

AVP CALIFORNIA NEWS

Spring 2015



AVP CA GOES BIG ON A SMALL BUDGET

by Present Pat Hardy

After many attempts to recruit locally in the San Joaquin Valley and in Blythe and Susanville, AVP CA succeeded in launching an innovative project to serve prisons in these areas. We're now engaged in hiring local citizens to serve as paid, temporary Outreach Coordinators to develop self-sustaining AVP councils in underserved areas.

As Fresno facilitators were preparing to conduct interviews

hired for three years to work in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

We're searching for two OCs in the desert Coachella valley to serve Chuckawalla Valley State Prison near Blythe, and in the Northern Sacramento valley to serve High Desert State Prison near Susanville.



for one Outreach Coordinator position funded by AVP friends, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) awarded AVP CA grants totaling almost \$230,000 to support three Outreach Coordinators (OCs) for one year. These grants are assigned by prisons and we couldn't have received a better selection from the nine for which we applied.

One of the new OCs, Mike Wells, will recruit volunteers for Corcoran State Prison. He will work with Irene Serrano who was

In both areas, which are 4-6 hours from well-populated areas, AVP programs had started but struggled in the absence of local councils. The application deadline for one position is open until June 29 so please share freely:

<http://avpcalifornia.org/Documents/Outreach%20Coord%20Job%20Opp2%20Desert%205.11.15.pdf>

Milestone Credits

Anyone who has facilitated in a prison has heard inmates ask if they can receive "Milestones" for
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SAVE THE DATE!!



AVP CA Fall Gathering In Beautiful Cambria, October 23-25, 2015



AVP CALIFORNIA 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

by *Awesome Ann Leonard*

Every spring we provide an update to AVP/USA on California's activities over the previous year. We thought you would like to see some of the highlights.

One of our greatest joys in 2014 was to bring AVP to two additional California prisons: Calipatria, a high security facility in the Imperial Valley, and California City Correctional Facility, a new, level 2 facility in the Mojave Desert. In both cases, the introduction was due to new wardens who had witnessed AVP in action in other facilities.

Within one year, the program at Calipatria has expanded from one workshop every three months to two workshops every other month, and the prison is now requesting expansion of the program to an additional yard. The California City program is now holding one monthly workshop, and will increase to two workshops a month in 2015. All of this has been accomplished while maintaining our ongoing programs, so that AVP is now available to inmates in 18 out of California's 35 state prisons. In addition, AVP is now being offered in several juvenile probation facilities as well as in four county jails.

We're particularly gratified that law changes in California are allowing more inmates to gain release from prisons, including many of our experienced and

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Fall Gathering 10th Anniversary Celebration

by *Loving Linda McCue*

Come one! Come all! Our annual AVP California Fall Gathering will be even more exciting and full of learning and good times than usual.

We are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the founding of AVP California and are looking ahead to our next 10 years. Together, we will look at where we started, where we are now and where we can be in the future.

You'll hear stories of the early years of AVP California told by our "stalwarts" and add your stories to the history timeline displayed on the wall. There will be an array of choices for breakout sessions led by experienced facilitators on topics of your choice. We'll have a great time being together with fellow facilitators, sharing, eating, playing, learning and laughing.

We're gathering at beautiful

Camp Ocean Pines, overlooking the ocean in Cambria. We'll share the space with deer, birds, raccoons, mountain lions and sea lions. We'll sleep in bunkhouses and eat in the comfortable dining hall, where delicious, sumptuous meals are adapted to any and all diets.

Please send ideas for breakout sessions soon to Bodacious Bob at sierravp@nccn.net so that we can create sessions to meet your interests and needs.

Bunk at Camp Ocean Pines



**Information on registration will be sent out soon.
See you at Camp Ocean Pines!
View from outside the Gathering Hall:**



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the AVP workshop. Milestones allow inmates to receive credit toward rehabilitation and reduced sentences based on the number of hours in our workshops. Milestones



have only been offered through the academic division of CDCR. With the new Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), a door opened for organizations like ours who offer substantive programs that work.

