

## the Transformer 2007

herding goslings:  
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communicating to facilitators



## Communication: Among the Team

Compiled by "take a breath" Toby Laverty, who became a facilitator in 1997 in San Quentin State Prison and, since his release, has been an important part of the North Bay AVP Council and is a member of the AVP-USA Communications Committee.

A request from the AVP-L for input into the subject of team communication elicited some great responses. When I put these thoughts together once again, I was amazed at the simplicity and "magic" that AVP creates.

Righteous Riskiyat, Nigeria, recommends "start from team-building, which is very critical. [The] team must communicate well and understand themselves; experience-sharing could be the starting point and further to talk about capacity."

### PRE-WORKSHOP CLINIC

#### When?

Fran Howard writes: "Our teams always meet for a pre-session 'clinic' where we plan the whole workshop a few days before it is scheduled. This is with the inside and outside facilitators. This gives people time to prepare adequately for their exercises, and it is our opportunity as experienced facilitators to stress the importance of good communication

amongst the team. It is essential that all team members be present the entire time (something that is more easily said than done).”

Bodacious Bob observes that: “in a prison workshop it is common for team members to either not know each other or barely be acquaintances. Some or all of the outside facilitators may be new to the inmates or even to each other as team members, and the need to create an emotionally safe place to work together is considerable.”

When outside facilitators travel a long distance, the pre-workshop clinic may be done only an hour or so before the workshop. This can be accomplished by assuring everyone on the team has an agenda prior to the meeting. In case you are not finished when the prisoner participants arrive, prepare an arrival activity so you can complete your team meeting while they begin interacting, such as the People Treasure Hunt (*see sidebar “Find Someone Who”*).

**Find Someone** (in our group) **Who** fits these categories. Have them write their adjective name on the line next to the category. Try to get as many as you can, but try to use each person's name once.

Has ever owned a pet \_\_\_\_\_

Is left handed \_\_\_\_\_

Is either the oldest or youngest in their family \_\_\_\_\_

Has ever turned a cartwheel \_\_\_\_\_

Is an aunt or uncle \_\_\_\_\_

Likes baseball \_\_\_\_\_

Has traveled to other countries \_\_\_\_\_

Likes to cook \_\_\_\_\_

Has ever played a musical instrument \_\_\_\_\_

Is good at shooting baskets \_\_\_\_\_

Likes anchovies on their pizza \_\_\_\_\_

Speaks more than one language \_\_\_\_\_

Has grandchildren \_\_\_\_\_

Likes Mexican food \_\_\_\_\_

Is younger than 40 \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes snores \_\_\_\_\_

Likes classical music \_\_\_\_\_

Has ever had a broken bone \_\_\_\_\_

Knows how to swim \_\_\_\_\_

Has been in a prison during a lock down \_\_\_\_\_

Has ever been incarcerated \_\_\_\_\_

## How?

Joann Perry advises in the pre-workshop clinic: “We normally use a series of questions as one would lead a gathering, although in popcorn style (right from the T4T manual), that focus on strengths we bring as facilitators and team members. I believe three series of questions are the minimum and four is about right. Other questions (that all team members answer) might include some combination of these:

- strengths and weaknesses we bring as team members and facilitators
- check-ins on what is going on in our lives, what keeps me from being present this weekend
- some facilitation tool I might want to work on this weekend
- an aspect of myself as a facilitator I want to improve is
- if it is a particularly inexperienced team, I normally include a question that

asks people if they have a particular TP step they want to work on that weekend and why

Fran: “Bad communication or bad feelings between team members virtually can destroy any good we are trying to bring. We stress in pre-workshop conferences the team spirit we bring; the way we treat one another speaks volumes and can demonstrate good listening, I-messages, and respect far more than anything else we may do.”

Bodacious Bob continues: “We listen to each other. I ask each person, in turn, to respond in any way they choose to the request: “Tell us about yourself. Start anywhere.” Almost always, something they say will provide a lead to go deeper in a specific direction. “Sounds as though you feel very deeply about that – say more.” If a speaker appears to have run out of material ask, “What do you really care about?” “What is critically important to you?” “How did that (experience) go for you?”

And end up with that speaker: “What do you see as the strengths you bring to the team? In what ways would you like fellow team members to help you in the workshop?”

