

AGREEMENT

Inmates could get more sleep

By Don Thompson
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — Some of California's most dangerous inmates could be getting more sleep under an agreement announced Thursday that requires guards to hold down the noise.

Dozens of prisoners complained that they were being kept awake

around the dock by overnight welfare checks every half hour.

Under the agreement between attorneys representing inmates and the state, guards in Pelican Bay State Prison's notorious security housing unit will conduct the checks half as often between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. to minimize the clanging of metal doors.

Guards are even handing out

earplugs to help inmates rest.

Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation spokesman Jeffrey Callison said the department has asked the manufacturer to look at how the doors operate and propose ways to reduce the noise.

The checks began in August as a way to deter suicides. But attorneys say the resulting sleep deprivation

was causing health problems and psychological stress.

The welfare checks have been used successfully at other state prisons.

But the noise agreement filed with a federal judge in Sacramento says the unique design of the security housing unit is causing the problems. Guards have to enter each pod of cells through a metal

door, then climb up and down metal stairs to make their rounds.

The segregation unit houses about 1,000 gang leaders and those who commit serious crimes behind bars.

It's at the center of a landmark court settlement in September that effectively ends indefinite solitary confinement in California state prisons.

SCIENCE

P.G. students hear what bats have to say

After-school club sets out sound recorders

By Natalie Iacowicz
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PACIFIC GROVE — One day last summer, just before sundown, a troop of biologists knelt around some oversized lunchboxes in a grove of Monterey pines more than 60 feet tall. Inside the boxes lay masses of looping cables and highly sensitive audio recorders, which the young researchers hurried to untangle. They were hunting for bats, but they weren't allowed to stay past dark.

These citizen scientists were in the seventh grade.

The Pacific Grove Middle School students called themselves Team Chiroptera after the scientific order that includes bats. They wore sweatshirts emblazoned with the name.

The kids had enthusiastically embarked on their scientific journey after their teacher, Kelly Terry, asked for volunteers to form a "bat club." They learned how California bats transform environments and help the state's agriculture industry, even as urban sprawl threatens the furry flying animal's way of life.

"Bats have a large impact on our daily lives," said team member Robertson Rice, 13.

Children like Robertson love bats, despite — or perhaps because of — the macabre associations adults heap on the winged oddballs. Bats have flitted into toys, cereal and costumes. They've inspired Batman movies and the Make-A-Wish Foundation's pup-sized Batkid. And these days charisma counts in California's science classrooms, where newly adopted Next Generation Science Standards target hands-on learning.

"A lot of kids are really interested in bats," said Terry. "They're weird little animals that fly through the air."

Dave Johnston, a bat biologist for the Los Gatos environmental consultancy H.T. Harvey and Associates, approached Terry about doing a bat project with students in fall 2014. Terry invited pupils to join an after-school bat team. Eighteen students, in both gifted and special education programs, raised their hands.

The team's enthusiasm surpassed expectations. They met after school to learn about bats



Pacific Grove Middle School student Leo Lauritzen sets up a recorder to detect bat sounds.

from research biologists. They spent lunches in the lab discussing bat habitat. Bats became a family affair: The students persuaded parents and siblings to join nighttime expeditions where they watched bat biologists capture specimens.

Johnston, an adjunct professor at San Jose State University, taught Bat 101.

Bats, the only mammals that can fly, began evolving roughly 60 million years ago after the dinosaurs died off, he explained to the students. The fuzzy animals elongated their digits — the same ancestral bones that evolved to form hands in humans — and a thin membrane connected them to form wings. Today, 25 bat species inhabit California, and 16 species live in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

Johnston always explained the significance of bats in kid-friendly terms. To put this little tidbit into perspective — that a lactating female bat will eat her weight in insects every night — he said that for a 100-pound child to do the same, she would have to eat 400 quarter-pound



The Western red bat has lost 95 percent of its riparian breeding habitat in the Central Valley.

hamburgers every night. "It's mind-blowing," he said.

Bats require such feasts because flying and producing milk burn energy at breakneck speed.

Their huge appetites benefit humans. Bats scarf down insects that would otherwise devastate native plants and crops. In 2011,

FUNDRAISING

Operation Christmas Cheer tops \$60,000

By Herald staff

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Operation Christmas Cheer, the fundraising effort aimed at aiding local families during the holidays, has raised \$64,046 after four weeks.

Matching grants from the Monterey Peninsula Foundation (\$15,000) and the Packard Foundation (\$20,000) have helped the fund along the way.

Operation Christmas Cheer is an effort sponsored by The Herald, The Salvation Army and 1st Capital Bank. It has raised more than \$2 million since it began in 1985.

The money raised by the effort helps families who have come to The Salvation Army for support. None of it goes toward administrative costs or overhead. Contributions are used to pay for utility bills, food, fuel, clothes, shelter and toys for the children. Applications come from Monterey Peninsula and Salinas Valley residents and are screened.

The Herald is profiling several families needing help this year.

