TOO BIG TO JAIL

It’s a year later and...

Bonuses are bigger than ever

Goldman Sachs CEO: “Doing God’s work!”

Subprime villains get taxpayer cash to...fix mortgages?

Congress’ Wall Street toadies rake it in

Madoff’s cronies live large

PLUS: Joseph E. Stiglitz on fixing the moral deficit
roundups, which Parant describes as "cruel and imperfect." The BLM contends gatherings are necessary to save horses that are dying because their habitats lack food and water, a problem caused by overpopulation and possibly aggravated by climate change. Then again, if less mustang habitat was being parceled off to developers and energy companies, the horses might do just fine.

ROAM would radically alter how the BLM manages wild horses. Shepherd thinks it will foment further conflict. "It increases the population of horses on the range, and the majority of management areas already share that range with livestock." When I tell this to Parant, she shoots back, "There are 33,000 horses and 4 million head of cattle. To me, that doesn't seem fair for sharing the land. The BLM is using gatherings as a management tool when it should be an extraordinary measure." In August, a US District Court agreed. Weighing in on a BLM plan to gather 147 mustangs in Colorado, the court found that the plan "exceeds the scope of authority that Congress delegated to it in the Wild Horse Act," and enjoined the gathering.

In October, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced his intention to overhaul the program by promoting "aggressive use of fertility control," relocating mustangs to new preserves all over the country, even out East, and making some herds "a focal point for publicity and increased ecotourism." The current program "is not sustainable for the animals, the environment, or the taxpayer," Salazar stated. "Water and forage are extremely limited in the West."

Parant thinks the Salazar initiative merely diverts attention from the more comprehensive ROAM bill. "It's very sly. They are just asking Congress for yet more money for what basically amounts to long-term holding and putting an ecotourism spin on it." At press time, neither ROAM nor Salazar's plan had progressed. So the gatherings continue—and adoption remains the best way to save those captured mustangs.

Toward the end of my stay at the Honor Farm, I watch an inmate ride a mustang around an indoor pen. A gentle tug on the reins and the horse canters in a precisely choreographed figure eight. Crofts looks on proudly. "This is the most rewarding part of my job," he says. "These guys have been taken out of society because they don't like following the law. But you bring them here and you can see how that person changes—and change comes through frustration. Every one of these guys we have at the farm has the potential to be your neighbor. And I just hope we make that critical change in his life so that he becomes a law-abiding citizen."

I'm about to leave when another inmate, John Shuck, trots toward me on a gorgeous pinto he trained. Serving 12 to 20 years for aggravated assault and battery, and attempted sexual assault, Shuck, who is 60, has been here since May 2006. He's the designated "lead man," the senior Horse Hill go-between for inmates and prison managers. "These wild horses have taught me trust and patience," he says. "And once you build trust with them, they'll do anything for you."

BY BETH SCHWARTZAPFEL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENJAMIN DRUMMOND

the green mile

Can turning prisons into hot houses of sustainability pay off for everyone?

B y the time Anthony McKinney gets out of prison, he will have missed his 20s entirely. He's 28 now, a compact man with a short mohawk and a tattoo of a chain on his neck. "When I get out, I'll be only 30 years old, and I'll have 13 years of prison. If that was all time wasted, I would have come out a very experienced criminal, with a stronger body and a sharper mind," he says. "That's not what you really want to unleash on the community."

It's a cloudless day in western Washington, sunny and hot, and McKinney and three of his fellow inmates are tending to the apiary at the Cedar Creek Corrections Center, in Littlerock, outside Olympia. Until he was transferred here from a prison in Arizona, McKinney says, he was on the road to exactly that scenario. "I was very angry up until about six months ago," he says. "I've been active in negativity for the past ten and a half years in the system. The bees changed all that."

McKinney is one of about 60 inmates involved in the Sustainable Prisons Project, a collaboration between the state Department of Corrections and The Evergreen State College. The project began here at Cedar Creek, a minimum-security work camp, and has expanded to three other prisons. Inmates compost the facility's food waste. They sort recycling by hand. They grow organic produce. They collect rainwater for the gardens. They raise bees. And they partner with scientists to do ecological research projects; right now, two of them are painstakingly raising endangered Oregon spotted frogs.