No interruptions, no comments; just plain, old-fashioned, high-quality listening, with full attention on the speaker. The lead facilitator will have to keep track of each person’s time – of course!

Even if that time is severely limited, we can still share a tiny fragment of our lives (“We have two/three minutes each to...”) and thereby move a little bit away from first impressions, the “baggage” we have brought into the meeting, apprehensions and the like.

And then on to “Who’s going to do what?”, giving less experienced facilitators first choices as to what they want to do, with the more experienced ones filling the slots as needed. This goes vastly more smoothly when we have prepared ourselves by this process I’ve used many times.

Joann adds: “If it is an Advanced and we have time, we sometimes practice consensus ourselves by coming up with a TP tool we want to work on as a team. When it is a T4F, we discuss how the newbies will be looking to us and using our example for their first several workshops and that our team will be the model they use. I’ve seen a very effective team leader talk about the AVP magic and the risk people take as part of the Basic level team-building process.”

“Normally, the vast majority of the time is spent on team-building, and the last 45-60 minutes on the agenda. If it is an inexperienced team, a bit more time

goes toward the agenda so that other team members can help get prepared for their exercises.

“If someone hasn’t worked inside an institution before, we normally check in with them to see if they understand the rules and hopefully get them to talk about their fears or concerns. It is much more satisfying (and I think effective) if this is handled by an inside facilitator.

“When we seem bonded, we normally conclude with expectations I have of my team members (like smiles and pass-offs) and make agreements on how we will operate as a team. (i.e., Will we do feedback between sessions? How we will interrupt if someone seems lost? What times do we need to meet in the morning). When the facilitator of the team-building feels complete, s/he asks if others are complete with the process and then work begins on the agenda.”

“The net effect is that we have created a safer space to work together in and can move on as a team, rather than a collection of people.” Bob

## MAKING CONTACT THROUGHOUT THE WORKSHOP

Joann stresses: “Once the team is built, there is usually decent communication throughout. Feedback is good; but if there isn’t time (except at the end), a thoughtful comment that relates back to what was said during the original team-building process works well (i.e., ‘You did a nice job on the L&L; I remember you said you weren’t comfortable with the silliness and it didn’t show’).”

Bob: “I try not to criticize directly or even hint at it. At the end of the day, and/or the workshop ask:

“What went well for you (today, the workshop, this morning, etc.?)

“What would you do differently the next time around?”

This latter especially opens the ground for suggestions, mentoring, from the lead/more experienced facilitators to point pathways for better communication, more thorough preparation, etc. I avoid as much as possible words like ‘went wrong,’ ‘bad,’ and the like.”

Apprentice Ruth Persky particularly appreciates that “Diana Couch allows a great deal of space for communicating – asking questions, making suggestions, clarifying – just relaxed and free and open [throughout the workshop].”

Anthea Michaelis in Sydney offers: “I like the frequent brief check-in we do in Sydney. We use the phrase ‘What’s on top?’ every time we start any discussion together, before team-building, after each session, beginning breaks, before sessions, etc. Team members briefly share whatever comes off the top of their heads at the time.”

Steve Birdlebough shared his observation: “In three workshops where I have been an apprentice facilitator, I have noticed that the participants really take notice of our clinics. They also seem to appreciate that we openly ask for suggestions from the co-facilitators as we set up exercises. We are showing that communication is not just a two-way street but a process that includes everyone present.”

Fran: “We also try to do ‘check-ins’ with the team initially, periodically, and at the end of the workshop to make sure we hear from everyone and are ‘feeling the pulse’ of both the team and the participants. We try to make a good distribution of the exercises to the team—always alternating with other facilitators between each activity as much as possible. We try to ‘pass it on’ and name the next team member by always noticing who is to follow our presentation.”

Phabulous Phil, a new facilitator, offers insights from his T4F in relation to time: “We had an assignment to complete and a short time to do it in, so we moved from consideration of quality (which takes time) toward getting the job done.... In order to get us all on the same track/pace, it did take some initiative to raise the issue of schedule so we could communicate our concerns/expectations and agree to what amounted to a compromise of going faster than we wanted and taking the time/consideration we needed to take. We communicated about this openly and directly, discussed the issues and agreed on a plan. It was a good exercise and resulted in us feeling well-prepared for what we wanted to do. As it turned out we had not prepared as well as we might have for a couple of the segments of our presentation, but that is the point of the practice – to learn what works and what further effort/planning is needed to do the exercises well and productively.”

