



*LSA Director Vanessa Nelson-Sloane, with paroled lifers David Sloane and Jeff Stratton at LSA Family Seminar in Hawthorne, CA.*

## **WELCOME HOME!**

Welcome to **After\*Life**. No, you're not dead; in fact, you've just started to come back into life. And as you're no doubt discovering, life in the world as a former lifer has generous helpings of both joys and challenges. Hopefully, we here at Life Support Alliance (LSA) can help you savor those joys and meet those challenges.

**After\*Life** will be a monthly, free, via email newsletter for paroled lifers to alert you to new policies, procedures and peccadillos of the Division of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO), that arm of CDCR that you'll now be dealing with. For some time now LSA has had a good, mutually respectful and helpful working relationship with DAPO. Dan Stone, Director of DAPO, has been inclusive and receptive to our concerns and comments regarding the changing role of parole agents as more and more lifers come home.

As the realignment of CDCR has rolled out, bringing massive changes to the prisons, so realignment has caused a huge shift in DAPO, including a 50% reduction in the number of DAPO agents and

personnel, a change in the clientele those agents supervise, and, most importantly, a culture change in attitudes and practices. And anytime change happens, it's seldom smooth.

Each month we'll try to address some of the more pressing concerns of paroled lifers, fielding your questions, finding answers and passing along the straight facts, as well as new changes, developments and practices in supervision and reentry as they evolve. And you'll find some pointers on dealing with the challenges of your new life.

And we want this to be a two-way, interactive communication. Send us your questions, problems, areas of concern, even your suggestions on the issue we'll discuss. We've found no one is better at helping paroled lifers integrate into their new lives than the paroled lifers who have gone before them, and we have a great pool of those lifers to draw on for suggestions, pointers and tips.

In this, the first issue, we'll tackle what is probably the most angst-producing, frustrating and misunderstood (by both agents and parolees) issue in supervision, travel passes. Like most things CDCR, it's a procedure that is both in transition and subject to interpretation by all the parties involved. And, like all things CDCR, it's a process.

Please pass **After\*Life** along to other parolees you think might benefit from what you'll find here; it's free, and to sign up to get each monthly issue, you have only to send your email to us, here at: [lifesupportalliance@gmail.com](mailto:lifesupportalliance@gmail.com).

### ***TRAVEL PASS PROCESS***

*Part of coming home is reconnecting with friends, family, jobs and life in general. And to do that, you'll need a travel pass. Herewith is the process, to date, on how to go about requesting, following up and hopefully being granted that pass. Deviations from this basic procedure should be resolved (hopefully) via the interview path; and if not, please contact LSA with all the details and issues.*

Lifer parolees should submit travel requests and plans as soon as possible, within reasonable limits. We suggest no less than 30 days prior to departure date. Emergency and job travel is handled in a different manner, but for leisure and what the department terms "pro-social" purposes, submit requests as soon as you are aware of the need.

Submit in person or by email to your agent complete travel plans, with contact information for all locations/individuals where you will be staying. Include:

- Dates of travel requested and reason for the trip (business, family reunion, vacation)
- Method of travel including airline, flight number, departure/arrival time and destination. Same information for bus or train travel. If by car, license plate, make and model of car and to whom it is registered. In some cases it may be wise to include how you will get from home to airport, airport to destination (shuttle, friend pick up, etc.). If you are renting a car, from which agency and in whose name the car is rented.
- Where and with whom you will be staying; give motel location, phone number and in whose name the room is registered. List relatives you will be staying with and provide contact information.

- With whom, if anyone, you will be traveling; family, spouse, alone.
- Where you will be going; major events, such as Disneyland, family reunion, business/organization meeting and where it will be held.
- And of course, your name, CDC # and cell phone number. If you're traveling with your spouse, include their cell phone as well.

LSA has discussed with DAPO administration the need to have passes processed in a timely manner, namely with approval/denial made within 2 weeks of requested departure, to allow for ticket purchase, etc. And while those in supervisory positions agree this is the target, it often doesn't happen that way.

So we suggest follow up—with your agent by phone or email if you haven't had a response within 10 days. If no response is forthcoming or if the pass is denied, you should be informed as to the reason for denial and your next step is to follow the process for appeal. That process begins with a request for interview, CDCR Form 22. This should be available to you from your agent or parole office and should net you a receipt, when you file it, as well as an answer/interview from your agent within 3 working days or from the supervisor within 7 working days.

