



Mission Statement

Survivors of Torture, International:

- Facilitates the healing of torture survivors and their families;
- Educates professionals and the public about torture and its consequences;
- Advocates for the abolition of torture.

June 26: Rehabilitation Centers from Around the World Denounce Torture

June 26 is the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, a consortium of 139 torture rehabilitation centers worldwide, has selected "Help Us Erase Torture" as the theme of the June 26, 2008, global campaign. The day reminds people that torture is a profound and horrific human rights abuse.

This year, **SURVIVORS'** board and staff are focusing on educating policymakers about torture and its effects. **SURVIVORS** is joining with member organizations of the California Consortium of Torture Treatment Centers for an advocacy day in Sacramento. Additionally, some board members and community volunteers will be meeting with legislators in San Diego.

The UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment states: "No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other

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Word from the Chair

Jeanette Barrack, Board Chair

This newsletter issue includes several articles about the detention of asylum seekers and the services we provide for them. Despite movies like *The Visitor* and in-depth reporting by news outlets such as *The San Diego Union-Tribune* and *The Washington Post*, detention is an issue that is often hidden from the public eye.

Asylum seekers fleeing torture come to America to find safety and protection. But many are jailed upon arrival, for months or even years.

For torture survivors, the isolation of being detained exacerbates serious medical and psychological conditions. Except for care provided by **SURVIVORS**, detained torture survivors have no other way to get the

asylum support that frequently makes the difference between being allowed to live in safety in the United States and being returned to countries where they will often be subjected to torture again, or be killed.

We want to be able to provide care to all the torture survivors who need it, but we have been receiving an increasing number of referrals from immigration attorneys and other professionals on behalf of detained torture survivors. Right now **SURVIVORS** has approximately one dozen pending referrals.

Meanwhile, the Corrections Corporation of America has applied to build a new detention facility in Otay

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Program Spotlight

Serving Survivors of Torture in Detention

*In March, Dr. Margaret Higgins became the clinical director at **SURVIVORS**. Here, she writes about one of her experiences serving an asylum seeker in detention.*

Driving up a long curving road, the last leg of my 35-mile trek from San Diego to a remote area of Otay Mesa, I see the tall prison gates. As I pull into the parking lot at the Corrections Corporation of America detention facility (CCA), where I will meet with a detained asylum seeker, I hear gunshots. Next door to the CCA detention facility is a firearms training facility, adding audio ambiance to the stark setting. I can only imagine how retraumatizing the sound of gunshots



After arduous journeys, torture survivors sometimes spend months or years awaiting asylum in U.S. detention.

could be to the individual I am coming to see.

I walk through the double iron gates, after declaring to a voice at the

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*Survivors of Torture,
International's*
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**Board of Directors Forms
Emeritus Society**

Over the past decade, **SURVIVORS** has had many former board members who have continued to exhibit exceptional commitment and service to the organization. To recognize these individuals, the board of directors created an Emeritus Society. The Emeritus Society currently consists of **SURVIVORS'** co-founder the Reverend George Falk; Dee Aker, Ph.D.; Cheri Attix, Esq.; Elizabeth Michel, M.D.; and Darryl Solberg, Esq. ■

**Raise Money for SURVIVORS at
No Cost to You**

When you use your Ralphs card, a percentage of your purchase can be donated to **SURVIVORS**. To enroll go to www.ralphs.com and click on "Community Contribution." Select "Participant" and enter #84761. ■

Director's Reflections

**SURVIVORS Celebrates 11th Anniversary at the
Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice**

Kathi Anderson, Executive Director

Carlos Mauricio made the journey from El Salvador 15 years ago. He fled torture in search of a new, safe life in America.

"There, I was a professor in the university. And I came here and I was nothing. I had to begin again and rebuild my life."

I was excited to hear Carlos speak at our February 24 event, the Celebration of Hope & Healing. I was equally excited to see so many of our dedicated donors and volunteers support **SURVIVORS** by coming to the event at the Institute for Peace & Justice.