Vibrant Val Liveoak (Valeria Viva) reminds us to: review the workshop guidelines, applying them to team communication with one addition (one which I first heard at an AVP National Board meeting and still think is very useful): We will confront problems and conflicts on the team using these guidelines.

I always need the reminder that the guidelines are to be remembered. (In fact I hand them out with the wallet card at most Basics, saying, “The guidelines helped us to establish the community we had here in this workshop. What would it be like if we used them all the time in our everyday relationships?”)

## COMMUNICATION DISCOURAGERS

Joann also offers a few precautions for us to be mindful of so as not to discourage communication:

1. Getting too focused on the agenda
2. One person talking too long
3. Having the inside facilitators on half the room and the outside facilitators on the other side.
4. Too much noise
5. Not being honest with the restrictions of the institutions
6. Interrupting in eagerness to be heard tends to shut quieter people down
7. Obvious and stated intention of ‘fairness’ when doing agendas so that all get to participate at some level according to their comfort or discomfort level
8. Allowing one participant to take over the workshop with the overt or tacit agreement of one of the facilitation team
9. Having two (or more) dominant personalities on a team that aren’t committed to the AVP process
10. Unconscious or unhealed fears (such as racism, authority issues, etc.) can wreak havoc on a team; although once they are openly stated, they can really improve the team and the workshop. AVP can certainly help people work through their “stuff.”

Bob’s additions:

11. Making decisions when the whole team is not present. This can be tricky when time is crashing around us and some team member is out of the room, not back from a break, not in sight to bring [back] to the group, deeply engaged in conversation with a participant and so on.
12. Assuming that a team member is not prepared to handle what he/she is scheduled to take on in the ensuing session. A process that can help handle this is to offer to co-facilitate that exercise with her/him – an offer that is usually accepted by someone who feels shaky and is too embarrassed to say so.
13. Feeling rushed...pushed by the tyranny of the timepiece, a C.O.’s orders, insufficient team-building

Angela Pelzi adds an important and personal response, invoking Transforming Power to team conflict: “One of the ways I find that helps me in communication when I am upset about an interaction that I have had with someone is [that] I go to my patio, close my eyes and meditate by talking to my spiritual guide.... I tell them [him/her?] what I am FEELING, and then let the answer come....”

These ideas are shared with the hopes that they will remind us of the true spirit of what we are doing and give us guides to keep the “loving” spirit going when

it gets a little difficult. The importance of quality team communications can never be over-stated.

*Toby Laverty became a facilitator in 1997 in San Quentin State Prison and, since his release, has been an important part of the North Bay AVP Council and is a member of the AVP-USA Communications Committee.*

## QUALITIES AND SKILLS in Facilitating AVP Workshops

*Submitted by Cynthia MacBain*

**Purpose:** to increase awareness in facilitators of the importance of developing and encouraging growth in both inner qualities and outward skills.

**Time:** 30 minutes...more if you have more than four small groups to make reports.

**Materials:**

Large pieces of newsprint or other paper taped together to make a sheet large enough to draw a “dough boy” figure with plenty of room on the inside and outside; One large newsprint sheet for each group, folded and torn lengthwise into four strips; Pencils, paper and Magic Marker for each small group; Tape

**Process:**

1. Explain that we are going to break into small groups. Each group will have ten minutes: five minutes to brainstorm and record the **inner qualities** an AVP facilitator should have (develop), and five minutes to brainstorm and record the **skills** an AVP facilitator should have (develop).
2. Break participants into groups of 3-5 (no more than 8). Pass out paper, pencils and ask to have one person in each group act as recorder.
3. Ask them to begin brainstorming the inner qualities a facilitator should have (develop).
4. At the end of five minutes, ask the groups to switch to brainstorming skills.
5. At the end of the second five minutes, call time. Ask each group to report what they have written for inner qualities. Take time to have someone print these inside the figure in letters large enough to be read by the participants. If a group repeats a quality that another group has given, circle it. If it is

repeated again, place a check beside the circled quality.

