

MONTEREY COUNTY WEEKLY



Attorney Brian Worthington says his firm has sought a couple Certificates of Rehabilitation over the past few years. "I can't remember another that was successful." Photo by [Nic Coury](#).

REDEMPTION SONG

Salinas concert-promoter seeks governor's pardon for drug felonies.

By [Jessica Lyons](#)

Thursday, February 3, 2011

Cocaine, says Salinas native David Drew in a court document, "was the beginning of my downfall."

This was in 1984, and the now-successful businessman fell hard. He was convicted of eight felonies in the 1980s and '90s, and served several prison terms for sale and possession of marijuana and cocaine before being released in 2000.

Then he turned his life around. Drew bought a semi-truck from a friend and started a trucking company. He began working as a music promoter, founding David Drew Productions and hosting fundraisers for Rancho Cielo and other community groups.

In 2008, he bought the building that houses Growers Pub. In a court document, Drew says he did it to help revitalize downtown Salinas: "I believe I have become an example of rehabilitation and as asset to our community."

The court agrees with him.

In December 2010, Monterey County Superior Court Judge Kay Kingsley granted Drew a Certificate of Rehabilitation, an official document that allows him to seek a pardon from the state. Drew applied for the certificate in November and says, "I made a mistake and paid for it. I've tried to turn my life around, and really just wanted to have the county where I reside confirm that."

A pardon, which in Drew's case must also be approved by the state Supreme Court, restores some rights that were forfeited as a result of a felony conviction, such as the right to serve on a jury and own firearms.

By all accounts, it's uncommon for a convicted felon to receive a Certificate of Rehabilitation. Neither the county nor the state keeps records of how many apply for and/or receive Certificates of Rehabilitation. Deputy District Attorney Glenn Pesenhofer, who represented the state at the hearing, says less than 10 have been filed over the past 13 months.

A spokeswoman for Gov. Jerry Brown says thousands apply statewide, and the governor's office only keeps records of granted pardons. Former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger granted 16, compared to Gray Davis' zero.

But Drew's is a rare redemption story.

"Mr. Drew presented a unique case for a person who is a felon," says Drew's attorney Brian Worthington. "Most don't end up becoming prominent businessmen in the community where they grew up and getting involved in charity work."

It's also a reminder that you can't erase your past—and politicians often change their stripes.

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In applying for his Certificate of Rehabilitation, Drew submitted a collection of letters from a who's who of local big wigs—retired Judge John M. Phillips, then-Sheriff Mike Kanalakis, retired Sheriff's Cmdr. Fred Garcia (who ran for sheriff in the most recent election), and Mayor Dennis Donohue, along with other retired detectives all endorsed Drew's petition.

Kanalakis described Drew as a “model citizen” and commended Drew's fundraising efforts for Rancho Cielo.

Garcia writes that, “Drew [is] the ultimate ‘poster child’ for rehabilitation.”

Both, however, were quick to distance themselves from Drew during the campaign. Kanalakis returned \$800 for a donation of food from Growers Pub, which is run by Drew's partner Dawn Magri. Garcia paid back \$500 for a fundraiser Drew's production company sponsored just weeks before the June 8, 2010 election.

Donohue, on the other hand, received \$2,000 from Drew's trucking company for his 2006 mayoral run.

“David clearly made some mistakes,” Donohue says. “He paid a price and now he's doing exactly what we would hope he or anyone who gets out of prison would do: become a productive member of society and give back to his community.”