Normally this requires the "teacher" to test and measure the work of the student. When the DRS spoke to us about this possibility we discouraged it because we felt we could not ask the volunteers to add more requirements to the workshops including more paperwork. We explained that we do not test but do keep close track of participation and progress and know each and every prisoner's progress. They accepted our current practices of evaluating facilitators and workshops while conducting in workshop evaluations with participants after each session. CDCR is announcing this change now although it will not be until Fall of 2015 when CDCR will be able to implement it.

Service Enterprise Institution

AVP has been asked by the CDCR and the California Volunteers located in the Governor's office to go through the testing and interviews to become a Points of Light and AmeriCorps Service Enterprise Institution. If we are identified as one of these, we will be nationally recognized for the structure of our volunteer support, training and involvement.

I believe we are the first all-volunteer group that might be recognized as an SEI. The process has begun with

the completion of the first two levels that included an online questionnaire and in-person orientation. Thirteen prison and community program coordinators attended the orientation and are preparing to be included in the next steps which will include interviews. This process would normally cost us \$5000, but CalVolunteers is funded to make the process cost free in California. Those interested in participating in this process should catch up by participating in the weekly Prison Coordinators' conference call on Thursdays, at 8 AM at AVP/CA.

Conference call#

641 715 3300

Access code 988935#

**The State of California
Inspector General C-ROB
wants to know about AVP/
California**

Pat Hardy has been asked to give a 60-minute presentation to the California Rehabilitation Oversight Board. C-ROB looks at

rehabilitation programming efforts and various health, educational, and employment programs for inmates and parolees operated by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). They meet three to four times per year and hear presentations from divisions within CDCR, as well as from groups whose efforts help inmates and parolees better their lives. Here's a link to their website, so you will have a little more information about the board: www.oig.ca.gov.



WHEW — all this happened in one week... and I have been pedaling fast to keep up. It took years to get to this place, and I thank you all.

The work is not done and funding is still needed for the three-year position in the San Joaquin Valley. If you would like make a contribution, call me at 805 886 9773 or send a check to AVP/CA, P.O. Box 3294, Santa Barbara, CA 93120. Or donate now by clicking below.

Present Pat Hardy

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Highlights

talented inside facilitators. Ad hoc efforts on the part of local councils are assisting many of these returning citizens to find opportunities to serve as AVP facilitators in community workshops, thus increasing the number of community volunteers available and offering community participants an opportunity to gain from the tremendous wisdom and experience these men and women possess.

Our joy at expanding the program to two new prisons is dampened only by the fact that we have more invitations to open new prisons, and new yards at facilities where we are already running programs, than volunteers available from the outside, thus the effort to bring on Outreach Coordinators in search parts of the State. The importance of recruiting new outside volunteers is emphasized by the fact that while our total number of inside facilitators increased from 478 to 543 (14%) in 2014, we actually experienced a decrease in the number of outside facilitators from 172 to 165 (6%), despite offering programs in two additional prisons. We are constantly amazed by the amount of work carried out each year by our AVP volunteers; just think what we could do if there were more of them!

AVP Bay Bridge Council Wins Peace Maker Award

by Stimulating Stephen Matchett

Ten members of the AVP Bay Bridge Council accepted the 2015 Leadership Peacemaker on June 5 at a special luncheon given in the historic City Club in downtown San Francisco.

The award is given annually by the San Francisco Community Boards, a neighborhood mediation training organization. While the focus was San Francisco, the award also recognized AVP's statewide, national and international impact, so all AVP facilitators share in this award.

AVP/CA Steering Committee and BayBridge Council member Stephen Matchett accepted the award. Also present were Ben Glass, coordinator of AVP BayBridge's program at the men's jail in San Bruno, Community Workshops Coordinator Dorothy Kakimoto, former AVP/CA Steering Committee member Mark

Thomas, and BayBridge facilitators Barb Atwell, Lydia



Cohen, Robert Faltisco, Chia Hamilton, Cheryl Martin and Susan Swope.

Also present was Charlie Spiegel, a San Francisco lawyer, community activist, and friend and admirer of AVP, who nominated AVP for the award, and representatives from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the office of State Senator Mark Leno also attended. Photos of the event can be seen at:

<https://goo.gl/photos/GWL3rUtcSBVx4GzFA>

