



**FIRST ANNUAL (we hope) NORTHERN CALIFORNIA  
LIFER PICNIC!**

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 19, 2015**

**11:30 AM TO 4 PM +/-**

**NORTH LAGUNA CREEK PARK**

**6400 JACINTO AVE**

**SACRAMENTO, CA 95823**

(near Consumnes River College and Center Parkway, south Sacramento)

Sponsored by Life Support Alliance/California Lifer Newsletter, food and fun for everyone, come connect with old friends, make new contacts and generally enjoy life.

Group photo at 2 PM—BE THERE!

Food and drinks supplied, but you're welcome to contribute to the menu or make a donation to help with the costs. No alcohol or smoking in the park, please RSVP (so we have an accurate count for food) to; [lifesupportalliance@gmail.com](mailto:lifesupportalliance@gmail.com); 916-402-3750 (OK to leave message)

If you need additional information for travel passes, let us know, we're here to help. Friends and family welcome. We can't wait to see as many paroled lifers as possible enjoying their hard-won freedom and new lives. It's more like a family reunion than a company picnic.

***BE THERE OR BE.....LEFT OUT!***



## YES, WE KNOW....

We're late. Very. But it's a proven fact, if you have X number of tasks to do, then you need Y number of people Z hours each, or Y+ people, Z- hours each. And the truth is, we have Y- number of people for Z- hours because we keep coming up with X+ number of tasks to do.

So something has to give. And rather than that something be the sanity of the individual writing *After\*Life*, as well as *Lifer-Line*, and much of *California Lifer Newsletter*, and position papers in support or opposition to legislation, and answering prisoner letters, and, well, you get the drift, we've decided to make *After\*Life* a bi-monthly, along the lines of CLN. And yes, we're still playing catch up, but it will happen.

## HOW LONG IS YOUR TAIL?

*And when can you cut it off?*

How long will you be on parole? Depends on your crime, when it was committed—and of course, your performance on parole. In one of those not uncommon strange quirks of law, those who have been in the longest have the least to serve under DAPO, once released.

If your life crime was committed before January 1, 1974, then your time with DAPO, absent untoward behavior, will be three years, even if your conviction was for murder. If you went down after January 1, 1974, you'll have a 5 year base with a 7 year max. And if your crime was after January 1, 1979, then you have the possibility of life-time DAPO supervision.

The operative word here is 'possibility.' Something like the 'possibility' of parole, the 'possibility' of life-time parole rests on certain things, at least in theory. But, privately, pretty much everyone in DAPO/CDCR/BPH admit the state doesn't have the resources, either human or financial, to continually supervise for the rest of a lifespan. So absent any violations, new crimes or other negative actions, most lifers are looking at somewhere between 3 and 7 years on parole.

Discharge reviews are to be performed about a month before the presumptive discharge date, with reviews and check-offs at 3 levels; the agent, the supervisor and finally the BPH. If the agent recommends retention on supervision he/she must clearly state why this action is recommended, including tying any concerns to a nexus with your crime. That nexus, however, can't simply be your crime.

Recommending retention on supervision based on 'the heinous nature of the life crime' or 'victim concerns,' absent any behavior by you that would inflame those concerns or cause concern by your

agent, should send you scurrying for an appeal form. And if those same suspect reasons come from the pen of the supervisor, your path is the same—appeal.

You should be prepared to make your case much like you prepared for parole—with a complete record of your accomplishments, Goals and Progress reports met or exceeded and pro-social activities on your calendar. However, if you've had a few hiccups along the way, say a dirty test or two or similar issues, don't be surprised if DAPO would like to keep you in their house party a while longer. But unless you're one of those potential lifetime parolees, there is a legal limit, set in statute as to how long you can be retained.

As for those hoping for early discharge from parole, the word is that it's possible, but difficult. No matter how well you're performing on your first year out don't expect either DAPO or BPH to be eager to see the last of you. They still want a bit more reassurance that you've got this reentry business figured out. Our research indicates that those asking for discharge after the first 12 to 18 months will most likely receive a polite but firm No. As with gaining parole, just quietly doing your time probably won't get you an early out.

But after a reasonable passage of time, say 3 or 4 years into a 5 year tail, and with an exemplary record in your file, the possibilities are better. Each early discharge request is personally reviewed and approved, or not, by BPH Executive Director Jennifer Shaffer; not an easy sell, but not a hanging judge, either. Be reasonable in your expectations, superior in your parole performance and articulate in your reasons for requesting early discharge and you might be the lottery winner.

And it never hurts to ask. Requesting consideration for early discharge and being turned down will not decrease your chances of discharge in the natural flow of the process, or even lessen your chances if you ask again. So if you feel you've been a stellar performer on parole, have done enough time on parole to give DAPO reassurance that you've become an upstanding citizen and have good reasons for requesting discharge, go ahead and ask.

The worst that can happen is a negative reply. Of course your agent may complain about the paper work—but tell him/her to look at it as job security.