6. Have the groups take turns reporting their lists of skills. Have these printed on the outside of the figure.
7. Pass out four strips of newsprint, a magic marker, and a sheet or card of Transforming Power guides. Ask the group to read the guides and select four that might help in developing either one of the inner qualities or one of the skills posted on the sheet. Someone in each group should print one of the TP guides on each strip.
8. Post the TP guide strips on the wall to the sides of the posted “dough boy” sheet.
9. Have people return to the large groups. Ask people to make observations about what is posted and about the experience itself.

## herding goslings: communicating with facilitators

I was fortunate enough one spring day to be at a Montana Bed-and-Breakfast Inn when a pair of geese was hatching that year’s goslings.

Located in a truck tire on a platform 15 feet above the water, the goslings



hatched one by one and stuck their heads over the huge tire and looked down at pops circling below encouraging them to jump. After the first couple hatched, mom flew down to help her honking spouse. Some of them jumped right over the edge fearlessly, and others took up to an hour of peeking over and being honked at until they also

leapt. Eventually, they all were in the water, and dad started off away from the group while mom attempted to get them all to get in line between them.

This didn’t work very well, and everyone was tired by this time and came ashore, goslings exploring over lake rocks as big as they were, falling over and finally snuggling under mom’s ample breast. Dad was complaining and keeping track of everyone all the time. Later, they all went out to practice lining up. Mom was at the back poking wanderers with her beak; Dad was honking instructions from the front and all but throwing his wings up in frustration at their inability to get in line. The next morning after a good night’s sleep, they all awakened, struggled over



rocks to get in the water, lined up and went across the lake just as if they had always done it.

Unfortunately, facilitators are not as easily put in a row. Getting them trained has its own challenges, but keeping track of them and keeping them involved takes some extra work. The biggest problem, of course, is that everyone wants to facilitate, usually in prison, and few people want to take on the “administrative” tasks. This article is designed to give you a few hints on how you might simply track, challenge, and involve your council facilitators. Unlike geese, “honking” at them doesn’t always produce the commitment we want.

Fortunately, we are dealing with a highly motivated group of adults; people who know what to do and want to do it. The bad news is they have other activities in their lives. So, organizing and communicating with us needs to be easy and accessible.

### **Maintaining a database of facilitators**

An obvious method is keeping a list of who is trained, how far along in their training they are, and what their interests and availabilities are. On a local council basis, this is not particularly difficult because your group is small enough that you can keep track of these things. That said, it is helpful to keep a central tracking of all who have taken a workshop,

including inside the prison, and those who are interested in taking a workshop. There are several database files, including Filemaker, which are simple enough to use and set up so that this information can be shared and passed on to the rest of the group with relative security. Most importantly, this database needs to be readily usable by others who might add the list of those who just took a workshop or those interested in taking a workshop. Ask around for a young person in your life or neighborhood who might like to set something up for you on the web with a secure site.

Keeping information up-to-date. Be prepared that some people will not take to entering their own data. Printing a form to hand out at meetings is another way to keep the information up-to-date. Leads who have the data might find someone on the council who is willing to enter the information or even a supporter who may not want to go into prison; a spouse, good friend or, again, a young person.

Emailing people to enter their information sometimes works.

Calling people on the phone helps, too. Record the information from that call in the database so you can remember what was discussed if you have more than about 20 people to keep track of. The initial setting up of the database

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needs to include a notes box with ample space for recording notes.

Determine what you need to know. In California we figured there were a lot of people who had been trained and who might come back now that there were prisons in which they could facilitate, but we didn't know who they were or how far along they were in their training and apprenticeship. See [www.avpcalifornia.org](http://www.avpcalifornia.org) and go to Workshops to sign in and see the database questions used.

We also wanted a place to enter names of people who had indicated an interest in taking workshops as well as who had taken a Basic or an Advanced and were ready for the next level. What we discovered is that even though someone doesn't take a workshop this time, they are willing to be notified for years until it fits into their life.

On a local level, we usually just talked to facilitators in a meeting but didn't track those interested very well. Now we can use the California database to find our Local Council facilitators as well as to notify interested workshop participants. So, too, might facilitators in other areas of the state fill their workshops or teams by just a quick search.