The celebration also featured five young adults from the Owl & Panther expressive arts group. These articulate children and teens came all the way from Tucson, Arizona, to read their poetry to the audience. The heartfelt poems reflected their experiences as refugees, or as the children of refugees, from places such as Uganda, Mali, and El Salvador. Through poetry, they are able to share their



Featured Speaker Carlos Mauricio

feelings, acquire public speaking skills, and build confidence.

Also at the event, Cheri Attix received the George Falk Human Rights Champion Award. Cheri is an attorney and former **SURVIVORS** board member who has represented more than 200 asylum applicants and has shown extraordinary dedication to promoting human rights.

The work of **SURVIVORS** is sometimes seen as scary or depressing. While we know how bad the health and mental health effects of torture can be, we also know that people have amazing resiliency, strength, and courage. Immigration attorneys like Cheri, our staff, and other professionals in our network witness how clients cope constructively with adversity, just as Carlos and these young people have done.

Your continued support helps survivors of torture receive the services they need to heal. Thank you for believing in our mission. ■



Kathi Anderson thanks Luis Monteagudo, Jr. as he presents a proclamation from the Office of Supervisor Greg Cox

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Mesa to hold nearly 3,000 more detainees. As more people are detained, and for increasing periods of time, it's important that we continue to build our capacity to serve this vulnerable population.

SURVIVORS assists torture survivors with their applications for asylum by providing physical and psychological evaluations to document

the effects of torture — at no cost to the client.

Thank you to our network of psychologists, physicians, and interpreters who provide services to asylum seekers.

I also want to thank the donors who support this life-changing work. Your gifts save lives. Please send a generous contribution today. ■

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other end of a speaker that I have no cell phones, lighters, weapons or illegal substances. In the waiting room, when my name is finally called, I pass through security, climb two flights of stairs, and walk through a series of locked doors and long corridors. I am buzzed through three more locked doors and enter a small room. A prison guard is posted outside the room.

Seated across a large cement table from me, wearing a standard prison jumpsuit, is a person who has traveled many more miles and experienced much more harrowing events than I have.

She is a survivor of torture, who has fled persecution in her homeland to seek safety and asylum in the United States. For now, she faces more walls, more officials in uniforms, more fear and uncertainty about her future and the well-being of her family back home. No one can tell her how long she will be detained, or whether she will be granted

asylum or sent back to the country where she was tortured. Yet towards me, she is gracious and cooperative. Her attorney told her a therapist would be coming to ask her some questions and that it would be imperative to her legal case.

During the next few hours I will listen to her story and assess her psychological state. This may be her first time telling another individual her story. She would much rather never mention it or think about it ever again. Yet she answers all my questions, sometimes through tears, sometimes rather stoically.

Emotional numbness is commonly seen among survivors of intense trauma as a protective mechanism. At the end of the evaluation, she smiles and thanks me. We have often heard from torture survivors that sharing their stories in safety has a therapeutic and healing effect.

This is the kind of work that drew me to **SURVIVORS**, where I served as a contracted network psychotherapist/evaluator prior to becoming the clinical director. It wasn't the stories of the horrors that took place that held me captivated, but these remarkable individuals and their awe-inspiring capacity for resiliency and healing.

At **SURVIVORS**, we support these individuals through the lengthy and tumultuous asylum process in several ways. This support begins with handwritten letters that not only offer hope and encouragement, but also establish a connection so detainees will know about **SURVIVORS** after release.

After a clinician from our network visits the client, he or she will write a report, documenting the psychological effects of the torture. Physical evidence of the torture, when required, is documented in a medical affidavit,

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Director and Actor of *The Visitor* Share Views on Asylum Detention

This Spring, a film called *The Visitor* opened at movie theatres across the country. The film was written and directed by Tom McCarthy and stars Richard Jenkins ("Six Feet Under") as Walter Vale, a college professor. Walter befriends a Syrian man named Tarek and his Senegalese girlfriend Zainab. The film focuses on the relationships these characters develop, but it also delves into complex issues involved with immigration and detention.

In May, **SURVIVORS** interviewed McCarthy and Jenkins to learn more about their experiences with the film. When writing the script, McCarthy spent more than a year researching and visiting detention facilities. To hear all perspectives, he met with lawyers, activists, homeland security personnel, and detainees.