## **CREATING THE EASY-READ RESUME**

Simple to understand, easy on the eyes and a quick read are the basics, but there are some other easy to follow tips for getting the most from your paper/electronic introduction.

Be sure to clearly provide your contact information, including phone number and email address. If you have a professional website or LinkedIn connection, make sure that information is high up on your resume, and that your connections are easily accessible to prospective employers.

Don't however, include Facebook or Twitter on your resume. And, even if your Facebook page isn't on your resume, you can assume someone will search for you on that media, so clean up your virtual house.

Center the headings of your document so that categories like 'professional development' and 'work experience' are easy to find. Research has shown most employers spend only about 6 seconds glancing through a resume before deciding whether to pursue the candidate or not and their eyes tend to focus on the center of the page.

Choose an easily readable, professional and clean looking font for your printed or on-line documents and use it consistently. Typefaces that appear to be script writing are wearing on the eyes and may detract from the professional appearance of the resume.

Forget student activities, and long-ago first jobs. Unless the things you did then are relevant to the position you're seeking now, its old news that no one but you and your parents care about.

List your accomplishments, not just job duties. Did you improve productivity, streamline a process or find a new solution to a problem? Outline those—it's OK to brag a bit about what you can do for a company, even did for PIA. So long as you can back up the bragging with action.

Most companies do some sort of background check, so it pays to be upfront from the beginning. As difficult as that is for someone on parole, it's even harder to get a job and then lose it because you haven't been forthcoming.

How you handle your years of 'state employment' depends on the people and situations involved, but lying is never a good path. And each time you deal with the issue you become more adept at overcoming that hurdle and getting to the real point—who you are, what you can do and the asset you'll be to the company.



## IT'S HEERRRE—INSTANT TESTING, AT YOUR DOOR

As promised, threatened, prophesied several months ago (see After\*Life Issue 2, August, 2014) instant results drug testing is apparently now pretty much state-wide. Instead of collecting a specimen from parolees required to submit to UA tests, sending that sample off to a laboratory and awaiting results, parole agents can now find out if their clients are clean on the spot.

Through the magic of modern chemistry once the 'sample' hits the 'litmus' the result, positive (whoops) or negative (that's what we're looking for) appears within a few seconds. The disposable specimen container and its magic internal workings test in a pretty clear fashion for a half dozen street drugs no parolee should be using.

Something along the lines of pregnancy tests, two lines on a panel bar indicate the presence of a forbidden substance while one line means you're good to go. If the results show positive for any substance the entire sample is sent to a lab for confirmation.



4. Offer a firm handshake. No, this isn't a chance to show off your muscles, but a firm, confident handshake—whether you're a man or a woman—is the start of a good first impression.
5. Listen—really listen. Don't just hear the words, pay attention to what people are trying to communicate to you. Listen, consider and respond.
6. Relax. You don't have 'felon' printed on your forehead, you won't get written up for stepping on the wrong line and everyone else out here probably has some big insecurities and secrets too. Take your time, watch how things go in this busy world and learn from those around you.

## **WHAT CONDITION(S) ARE YOU IN?**

After being granted parole the next big hurdle for paroling lifers are the conditions of that parole, whether set by the BPH or by their DAPO agent. There are, of course, some pretty standard ones; no contact with victim or family, no alcohol/drugs, no weapons, the 50 mile radius are the most common.

But we're heard of some pretty unusual if not weird restrictions imposed on various individuals, some that not only make no sense but that can be real obstacles in reentry, reunification and just trying to keep on keepin' on. So we're starting to collect these tales of angst and woe—yes, we do collect some bizarre things. But our collection is for a purpose. We'll be discussing any patterns we find with both BPH and DAPO, with an eye toward helping both current and future parolees.

For the record, it is possible to modify or remove conditions, but it ain't easy or fast. CDCR's pace of change is pretty glacial, and DAPO and BPH, are part of CDCR. But it is possible. It's a process we'll review in the next issue of *After\*Life*, but in the intervening time please alert us if you have conditions of parole imposed that are burdensome, difficult to meet, aberrant to the facts of your case or seem to be imposed out of the blue.

We'll need your name and CDCR # (though we have no plans to 'out' you), your agent's name, what area you paroled to, whether the conditions were imposed by DAPO or BPH, why the conditions are troublesome and, of course, the conditions. If you're not sure where the conditions come from, check the decision pages of your transcript and your release papers.

If you have documentation of the conditions, copies are always helpful. And if your agent has imposed 'verbal' conditions, not verified in writing, we'd like to know that too, also whether or not you've tried to get the problem items modified.

Send the info to us, leave us a message or stop by the chat at the picnic—we love a good fable. You can mail it to LSA, PO Box 277, Rancho Cordova, Ca. 95741, email us at [lifesupportalliance@gmail.com](mailto:lifesupportalliance@gmail.com) or give us a call at 916-402-3750.