### **Contacting facilitators via the web**

Now that a database is set up, we can notify facilitators by email (85% have

and use email) of the need for teams in different prisons or communities both by email and by posting the prison schedule on line. Anyone with a short orientation can send out notices, though I tend to be the one who does this. So far we have had no complaints about receiving brief notices from AVP/California, which are sent out no more than weekly at the most.

By having a website, you also have a way for parolee facilitators to find your organization as well as prison administrators who want to know what AVP is about. So far only about 5% seem to use this section, and those tend to be Leads; but it does function as a good referral source for AVP/CA leadership.

### **800 number**

Having a [toll-free or at least number that is not connected to a home address] also makes it easier for parolees and others to find you. AVP/California has theirs listed with a web-based answering service, which answers the calls and forwards the messages to the assigned people via email. The people receiving these messages can be changed, and the messages can be forwarded on to others. The number has no home address, allowing for facilitator privacy.

### **Post Office Box**

Having a Post Office Box makes

it possible for prisoners to contact AVP/California to ask questions and send thank you notes and articles for the newsletter and for anyone to send money.

### Communicating via the web, mail, and phone

It does no good to have contact information if it is not communicated to others. All of these contact points are listed on the back of certificates

received by AVP graduates. Samples can be seen at [www.avpcalifornia.org](http://www.avpcalifornia.org) on the Facilitators Only page. Also, they can be found on the wallet card with Transforming Power Guides on the reverse side. This handy means of contact is handed out, as well, at graduation. During any given month, AVP/CA receives approximately 7 answering machine messages, 20 letters, and 20 independent entries in the database, either by Lead facilitators

⇒ p14

#### *eMAIL MESSAGES THAT CREATE INTEREST*

You are not likely to get a huge immediate response to most email messages. People don't seem to feel it is necessary to respond. Believe me, though, the recipients are responding at some level. Either they are thinking: "Wow, things are really happening," or "I am really needed," or "I wish I could help; maybe next time," or "What pests they are... delete!"

When doing bulk emails to a group, what you don't want to do is irritate them; you want them to read your communication, so:

- ☐ Don't send your group political or "send this to 10 friends for good luck" emails.
- ☐ Cover just one issue: Meeting announcement or facilitation opportunity, not both.
- ☐ Don't make them scroll down; the primary message should fit in the box that appears on the screen.
- ☐ In other words, make it brief. Use bold or CAPs to highlight action items.
- ☐ If more than about 10 people are to receive it, cut and paste their names in the BCC box only, so everyone doesn't receive a huge list of people's emails first and you preserve their privacy.
- ☐ (and, my greatest failing...) Hold it for

overnight or a couple of hours before sending it. You will look at it anew and see errors or even have a different approach.

☐ Don't assume they remember what AVP means if you are sending your email to potential participants; list the full name and a website to find out more.

☐ Include contact information in the body of the email.

☐ Be clear and specific in the subject line and provide information they can search, for example:

***"AVP Facilitators Meeting on Friday at 7 p.m."***

***"Conflict Resolution workshop: sign up now!"***

***"AVP needs you to facilitate in Blythe."***

or potential workshop participants.

### Updates

Keeping people up-to-date both inside and outside the prison can be done in a number of ways: meetings, emails, telephone calls, or a one-page update with statistics.

Meetings are the most popular way for local groups to keep in touch. For example, the Santa Rosa Council has become its own support group, learning about one another at retreats and by taking an annual or biennial Second-Level workshop together.

The Central Coast Council meets a couple of times a year but keeps track of what is happening in the prison by circulating, via email, the Overall Evaluation forms from each workshop. Rules change, apprentices gain experience, and this information needs to be shared for everyone to be prepared for their scheduled workshop.

It is easy, however, to let meetings slide and to lose touch, so keeping people on board can be done with a quickly compiled update of things that have happened during the past quarter. Consider including a story, statistics of how many have been trained, an exercise hint, who is volunteering, and general news of AVP progress.

Local councils can record notes from meetings in list form to help keep people in touch by mail or email. (See

sidebar “Email messages that create interest.”)

As a PR piece and to keep statewide volunteers both inside and outside in touch with what is going on elsewhere, AVP/CA uses a one-page, two-sided, very simple Update that can be circulated inside the prison and with CDC administration. The administration has been emailing it to all the wardens. Writing it becomes easy when you collect ideas throughout the quarter and choose a theme. See AVP/CA Updates on [avpcalifornia.org](http://avpcalifornia.org) website homepage. Don’t forget the stories!!