"I came to realize not many Americans have any idea what's going on in [detention facilities], so we wanted to provide it in the most human way so that audiences could accept it," McCarthy said. "Not many people realize it's happening in different cities and how tragic it is on a human level."

In preparation for the role, Jenkins

and his co-star Haaz Sleiman visited a detention facility along with McCarthy.

"We visited a detention facility because Tom thought it was important for me and Haaz to know it looked just like that," Jenkins said. "There was so much chaos and confusion."

Jenkins also commented on the quiet nature of Zainab, the young woman from Senegal. Her character displays feelings of fear and insecurity that asylum seekers commonly have when arriving in the United States.

"It's not easy to open up to people because you don't know who you're opening up to," he said.

Jenkins said he doesn't see himself as a Tim Robbins or Richard Gere type of actor/activist, but that he sees the importance of using movies to inform audiences about complex social issues.

"That's the importance of art. It makes

things human," he said. "It has to do with putting a face on something."

McCarthy said that he is hopeful there will be policy changes when enough people learn about the issue.

"Detention is never going to go away, but we can know what is being done in our name and how can we do it better. The public is just catching up, and I have faith in the American people that when people do catch up, there will be change."

Learn more about *The Visitor* through the site www.takepart.com ■



(Left to right.) Richard Jenkins and Haaz Sleiman star in *Overture Films' The Visitor* © 2008 Visitor Holdings LLC. All Rights Reserved. Photo Credit: JoJo Whildon

Love and Forgive: Change Everything

A small group from SURVIVORS' community participated in the Fetzer/KPBS Forgiveness Conversations as a part of the Campaign for Love and Forgiveness. Four conversations don't sound like a way to change everything, but they proved a good start for those who committed themselves to these deep discussions.

The conversations included four components:

- The nature of forgiveness
- Why to forgive?
- The journey of forgiveness
- Are some things unforgivable?

With helpful participant materials and the KPBS film *The Power of*

Forgiveness, participants were able to consider how forgiveness, of others and of themselves, could improve their well-being. Several participants reported a change in their thoughts and behaviors due to the conversations.

"I unexpectedly find myself considering this topic during the week," shared one participant. "Never before has this topic seemed so alive and viable in my life."

The last conversation topic was a difficult one, especially given the awareness of this community to the atrocities, losses, and human-induced trauma experienced by so many in San

Diego. As explained in the participant handbook, this campaign certainly emphasized that forgiveness cannot stand apart from justice and should never trivialize, condone, or absolve the wrongdoing. Whether it can help heal the pain, anger, hatred, and destruction left in its wake is, however, an important question to ponder.

The campaign will continue into its third and final year of conversations beginning July 2008. Please go online to www.loveandforgive.org and www.kpbs.org for news, activities, and engaging essays. ■



"Never before has this topic seemed so alive and viable in my life."

SURVIVORS Launches a Youth Music Group

In March 2008, SURVIVORS and the local nonprofit organization, Resounding Joy, launched the Youth Music Group to serve SURVIVORS' transition-aged youth (ages 14-25) community. The group helps young adults experience the power of music, express their creativity, relieve stress, and build friendships. Resounding Joy aims to promote emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual well-being through supportive music.

Attendees participated in four types of activities: active music making, relaxing to music, songwriting/lyric analysis, and creative arts. SURVIVORS' clients report several benefits including relieving stress, anxiety, and frustration; having fun; and enjoying drumming sessions as a way to release emotional pain.

The Youth Music Group is cofacilitated by Cristina Grisham, SURVIVORS' counseling intern, and Tiffany Wyndham, M.A., MT-BC of Resounding Joy. They are assisted by two music therapy interns, Noriko Ujiie and Summer Mencher, who contribute to session planning and music making. For more information about this group, please contact Cristina Grisham at cgrish@gmail.com. ■

SURVIVORS Has Job Opportunities

Psychiatrist

SURVIVORS is currently recruiting for a licensed psychiatrist to provide paid assessment and medication management services for our clients. This is an independent contractor position and requires approximately 10 hours per month at SURVIVORS' office. Candidates must be competent in working with diverse cultural populations. Please send your curriculum vitae and cover letter to Clinical Director Margaret Higgins, Psy.D. by e-mail to mhiggins@notorture.org or by fax to (619) 294-9405.

