a slow-moving judicial system.

To counter act the situation and help spare taxpayers a growing expense, more emphasis needs to be placed on alternative forms of incarceration – like shock camps – and alternatives to incarceration programs.

Home monitoring, court drug programs, community service, pre-trial release, intensive supervision and other programs are proven methods that protect the public and save money by keeping nonviolent offenders out of jail or limiting their time behind bars. They also provide treatment and help lower recidivism rates by allowing some offenders to remain productive in society.

With the rising cost of incarceration these days, more effort should be made on the federal, state and local fronts to fund and encourage these programs. In the end, they help offenders turn their lives around and save taxpayers money.

## NATIONAL VIEW | PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

# Farewell Pavarotti

A great voice, a great man, no longer lives among us. Operatic tenor Luciano Pavarotti died Thursday, closing the libretto on a colorful, accomplished musical life.

Dominating the classical music scene for nearly three decades, he was easily among the top sellers of classical recordings ever. He probably brought the music to more people who wouldn't have thought they'd like it than any previous musician ever had.

Some experts consider him the best tenor ever – better than Caruso, Gigli, McCormack, Bjorling, Martinelli; all of them were God-gifted geniuses blessed with physical instruments.

That's probably the first thing to say: To be a Pavarotti, you must have a physical endowment, a voice and a body that resonates to and with that voice, to project and shape a sound that

reaches and moves others by its very nature. It's a thing of awe-striking loveliness when it comes along, which isn't often.

Yet, shame to tell, many of the best voices in history have been owned by people who didn't know it, didn't have the resources to train it, or didn't care. That's the second part: Pavarotti was Pavarotti not just because he happened to have That Voice. He was a fine musician, too, who knew how to use his instrument.

Which brings up the third thing any Pavarotti must be: an entertainer. Almost as familiar to the world as his voice was his bearded, swaggering grin, his hammy gusto in performance, his expectation that he could put his big arms around an audience and shake it till it cried "I love you."

Pavarotti is gone, but in his recordings and videos he has left the world a great gift.

## LETTERS POLICY | THE LEADER

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## ARTIST'S VIEW



## COMMENTARY | JM WRIGHT

# Worrying about being bitten

Awaiting the imminent report of Gen. David Petraeus and further dismayed by recently revealed findings of two independent commissions, most Americans are confused at the scarcity of identifiable sunshine in the clouds that hover so persistently over Iraq.

We're like a man who holds a sullen dog at bay with both hands on the collar. The man is anxious to set loose the beast and be gone, but he fears to do so lest the disturbed animal attack him from behind as he tries to leave.

It is no longer a question of whether a majority of Americans want to be free from our self-imposed burden in Iraq. The questions are when and how.

Fear lingers that, on our withdrawal, the country will immediately ignite in a nationwide civil war. Yet our 4 1/2-year occupation has not prevented the violent sectarian outbreaks between Sunni and Shiite zealots that keep raising the anger level on both sides.

The Aug. 31 *New York Times* featured a story of

how a female Iraqi lawmaker, chosen in the nationwide balloting, began with idealistic hopes of a new day with Sunnis and Shiites (she is the latter) working harmoniously together. Events of the last two years have disillusioned her, driving new wedges between herself and her former neighbors and friends in the Sunni community.

The nonpartisan Government Accountability Office finds that almost all the mutually agreed benchmarks for the surge remain unmet. And Gen. James Jones, formerly U.S. commander in Europe, headed an official assessment of sectarianism in the Iraqi national police force that found religious divisions so rampant that some members of the panel think Iraq should simply dismember the organization and "start over."

Some advisers have been urging President Bush to "replace" Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki with a "more forceful" leader. Reports of this in Iraqi newspapers provoked the highly predictable

retort from al-Maliki himself that he'd been elected by his countrymen to head the Iraqi government and fully intended to do so.

Whatever possessed any presidential adviser to imagine some power by which Bush could summarily overrule Iraq's new electoral system (that we so proudly sponsored), by single-handedly replacing the country's legally chosen leader, betrays the confusion of our position.

And the very suggestion is enough to raise huge doubts among Iraqis about the sincerity of our protestations in support of "home-rule" democracy. That's one trouble with this kind of war. It headlines us as we aren't. We've been dogged by ugly incidents. The worst, perhaps, was the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, portraying us as taunting bullies, harassing and humiliating Iraqi prisoners.

■ **Jim Wright is a former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. Readers may write to him at: P.O. Box 1413 Fort Worth, Texas 76101.**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### I do not support Reed for mayor

**TO THE EDITOR** | I read with interest Ms. Rose Niemczyk's Aug. 31 letter to the editor. In her letter she described how Tom Reed and his developer supporters/clients had no use for historic and cultural resources in Bath. Do we really want a Corning mayor whose supporters and clients have disdain for our Victorian city's valuable historic and cultural resources? I think not.