And if you are told they've never heard of it, it isn't available or just plain NO—well, we have the form and will be happy to send it to you, as well as the brochure DAPO has created to explain the interview/appeal process to you. This form should net you a face-to-face with the Unit Supervisor, where you can plead your case for travel pass. And if this does not provide relief, there's always that old favorite, "602 it!" This must be done within 30 days of the decision, pretty much the same as when 602 are filed by in-custody prisoners.

As to why some travel passes seem to be more readily available for some parolees and in some areas, mark it up to two things: 1) lack of standardization throughout the state and 2) discretion allowed agents. That discretion, however, has its limits. We are hoping for and working with DAPO administration to achieve some standardization for what constitutes a reasonable travel pass request as well as streamlining the timeline for approvals.

Always keep in mind, while DAPO is now interested and working toward helping you with reentry and reintegration into the society you left behind so long ago and adapting to all the changes in the world now, ultimately, whether you are successful in both travel pass requests and reentry depends on you and the choices you make. It goes without saying that those individuals who incur repeated violations or problems while on parole won't be likely to be successful in seeking travel passes.

If you're refused a travel pass without a reasonable explanation or your appeals are ignored, we're here to help. But if you've had violations or problems comporting yourself in compliance with your parole conditions, you don't leave us much to work with. When you send us your issues and problems, please be as specific as possible, including names of who you've spoken to, dates and the outcome of those conversations.

In the next issue we will discuss business and medical travel requests.

## **THE PURPOSE OF GOALS**

*BY DAVID PACK*

*Parolees are to set quarterly goals, in conjunction with their agents. And while the procedure may vary from region to region, there is a purpose and reason for setting and meeting goals.*

Why set goals? Is it worth the time to actually sit down, discover your goals, and then formulate a plan to implement them? Or, is it merely a waste of time? I believe that you will see the waste of time comes from NOT setting goals.

There are a lot of good activities in life that you have no business getting involved in. Imagine that you are a gifted athlete. One day someone very influential comes to you and offers you a \$100,000 scholarship to study law at Harvard University. Most people would jump on that in a heartbeat without even considering whether it was a right fit for them in light of their gifting, passions, and abilities. What this person would soon discover is that they would be miserable because they would be spending all their energies and efforts in an area that they are not passionate about, while neglecting their sweet spot, which maybe is athletics. We are not so different. We often go through life aimlessly committing to people and endeavors that pull us away from where our true priorities lie. Unless we are intentional about discovering and then writing down our goals, we end up spending our time investing in the wrong areas. Setting goals then becomes a filter in which we see life. Decisions are made in light of such goals.

In what areas should you set goals? What do you value most? One area of goal setting may well be spiritual. One of my goals is to grow daily in my relationship with God. This then dictates that I wake up early enough in the morning so I can read my Bible. Family is another crucial area. You must intentionally set time aside to invest in the people you love most. Setting employment goals is valuable. How can you excel where you are? If you're unemployed, what daily steps you can take to put yourself in a position to be hired? How can you give back to the community? Chances are you have a passion for a certain segment of people. Maybe in light of your past, you have a strong desire to help those less fortunate. Without a goal it's too easy to spend your time only focusing on yourself.

Truly successful people in all walks of life set goals. If you want to be successful in your parole and your new life, setting goals will definitely help. Start slowly with just a few goals at a time and build on your success as you master these areas.

So what are you waiting for? Does it sound intimidating? It's really not. Besides, there is help at your disposal. Don't be afraid when you start off to utilize your parole officer. They have a lot of experience in this area. In no time you will become more independent, and your life will begin to take on a newfound meaning.

### ***WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW AND WHO WANTS TO KNOW IT?***

Let us know what areas of parole you'd like to know more about or need help with. Pass along this newsletter to other paroled lifers, have them sign up to get their own copy. You can always reach us by email; [lifesupportalliance@gmail.com](mailto:lifesupportalliance@gmail.com) or PO BOX 277, Rancho Cordova, Ca. 95741.

*After\*Life* will grow with each issue. Life Support Alliance remains the voice and leading supporter of lifers, both in custody and paroled.