Clinicians

SURVIVORS is seeking clinicians to join its network of contract psychotherapists/evaluators, to provide psychological services including psychological evaluations and psychotherapy for torture survivors, many of whom are currently detained. This is a unique opportunity to utilize your clinical skills with a multinational population and for a humanitarian cause.

Network clinicians must be licensed in California and have experience in assessing and treating trauma. Training is available and modest reimbursement is provided on a case basis for evaluations and on an hourly basis for psychotherapy. Please contact Clinical Director Margaret Lee Higgins, Psy.D. at (619) 278-2403 or mhiggins@notorture.org.

Development Manager

SURVIVORS has an opening for a development manager to research, plan, and supervise fundraising activities. Candidates should have a bachelor's degree, excellent research and communications skills, and experience in fund development.

The complete job description and requirements will be posted on SURVIVORS' web site at www.notorture.org. Please submit your resume and cover letter to Public Affairs Manager Maren Dougherty by e-mail to mdougherty@notorture.org or by fax to (619) 294-9405. ■

Staff and Board Updates

Dr. Margaret Higgins Joins SURVIVORS

SURVIVORS welcomes Margaret Lee Higgins, Psy. D., as its new clinical director. Margaret's relationship with SURVIVORS started a year ago as a licensed clinical psychologist who was one of our independent network contractors while in private practice.

Prior to her work in private practice, Margaret worked at a local community based organization, the Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC) as the program supervisor of its adult outpatient mental health clinic. She has a B.A. in International Relations from the University of Pennsylvania, an M.A. in psychology and a Psy.D. (Doctor of Psychology) in Clinical Psychology from Alliant International University.

Her professional background also includes



Dr. Margaret Higgins

employment in the public relations field for companies such as Hewlett-Packard and KPMG Peat Marwick. She served in the public policy arena as a field representative for a California state senator.

Margaret is a first generation Chinese American and is fluent in Cantonese. She credits her experiences growing up as an Asian American female in New York City during the 1960s and 1970s for instilling in her a passion for human rights.

"This experience, as well as coming from an immigrant family, has given me firsthand experience with discrimination, power/privilege disparities, and other issues of social justice. It also instilled an awareness of and interest in cultural diversity and human rights issues." ■

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

32 new clients were served
January 1, 2008 through April 30, 2008

Geographic Origins	Ages
Middle East3	0 - 20 2
Africa.....25	21 - 30....15
Latin America...4	31 - 40....12
Asia.....0	41 - 50....3
Eastern Europe..0	51 - 60.... 0
	61 +.....0

Gender

Males.....24 Females.....8

California's Torture Treatment Leaders Meet in San Diego



On March 5-6, 2008, SURVIVORS hosted representatives of the California Consortium of Torture Treatment Centers. The leaders

came together in San Diego to plan joint advocacy and communication activities for the year.

Participants included leaders from Survivors International, San Francisco; Asian Americans for Community Involvement, San Jose; Program for Torture Victims, Los Angeles; Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles; Institute for Redress and Recovery, Santa Clara; and SURVIVORS. The California Endowment funded this meeting.

As in 2007, the consortium agreed to carry out joint advocacy activities on June 26, the United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims, at legislative offices in Sacramento.

Participants recognized the critical need to use their collective resources to improve public understanding of the numbers of torture survivors—now and anticipated—in their communities and to address the urgent issues this segment of the population faces. ■

Board of Directors Welcomes Ann Durham

SURVIVORS' board of directors is excited to welcome Ann Durham. Ann has had a long history with SURVIVORS, and we are pleased to see her become a board member.

Ann first learned of SURVIVORS in 1999 when she met Kathi Anderson, executive director. Ann has contributed to SURVIVORS' work in many ways from volunteering at mailing parties to educating the Office of Congressman Duncan Hunter about torture survivors.