A special feature of the Operation Christmas Cheer campaign is that contributors can have a brief personalized holiday message published in the newspaper by using a coupon printed each day in The Herald or by printing it from The Herald's website, www.montereyherald.com.

CHRISTMAS CHEER DONATIONS

ATTRIBUTED GIFTS

WITH MESSAGE

- Retired Merry's Social Club: Merry Christmas from our members, \$550
- Suzanne Francoeur Taunt: Best wishes to all in this holiday season, \$200
- Bill & Kathi Wojtkowski: Happy Holidays and hopes for a better 2016, \$200
- Paul & Bianca Schield: Merry Christmas, \$100
- Leslie Cooley: Peace on Earth, \$100
- Michelle, Jacob, Danielle & Gabe: In memory of "Dadod", \$100
- The Roy's: Hope this makes someone's Christmas merry & bright, \$100
- Kathy & Frank Pinney: Peace on earth...goodwill to all, \$100
- Joan & Christopher Eistob: May you have a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year, \$50
- Pat Ostrom: For Mom & clan, dum spiro spero as we breathe, we hope, \$50
- Ms. Erika Johnson: In loving

FUNDRAISING » PAGE 4

nounced he won't run for would do so if he's asked by Meanwhile, he said, the reached at 831-226-4348.

Bats

FROM PAGE 2

a paper in the journal Science estimated that bats contribute \$3.7 billion per year to U.S. agriculture in pest-fidding services. They also help their fellow mammals by eating disease-carrying mosquitoes and stinging wasps.

But, Johnston told students, the Golden State's urbanization is spending bats' ways of life, boosting a couple of species while threatening the rest.

"Bats occur in every habitat we have," he said. "They each have their own story... I think about it as winners and losers."

The Mexican free-tailed bat is a winner. These bats moved into California in the 18th century when the Spanish built a string of missions along the coast. The animals nested in tiled mission roofs. Today, they still squat in snug, warm nooks of houses. Another puffball of a bat, Yuma myotis, flourishes by feeding on surface insects atop still water created by dams.

But, Johnston said, these two species are the exception: "All the others are losing."

For instance, the Western

red bat — the bat world's redhead — has lost 95 percent of its breeding habitat as Central Valley farms have cleared river brush.

The skittish Townsend's big-eared bat abandons its young in caves after the slightest human disturbance. One study found that the number of Townsend maternal colonies halved from 1991 to 1994. The bat may soon be listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

So Team Chiroptera decided to measure the importance of bat habitat provided by Monterey pines. The students placed audio recorders in 10 pine ranges of varying size, predicting that detectors in more expansive habitats would record more bat sounds, tying bat population size to the number of pines available.

But the students found the opposite: Using software to detect bat calls from their recorders, the students identified 4,300 bat calls and found more calls in smaller groves of pine than bigger ones.

The kids hatched hypotheses to explain their findings: They had placed only one recorder in each pine range. In smaller ranges, the recorder would likely detect any bat residents, but in a large range, bats might live far from the recorder's

BAT FACTS

- Some mother bats use sound and smell to identify their young in large nursery colonies. The mother issues a call, and her baby calls back. The mother follows the sound and sniffs bat pups to identify her specific baby.

- Juvenile bats experiment with food. Once their mothers no longer feed them, the young bats try eating almost anything they can fit in their mouths. This trial and error helps them learn which food they prefer. (One food the young bats tend to sample and reject: banana slugs.)

- Bats can drop their body temperatures to match the temperature outside. This

helps them conserve energy when they're low on food.

- Bats and moths engage in sonic warfare. Bats can sense the echoes of moth wings, but some moths have sensitive ears that pick up approaching bats. When the moths sense a bat nearby, they begin flying erratically to avoid being caught.

- People sometimes block the entrances of bat roosts to get rid of bats. They often inadvertently trap many bats inside (especially babies), killing the bats through starvation. To humanely remove bats, contact a licensed operator with bat experience.

Source: Dave Johnston

remind public they are drone no-fly zones

The Associated Press

OAKLAND — With many drones expected as Christmas gifts, a San Francisco Bay Area park district is reminding people that flying them on park property could ground the pilot with a hefty fine.

The Contra Costa Times reports (<http://bayareaweek.com/1PmEFeV>) Thursday that the East Bay Regional Park District is reminding the public that motorized, remote-controlled aircraft are not only illegal to fly over its parks, but could pose a danger to helicopters and planes, while also disturbing wildlife and

other park visitors. Cindy Margulis, executive director of Golden Gate Audubon Society, says recreational drones can scare birds away from essential activities like feeding, roosting, and nesting.

The Federal Aviation Administration this week began requiring drone owners to register with the agency before flying outdoors. Even registered drones are banned at the regional parks. Citations for violating the drone ordinance cost about \$300.

Information from: Contra Costa Times, <http://www.contracostatimes.com>

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 **Obituaries**
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Wayne C. Padgett
November 7, 1938 - December 10, 2015
Pacific Grove, CA

Beloved husband and father, Wayne C. Padgett passed