**James Scouten**  
Corning

### Hunter for local clerk has my vote

**TO THE EDITOR** | I have been fortunate to know Judy Hunter for about 18 years. Our occupations united us professionally and she is respected by the local clerks throughout our county.

Judy has introduced the technology of the 21st century to the county clerk's office. She strives to represent the constituency of Steuben County with courtesy, integrity and the professionalism that is expected of this position. Hard work, dedication to

the position and the sincere desire to serve have been evident throughout her career. Judy takes very seriously her oath of office to uphold the Constitution and to faithfully discharge the duties of county clerk.

I encourage the voters of our county to support Judy in her bid for re-election to the position of Steuben County Clerk and to cast their very important vote on Tuesday, Sept. 18.

**Rose M. Blackwell**  
Corning

### Corning's got that je ne sais quoi

**TO THE EDITOR** | In the summer of 2005, I wrote an editorial about the malaise of Market Street. The street looked bleak then and I challenged the direction being pursued to turn it around.

Having spent the last week helping out with the fabulously successful Ferrari Club of America Annual Meet, I am very encouraged. Clearly, good things are happening and it is very good to see.

For the most part the development I see is high-end, including the new wine/tapas/martini bar and the new glass gallery. Also included are projects

underway – a restaurant at 2 East Market, and a restaurant at the old Wet Goods. Isn't this type of higher-end development tailored to Corning as a destination (tourism)? If so, I say "bravo."

With its natural beauty and cultural base, Corning is significantly poised to serve a new generation of destination seeker ... a couple tuned to appreciate the right combination. Fine dining on Market Street is an essential piece of the pie. The other additional pieces, health oriented (like day spas) nightlife and interesting shopping are as well. Nightlife is the critical need. The loss of our night club on Market Street – Fat Cats – is a big blow.

To all those working so hard – please keep up the good work. The more sophisticated weekend destination couples in the super region including Binghamton, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo, are there. They will come to a fun filled Corning – and come again.

Corning – culture, fine dining, interesting shopping, nightlife and health. Corning – fun. Corning – day and night.

**William M. Boland**  
Scottsdale, Ariz.

## Kuhl in trouble, Massa running strong

The next congressional election is 14 months away but I think if it were held tomorrow, U.S. Rep. Randy Kuhl would be in trouble.

### CITY BEAT



**Jbe Dunning**

Kuhl's stance on the Iraq War and, to a lesser degree, his reaction to war protesters are reasons why I think Democrat Eric Massa would come out on top if the election were Monday.

Massa barely missed beating Kuhl in 2006 as a political novice and relative unknown. Since then he's been out working to make up that 2 percent that he lost by.

But it has been Iraq – the key issue in the 2006 congressional elections that will be again in 2008 – that could be Kuhl's undoing.

Kuhl, a second-term representative, was not in office when the war vote was taken. Former U.S. Rep. Amo Houghton represented our district back then and, if you remember, he voted against it questioning the wisdom of opening a second front in Iraq when we were chasing the fiends behind the 9/11 attacks in Afghanistan.

But Kuhl has been behind the war effort and an advocate of the president's policies more often than not. That has exposed him, and other congressional Republicans, to loads of public scrutiny since most Americans want our troops to come home immediately.

Kuhl has said he feels the same way; that he's not a war monger and wants our men and women home as soon as possible. But then he's balked on taking a true stand like many other Republican congressmen have done.

Kuhl recently wrote in a guest editorial that he's had his doubts about the recent troop surge ordered by President Bush. Indeed, most Americans never liked the idea of sending more troops in to a situation that seems unwinnable.

However, Kuhl has said he'll base his decision on the war on a report from Gen. David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan's Crocker, which is due out Monday.

Well, enough information has already come out about the situation in Iraq to make anything in the report anticlimactic. The Maliki government has failed to reach most of its benchmarks, the civil war is raging on, our British allies are pulling up stakes, Iran is bankrolling the insurgency, our troops are fatigued and nothing less than the dropping of an atomic bomb would bring the war to a quick end.

It's obvious to everyone but Bush and his supporters that it is past time to pull out. And Kuhl's reluctance to say so will cost him votes, possibly enough to cost him his job.

■ **Jbe Dunning is managing editor for The Leader. He can be reached at jdunning@the-leader.com or 936-4651, Ext. 362.**



*Bob Rolfe is the Insider. Read his column Monday and Friday.*