Ann is the director of the Regional Health Occupations Resource Center at Grossmont College. As a registered nurse and family nurse practitioner, Ann understands the physical needs that many of our clients have, and she is aware of the sensitivity needed in treating their needs. Adding to her experience in healthcare, Ann obtained her law degree from Thomas Jefferson Law School. As an attorney, Ann is aware of the often overwhelming process of asylum that many of SURVIVORS' clients face.

"I hope to help the organization grow to offer more services as needed, so that all needs are met, and so that the public is educated," Ann said. ■

SURVIVORS Says Good-bye to Eliza Kane

On April 25, SURVIVORS said farewell to Eliza Kane. Eliza joined SURVIVORS' team as the administrative assistant in 2007. She is leaving to attend the University of Massachusetts, Boston. There, she will obtain her master's degree in English with a focus on literature. She will also be a teaching assistant for the English department. We wish her all the best as she pursues her dreams. ■

GoodSearch is a search engine that donates about a penny per search to nonprofit organizations that its users designate. Go to www.goodsearch.com and enter Survivors of Torture, International as the organization you want to support. ■

Thank You to All of Our Community Supporters

January 1, 2008, through April 30, 2008

We are grateful to the following individuals and companies for your generous support. Your donations of time and in-kind goods and services help SURVIVORS' programs run smoothly.

Companies and Organizations

Albertsons — Clairemont,
Downtown, Mira Mesa
Big City Bagels — San Diego
Big Kitchen Café — San Diego
Claim Jumpers — La Mesa
Corporation for National & Community
Service (AmeriCorps*VISTA)
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Easter Seals — South San Diego County
First Lutheran Church — San Diego

Great News Cooking School — San Diego
Knockout Pizzeria — San Diego
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Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP
Ocean Beach People's Organic Food
Market — San Diego
Old Trieste — San Diego
Ralphs — Carmel Mountain, Hillcrest,
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Resounding Joy, Inc.
Sicilian Thing Pizza — San Diego
Starbucks — Kensington, Sports Arena
Sunrise Kiwanis Club — Vista
Sweet Nicole's — El Cajon
Tesoro Winery — Temecula
Trader Joe's — La Jolla
The French Gourmet — San Diego
Windmill Farms — San Diego
Zoological Society of San Diego

Individuals

William Aceves
Joyce Anderson
Paul Anderson
Lorenz Ammann
Abhi Arunachalam
Ruchi Bahcty
Jeanette Barrack
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Antonio Perez-Cruet
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Delores Praefke
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D. Putchola
Martha Radatz
Patricia Radburn
Nicola Ranson

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Monica Ritchie
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Alisa Shorago
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Lauren Simon
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Cheryl Walczak
Peg Walden
Kristin Westerman
Renee Wong
Tiffany Wyndham
Nina Younam

Thank you!

We apologize for any errors or omissions and extend our gratitude for support that may not have been recognized.

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provided by a volunteer physician. Not all asylum seekers are detained, and for those living in the community, **SURVIVORS** also provides counseling, emergency food and basic necessities, as well as medical and dental care. **SURVIVORS** partners with local law firms such as Casa Cornelia Law Center to ensure survivors receive the legal assistance they need.

A torture survivor's application for asylum rests on demonstrating that he or she has a *well-founded fear* of persecution. Physical and psychological evidence of torture is often essential to demonstrating that the torture did occur, and that the individual is fearful of returning to his or her native country.

The attorney presents this and other evidence at a hearing before an immigration judge or at an interview by an officer from the Department of Homeland Security. Nationwide, only about 30 percent of applicants are granted asylum.

The support that **SURVIVORS** provides, along with the diligent work of the attorneys, contributes to successful outcomes for more than 90 percent of our clients who seek asylum.

Every time a client is granted asylum, it is a very happy time in **SURVIVORS'** office. It's an arduous journey, full of challenges and uncertainty, but one that can result in a safe and productive life here in the United States. ■

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public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture."