"If you've got people in here who are educated and have a profession, you can make it work. If you've got people in here who are staffed up and have a program set in place, then you can make it work. If you've got people who are on the streets who have let people down, then you can tinker with things a little bit, but you've got to be realistic about it. You've got to have a good economic plan. You can't just tinker with things and throw prisoners at it and expect it to work. You can't just say, 'I'm going to do this,' and just expect it to work. You've got to put a real economic plan in place. You've got to think about the community and the community leaders and the community members. You've got to think about all the different facets of the community.
If you can create jobs or activities for offenders that are educational in nature, what you’re doing is employing people and getting them out of their cells,” says the state’s deputy director of prisons, Dan Pacholke. “Any prison system will tell you that idleness is a bad thing. If we don’t have stuff for them to do, then we’re just going to hire more security staff.” Pacholke, 49, is a career DOC employee whose expertise is high-security response and emergency operations: escapes, disturbances, hostages, executions. His demeanor is easygoing, but he’s not the kind of man who spends taxpayers’ money on bleeding-heart projects. “It’s environmental economics,” he says. “We’re expensive places to operate. I could sell the [project] on cost containment alone: solid waste, energy, food costs.”

Cedar Creek’s 38-acre compound is located inside the Capitol State Forest, and as a result, the prison offered inmates green work opportunities long before anyone called them that—tree planting, brush clearing, firefighting. The work pays as poorly as most prison jobs, 25 to 85 cents an hour. But it has its rewards, says inmate Daniel Travatte, who works with McKinney in the apiary. “This is something else for me to do that’s positive activity, and I’m learning something. It’s something I’ll take with me when I leave,” he says.

The air hums as McKinney, wearing a long-sleeved pull-over and garden gloves, gingerly lifts a frame from one of the hives. Travatte has constructed each of these bars from slightly different material—one is plain wood, one is coated in wax, another has a piece of comb attached to it—and he takes careful notes on which materials the bees seem to respond to best. “They’re fascinating,” says Travatte. “It’s fun for me to keep track of different experiments, trying different things, and seeing what happens. It gives us something to talk about besides drugs, criminal activities. I’ve been to quite a few prisons, and I can tell you, when I get bored, I get in trouble.”

Back in 2004, Nalini Nadkarni was looking for people with a lot of time on their hands. A forest ecologist and Evergreen professor, Nadkarni was concerned about poachers, who were harvesting moss from old-growth forests to sell to florists. Nadkarni wanted to see if she could eliminate the demand for poached moss by growing it in a greenhouse. No one had ever tried this before, so she needed people to watch moss grow and gather data on which species could thrive in captivity, and under what conditions. Moss takes a very long time to grow.

Nadkarni, one of the nation’s preeminent experts in rainforest canopies, started asking herself, Who has a lot of downtime? “When you start thinking about it,” she says, “what population in the United States is completely devoid of nature, and doesn’t get to use their minds?” She found her answer at Cedar Creek. By 2005, there were...
8 to 10 inmates babysitting Nakarni’s sons samples and
taking meticulous notes. “The guys would come up to me
and say, ‘Nalini, I’m really helping the old-growth forests,
aren’t I?’” says Nakarni. “That turned out to be incredibly
important to them.”

Nakarni is a spunky 55. A mass of frizzy black hair
domins her delicate frame, and she is partial to sandals with
mismatched socks. The daughter of a Hindu father from
India and a Jewish mother from Brooklyn (who in 1952
married in New York because racist officials in Washington,
DC, where they lived, had turned them away), Nakarni has
an explosive laugh, an infectious enthusiasm, and a note-
book filled with drawings, notes, and to-do lists that she
frequently pulls out of her bag. A tireless science evangelist—in
2001, the Guggenheim Foundation awarded her a fellowship
to talk about her beloved forests to “non-scientists”—she
gives sermons in local churches, synagogues, and Buddhist
temples. Bringing most to prisoners seemed like a natural
extension of her mission.