### Keeping in touch with inside facilitators

Beyond the Updates listed above, locating AVP once a prisoner is released or helping families and friends of a prisoner become involved with AVP can be done. By listing the Post Office Box, website and 800 number on the back of their certificates, you provide a way to find your local or regional council. Handing out Transforming Power cards at graduation with all this information included is another way.

In an AVP workshop, an important element is communication; but all too often we forget that volunteers also need to be kept up-to-date on what is happening. In order for them to feel

*(See “herding goslings” p19)*

## *Falling In Love at the National Conference*

*The national conference in Parrish, Florida was a peak experience for folks from New Jerusalem of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We run workshops monthly for participants in our drug and alcohol rehab program, most of whom are ex-offenders, and for people sent by the Philadelphia probation department. New facilitators typically get trained and move on. Some of us who have stayed, made the journey to Florida. There were eight of us altogether.*

*For most of us, traveling out of state is a rare treat. Thanks to the generous support at local and national AVP levels, we were able to rent a van and make the trip down in just over 24 hours of continuous driving. The landscape changed dramatically during nighttime hours, and as we crossed the Florida state line, the dawn revealed unfamiliar palms, southern oaks, and Spanish moss, and finally, beautiful expanses of the Gulf of Mexico.*

*Just as beautiful were the smiling faces of our AVP/USA hosts at Day Spring. We were privileged to be among dedicated AVP facilitators from all over the States, and around the world, so many we want to remember...Booming Bob... Earthmother Ellen. Love was palpable everywhere...filling us far beyond our expectations.*

*Free for the taking were Light and Livelies, like "Here I Sit" and the "Beanie Baby Parachute Toss". There were the Anger Iceberg, Pyramid Community Builder, and new Trust exercises. We learned about the proposed national peace department, transformational psychology, and AVP-Colombia.*

*It is a tradition in our recovery culture to "give back," knowing that helping others helps us to get better. It was our pleasure to give back... in deep conversations, on stage singing, participating in discussions, modeling T-shirts (your purchases fund our next trip to national conference), and leading a breakout session on "Sharing New Exercises." We will be posting our exercises called "Slick Stuff: Passive Aggression," and "Reframing For the Big Picture" on the AVP/USA website. Two of us celebrated birthdays while at the conference. How fine it was to be clean and sober, and in the company of such great people who are doing such great good. We remain in love with All that brought us to AVP, to AVP/USA, and to our true selves. Thank you, All....*

## PATTERN BALL as a communication review . . .

Sometimes it is possible to make even light and livelies bring a little lesson to the workshop. Long-time AVP Facilitator John Shuford of Conflict Resolution Services brought an addition to the Light and Lively Pattern Ball (page F-14 of the AVP Basic Manual). He first introduced a way of enlightening participants when he shared with us his mini-workshop agenda, which he does when introducing his Staff Training program to a large group. It works well in a workshop as well.

**How:** Introduce and complete only the basic Pattern Ball L&L. Do not reverse it.

**Follow-up debrief** of 5-10 minutes can take a couple of directions, depending on your audience.

**A lead-in to communication thoughts** in a Basic workshop, John also uses it as a metaphor for job success when dealing with staff.

**To tap this as a communication example, ask:**

- *What can we learn about communication from this exercise?* You are likely to receive a variety of responses. Most participants readily “get it” and come up with amazing insights.
- *Add your own based on your observations.*

To use as a metaphor for job success, ask: What was necessary to be successful in this exercise?

**Responses you are looking for:**

- Pay attention to a few people
- Listen and receive information
- Know where, when, and how to receive information

**Final statement:**

- End by saying, *“I have a bit of information I am going to communicate”* and then toss the ball very hard to someone in the audience so the receiver can’t get it.
- Ask: *“Is this good communication?”*...Why? Good communication includes good information delivered at the right time and place and in the right setting, with less tension. ☞



## STORIES FROM THE INSIDE:

### Communicating AVP on the Yard

**GENEROUS GEORGE** was talking to newly-trained facilitator Jumping Jim about how he handles his friends on the yard regarding AVP. Jim didn't feel he could be on a team without jeopardizing his relationship with his homeys.