You can help denounce torture. If you would like to collaborate with **SURVIVORS** to plan an educational event or fundraiser in June, please contact Public Affairs Manager Maren Dougherty at (619) 278-2422 or mdougherty@notorture.org. ■

*Have gift cards for coffee shops, movie theatres, or stores like Target? Donate them to SURVIVORS and make a big difference in someone's day! Please mail to: Survivors of Torture, International
P.O. Box 151240
San Diego, CA 92175-1240*

SURVIVORS' Financial Supporters

January 1, 2008, through April 30, 2008

Healing broken hearts and restoring the spirits of torture survivors in San Diego County is accomplished with the help of our financial supporters. Because of you, survivors are rebuilding their lives. We are grateful.

Foundations, Corporations, and Organizations

Change A Life Foundation
Chula Vista Presbyterian Church
County of San Diego, Health and
Human Services Agency
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Grossmont Healthcare District
Qualcomm Matching Gift Program

Seaside Center for Spiritual Living
The California Endowment
The Center for Victims of Torture
The First Congregational Church of Ramona
The Kroger Company
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans —
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Pacific Southwest Region
Torrey Pines Christian Church
United Nations Voluntary Fund for
Victims of Torture
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement

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Dolores Welty
Susan Werwage
Kristin Westerman & Linda Bright
Nancy & Stewart Witt

The following individuals donated in honor of Rev. Bill Radatz's retirement and his dedication to SURVIVORS:

Philip & Kathryn Costello
Gerald Digre
Adeline Leraas
Janice Radatz & Bruce Hodek
Astrid Sjoval
James Swartz

Thank you!

We apologize for any errors or omissions and extend our gratitude for support that may not have been recognized.

Check it out! **SURVIVORS'**
2007 annual report is now
available online at
www.notorture.org/donate.html

Cooking Class Recipe: Filipino Cuisine

Adapted from recipes by Nora Daza

A volunteer befriender of one of our clients, Matthew Villaluz, submitted this recipe to **SURVIVORS'** cooking class.

As more of **SURVIVORS'** clients become involved with the class, the demand for cooking supplies grows. If you would like to support the class, please send **SURVIVORS'** a gift card from Smart & Final. The gift cards will be used to buy pots, pans, and other supplies.

- > ¼ cup cooking oil
- > 2 cloves garlic, minced
- > 1 onion, minced
- > 1 cup boiled chicken

- > 1 small cabbage, shredded
- > 1 large carrot, in strips
- > 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- > 1 ½ cups of broth
- > 1 bunch Chinese leeks
- > 1 bundle bijon China (rice sticks)

Boil chicken until tender (about 30 minutes) and save broth. Saute garlic in cooking oil, add onions, sliced chicken, carrot, and cabbage. Season with soy sauce and fry for 2 minutes. Add chicken broth and simmer. When the vegetables are cooked, mix in soaked and drained bijon and season with salt.

Garnish with leeks and serve with lemon. ■

Pansit Bihon

Survivors of Torture, International

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Donations of Used Cell Phones and Ink Cartridges Support Services

A special thank you to our community partners who help us raise funds through the recycling program with Funding Factory. New community partners for this program include the Catholic Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, Puente Consulting Inc., and the Office of Senator Christine Kehoe.

If your community group or business would like to recycle used ink cartridges and cell phones while helping **SURVIVORS** raise funds for services to torture survivors in our community, please contact Charlene Peña at [cpena@notorture.org](mailto: cpena@notorture.org) or (619) 278-2425. ■

Survivors of Torture, International

... was incorporated in February 1997 in response to a need in our community to bring assistance to that segment of the population which struggles with the wounds of politically motivated torture.

Since then, **SURVIVORS** has engaged a caring network of professionals — board members, attorneys, interpreters, therapists, physicians, dentists — and all of **YOU** in the community who give faithful support and encouragement in many ways.

We serve survivors who reside in the greater San Diego and Southern California area, but are prepared to assist the legitimate needs of all survivors of politically motivated torture.

To learn more about **SURVIVORS**, or to participate in our mission, please visit www.notorture.org or e-mail us at [survivors@notorture.org](mailto: survivors@notorture.org).

This project publication was sponsored by Grant # 90ZT0070 from the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Points of view are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.



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