It was at a dinner for Cedar Creek volunteers that Nakarni
met Pacholke, then the superintendent of Cedar Creek. She
watched as inmates involved with the prison’s various volun-
teer-run programs—church groups, veterans’ groups, Toast-
masters—would stand up with the volunteer person and say,
“I’m really glad Prisoners for Christ is here because they gave
meaning to my life on the inside, and I’m not screwing up so
much anymore, and thank you so much, Reverend, for com-
ing,” Nakarni recalls. She had come with samples of moss
and her own enthusiastic participant—a since-released inmate
named Wayne Hudspeth. “And Wayne got up, and he just
was so fervent about what he was doing—This has changed
my life, and I’m so grateful to Dr. Nakarni for coming.”

And the tone in his voice was exactly like the tone in the
Prisoners for Christ’s voice!” Nakarni recalls with her giant
laugh. “And I realized at that moment that there was something
here that could go beyond the scientific stuff. I had a conver-
sation.

Pacholke realized it too, and that night he and Nakarni
planted the seeds for a scientific lecture series at the prison;

time well served

Programs that help a few of America’s 2 million inmates put their time to good use

BARD PRISON INITIATIVE
New York (and replicated elsewhere)
PROGRAM: After Congress eliminated Pell
Grants for prisoners in 1994, effectively
ending access to higher education in
prison, Bard stepped in to offer inmates a
chance to graduate with degrees “identi-
cal to diplomas we give on campus.”
ANNUAL COST: $1.2 million, about $4,000 per
inmate, all from private sources.
TAKEAWAY: Courses this year include
“Power Part I: From Machiavelli to Marx.”

EAST HILL SINGERS
Kansas City
PROGRAM: Brings together church choir
directors and singers with inmates at the
Lansing state prison. Choir held packed
concerts at area universities until budget
cuts forced the show behind prison walls.
Concerts are now taped—along with
messages from inmates—for play at the
churches.
ANNUAL COST: Part of a five-site state arts-
in-prison program that costs $200,000
altogether.
TAKEAWAY: According to a 2009 study
the program gives inmates “opportunities
to foster transformational change” and
“a sense of group responsibility.”

VETERANS GROUP OF IRONWOOD
Bythe, California (and several other
state prisons)
PROGRAM: Incarcerated veterans collect
recyclables and throw prison pizza parties
to raise dough for charity.
ANNUAL COST: Free to taxpayers. Inmates
pay for pizza parties with their meager
prison wages.
TAKEAWAY: “They do four pizza sales a
year, and we have over 4,000 inmates,”
says Michael Alonzo, the prison’s spokes-
man. “If they make a dollar profit for
each pizza, you see how they can raise
money pretty quick.” The club has
raised $250,000 total; recently $10,000
went to highly specialized wheelchairs
for veterans of Iraq or Afghanistan.
“They’ve kinda taken that personal,” says
Alonzo. “They understand the govern-
ment’s not paying for those chairs.”

PEN PRISON WRITING PROGRAM
National
PROGRAM: Founded by the nonprofit writ-
ers’ group after the 1971 Attica Prison riot,
the program publishes a writing hand-
book, matches inmates with professional
writers as mentors, and sponsors an an-
nual prison writing award.
ANNUAL COST: $49,000, mostly donated by
pen members.
TAKEAWAY: Selections from the program’s writing contest are
featured at a celebrity-studded (John Turturro, Eric Bogosian,
and Mary-Carlisle) gala reading. Winners this year included
“Were Chains to My Father’s Funeral,” by Charles P. Norman:
“After they’d retrieved their nine millimeter, their ankle guns, their Buck knives,
canisters of pepper spray, police batons, and 12-gauge shotgun from the trunk, the
car backed out, and we were on our way.”