George explained, "I'm not going to lie; I still have gang ties. But when the brothers ask me about this workshop, I tell them this is for me as a man."

-Centinela State Prison. California

**MANAGEABLE MITCHELL**, after over 30 years with the Florida DOC on a 25-to-life sentence, and a release date in 2092, says, "My life was totally transformed when I reached the level of Advanced Alternatives to Violence Project." Working with Eduardo Diaz and Dawn Addy of AVP-Miami, Mitchell's contributions were recently recognized by the Florida Parole Commission by giving a release date in 2014 along with a recommendation to the FDOC for placement in the Work Release Program.

Mitchell is currently participating in the Lifers Program, a transition preparation and life skills program, and has a great support system setup on the outside. His advice? ***"If we stick with the program it shall pay off."***

-Everglades Correctional Institution. Florida

**ALVARO, AVP Inside Coordinator**, representing an inmate facilitator group at Green Haven CF in New York, writes "to reach out to you, our AVP family." For all these years, they had been unaware of the Transformer, and are now eagerly anticipating sharing their stories with us and reading the news and stories from across the country and around the world.

-Green Haven Correctional Facility. New York

### ***Thank You to those dedicated to AVP/USA***

AVP USA is powered by volunteers. Some of these volunteers have put in untold hours for years at a time in positions for which most organizations pay handsomely. We are fortunate to enjoy their expertise and their steady commitment to keeping AVP USA operational. Now there are many more people who deserve awards in AVP, but at the 2007 Annual Conference five dedicated people were honored for their ongoing service: Webmaster Rick Krouskop, Moderator of the AVP-L Peter Hoover, Distribution Center Manager Alan Taplow, Treasurers Tom Truitt and Joann Perry. We honor these valuable workers.

# DISTRIBUTION SERVICE LOCATION HAS CHANGED • PLEASE MAKE NOTE



The Vermont location of the AVP/USA Distribution Service has ceased its operations. Alan Taplow trucked all manuals and other Distribution Service inventories to St. Paul, Minnesota, where operations began during the week of June 25th. Your new Distribution Service volunteers are Terry Kayser and Joann Perry.

Alan Taplow spent a lot of time in Minnesota assisting in getting the new Distribution Service location up and running, and **effective immediately, all orders should be sent to them at:**

**AVP Distribution Service, 1050 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104  
888-287-8720 • [manuals@avpusa.org](mailto:manuals@avpusa.org)**

*"I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your working with me during the past 8 years. I know Terry and Joann will be working hard to meet your needs for AVP publications and I know you will be pleased with the level of service they will be providing from our AVP/USA National Office." - Alan*

# Bob Hillegass

1924 - 2007

of Greenfield, New Hampshire, contributed to our awareness of earth care sustainable living, suggesting in his personal response, “Sustainable Development As a Quaker Testimony?,” that **sustainability requires “attention to the intersection of technology and Quaker testimonies.”** In his view, *“this quest would involve nothing less than a profound transformation in our values: personal, economic, and political.”*

Soon  
soon we shall know  
if we have learned to accept that the stars  
do not go out when we die.

Abba Kovner

Chuck Oropallo remembered: “It is with great sadness that I pass this along from Ginny Hillegass for those who knew [him] ... Bob was one of those directly responsible for helping to launch AVP in New Hampshire.

“On a personal note, Bob was one of the few people back in 1992 who was able to interest me in AVP. He and several others became a source of inspiration to me and helped me to initially form - and over time reaffirm - the notion that nonviolent conflict resolution was an attainable goal in all circumstances. **Probably more than he ever knew, Bob helped to reshape my life** - never asking for anything in return - as he did so selflessly with too many individuals to count.

Bob walked the walk toward making the world a better place. He will be missed very much.”

In a letter to Chuck, Ginny Hillegass shared, “Bob died a little before 5:00 this A.M. We have had a quiet, and a good 6 months as Bob has had many more good days than bad ones... He had just about no pain at all ever and died at peace here at home last night.”



## **herding goslings from page 17**

they are part of the big picture and to stay enthusiastic and involved, we as a collective need to find ways to keep them informed.

Pat Hardy started facilitating workshops in 1991, presently serves as President of the AVP/California Steering Committee and on the AVP/USA Communications Committee.

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