

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Thursday, December 18, 2008, 1500 hours

**SUBJECT:**

**Sutter County Inmates “Pay it Forward” with Alternative Sentencing**

**TEXT:**

Between December 19<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> inmates in the Sutter County Sheriff’s Department Outside Work Release Program will be at Sutter Union High School assisting the school with painting, landscaping and general maintenance while the students are on Christmas break.

Correctional Officer Larry Ferguson, Sutter County Work Release Coordinator will be overseeing the participants on a daily basis as they assist Sutter High School maintenance staff complete much needed maintenance. This maintenance is work that could otherwise not be done due to budget constraints.

The Outside Work Release Program is a program where by persons convicted of minor, non-violent misdemeanor offenses can perform public work services in lieu of incarceration. This program has helped many other community organizations such as, Butchies Pool, Lyons Club International and all Sutter area Little Leagues.

Sheriff J. Paul Parker is a great proponent of the program and wishes to expand the program further to provide community services through alternative sentencing. Sheriff Parker said, “We only allow projects for public or non profit organizations in where there are no funds or any prospects for funds to otherwise complete these projects. We don’t want to take painting or landscaping projects away from the private sector. However, sometimes there is just no funding in sight for some of these organizations. This program has three benefits, one, it reduces the inmate overcrowding within the jail, insuring that we keep the more serious offenders incarcerated. Two, rather than just sitting around in the jail cell all day and accomplishing little, it provides the chance for low level offenders to give something positive back to the community. Lastly, it benefits the community by providing a positive partnership between the community and the sheriff’s department through community services.”

-End Text-

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