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION
New York
PROGRAM: 2 percent of kids under 18 have a
parent in prison. Osborne teaches 5,000
inmates each year parenting and other skills.
ANNUAL COST: $14.2 million, mostly from
government grants.
TAKEAWAY: Program director Tanya Kupat
tells helping kids in a support group in
New York City make cards to send to their
moms upstate. She worried that the “kind-
gerarten arts and crafts supplies” would turn
off teens. “But every kid, even the coolest
of the cool, with not a word of protest, sat
down with glue and crayons and made the
most passionate cards for their mom.” —B.S.
scientists would come in and talk to inmates and staff about topics like organic farming, composting, and water conservation. The lecture series, in turn, set off a chain of environmental projects at Cedar Creek. "They'd bring in a lecturer, we'd talk about it, and the business manager and I would say, 'Hey, let's do that,'" says Pacholke. Because Pacholke was the superintendent, he didn't have to ask anyone's permission, nor did he need extra money—the prison just used what it had to build what it needed. "We could turn around a project so quick!" he says. "In a month they'd come back and we'd be done, and say, 'Hey, look at this! You can spend a million dollars on an in-vessel compost, or you can put in a concrete slab and hand a guy a thermometer and a water temperature gauge, and say, 'Go out there and figure out how to make this work.'"

In 2008, the program went from Nadkami and Pacholke's scrappy and unlikely partnership to a more formal arrangement. The Department of Corrections has provided Evergreen with a $300,000 grant to administer and run the newly christened Sustainable Prisons Project. It's led to savings that Pacholke is happy to rattle off: By conserving water, Cedar Creek avoided a previously planned $1.4 million expansion of its wastewater treatment facility; by recycling and composting, another facility sent two-thirds less waste to landfills this year—garbage costs upward of $100 per ton to haul.

The program that began at Cedar Creek has already expanded to three facilities, including Stafford Creek, a medium-security lockup in Aberdeen, a coastal town about 50 miles west of Olympia. A blanket of gray hangs low over Aberdeen—where the staff calls it "sea fog" because it comes from the nearby Pacific—and even on a July day, the air has a soupy chill. Where Cedar Creek is a "work camp" with minimal fencing and bars, Stafford Creek is definitely a prison: metal detectors, rows and rows of razor wire, buildings like monoliths of concrete. Still, every few hundred feet there's a patch of green or a splash of chaotic color—inmate-tended flower beds and lawns. The men are allowed to check out push mowers whenever they want, and today a solitary inmate is lost in thought as he runs a squeaky mower over grass that is already aggressively, emphatically short. Almost 2,000 men live here, but only a few dozen with the best behavior records are allowed outside the security "hub," where most of the Sustainable Prisons Project activities take place.

At about 1 percent of what it would cost at a commercial greenhouse, inmates nurture seedlings used to restore native habitat on the Fort Lewis Army base, the largest swath of Puget Sound's remaining prairie ecosystem.

There are five greenhouses and more than two acres of organic gardens. The inmates graze as they work, savoring the mellow sweetness of golden raspberries, running a thumbnail down a pea pod to pop out the green orbs. "When you can go to dinner and see your radishes chopped up in the salad, or onions in the potatoes," says Travis Brown, carting a wheelbarrow full of weeds to the compost pile, "you know you did a little something productive." These are luxur-
The green mile
continues from page 61] note dates and types of seed planted, time to germination, and other data. Nadkarni and the inmates trade hypotheses on why some of the plants grow faster than others. She says it's clear they're doing a wonderful job. "The plants are telling me that. It's like the frogs at Cedar Creek," she says. "They did better than any of the other facilities that have these professional wildlife people working on them."

"Why do you think that is?" Erhart asks.

He reaches down and absentmindedly plucks a weed from one of the tubes.

"This is like your link to nature," says Nadkarni.

The men nod. "Plants actually feed off of you," says Smith.

"Absolutely. And we feed off them. It's a circle," says Nadkarni. "And I think the circle you have is really tight, going on in this greenhouse."

"It's the constant care that we give them every day," says Smith. "We get excited when we see them germinating. And the plant feels that, our excitement, so it thrives more."

He thinks for a moment. "As far as the difference between here and maybe somewhere where a professional horticulturist is doing this as part of his job? You know, they do their 'job' and do it for 42 cents an hour. That's not a living. We don't do this for the money, and I think that's what the difference is. We were hired from a pool of, what, 1,800 people that could be doing this? And we're the ones doing it. We do it because we like to do it. If we didn't, I don't think the success rate would be so high."

"This is the crux of the issue that will confront the Sustainable Prison Project going forward. All of the green jobs at Stafford Creek combined employ about 40 people—and the men who pull cardboard boxes out of the waste stream, who rebuild broken bicycles, who train troubled dogs for adoption, are some of the most motivated, best behaved inmates at the prison. They have to, or they wouldn't qualify for these jobs. What about everyone else? And if their interactions with science and nature are as transformative as they seem to be, wouldn't the men who aren't already changed be the ones who need it most? In other words, which comes first—does the work motivate the men to change their lives, or is it only the men whose lives are already changed that sign up?"

Pacholke says that even those inmates who are not involved in the program are affected by it. He recalls the day they served salad in the Cedar Creek dining room, with all the ingredients grown and harvested by inmates. They put signs up so the men would know where the food had come from. "There's an educational component to that, because people start getting curious: 'What do you do out in the garden? It changed the dynamic of the prison,'" Pacholke continues, "it's sometimes hard to tell where the "green" jobs end and the regular jobs begin. The guys in the kitchen preparing the organic food, or scraping waste into the compost bins? They're learning environmentalism, too, albeit on a much smaller scale.

And if the green activities are enough to make a difference in the prison, maybe some guy will ride into the compound on a bike, in shackles and see the stacked white boxes of beehives, and maybe this will put the germ of change in his mind. That is what happened to Anthony McKinney.

In the apiary, the grounds unfurl around us in shades of green and brown. Cucumbers grow in a little garden nearby, and a patch of earth is turned where the men harvested garlic yesterday. McKinney points to the lid of one of the hives, a white rectangle some three feet long and two feet wide. "If this whole board was who we are, about this much of it—" he traces a very small square with his finger—"is the part of us that got us in here."

It's easy to imagine that small square. It's filled with violence, drugs, theft, kidnapping, burglary, and robbery, which are what McKinney is here for. "It's humbling to come out here, slow down, and see: There are other living things, and you're not the center of the universe." The bees, he says, "they're aware of our presence here, but they really don't care. I'm not important to whatever they do."

"I thought this was the world," McKinney says of his little square, laughing softly. "That's all I learned about. But there's so much more to us, and there's so much more growth that we can experience, if not so much given the opportunity, but even just pointed in the right direction. If a door was opened, and said, 'Look. Look what's inside.'"

Avoid Gum Surgery
New Technique Fights Harmful Gum Disease by Vas Gardiakos

If you suffer from periodontitis, now available is a natural home-care breakthrough to improve your gum health and save your teeth.

Briefly, bacteria (plaque) force the gum to detach from the teeth, forming a pocket. Brushing, flossing and irrigating cannot reach the bacteria in the pocket. The pocket deepens and erodes more of the bone that supports the teeth. The gum recedes, the teeth loosen and fall out. Health suffers.

Proven - Simple - Painless
The VitaPick™ is a high quality, pen-size applicator that delivers natural antiseptics such as salt solution and peroxide into the pocket. The VitaPick™ works because it applies powerful antiseptics that kill the destructive bacteria at base of even the deepest pocket.

Kill the harmful bacteria, the disease process stops and the healing begins.

My 160 page easy reading book The Smile Method - How To Avoid Gum Surgery and Dentures covers all aspects of the natural home treatment for periodontitis. It lists all the problems associated with gum surgery, and root planing. It will show you how to use the VitaPick™ to quickly kill the deep hard to reach bacteria. More important, you will be shown a few simple ways to verify that it is effective.

The VitaPick™ and book are only $33.95 plus $6 s&h. To order, call 1-800-533-1821 (VISA, MC) or mail payment to: Albrite Inc., Box 1095, Dept. M-1, C.B., FL 34681.

60 Day Money Back Guarantee
Order today and receive a quality dental mirror FREE. Limited supplies. Call now: 1-800-533-1821
Visit: www.albrite.com