

# LostVault: Unlocked Logo



*We are soliciting a logo from talented artists  
~First Prize \$50~  
Please see Page 10 for details*

Welcome to the first edition of *LostVault: Unlocked*, a monthly newsletter published by the LostVault web community. LostVault is a website dedicated to promoting a free pen pal service for incarcerated individuals. We are 300+ members strong and growing. Since the site opened in September 2003, we have experienced tremendous growth. We began when a group of friends asked Matthew (aka CipherCode) if he could create a chat room for us to use. At first, his webspace housed pictures of this group of friends who all shared an interest in penpalling. As this group grew, so did the consideration of offering free pen pal ads for inmates. Matthew went to work creating a site that went well beyond our expectations. Michelle (aka Sewergrrl) took on the tremendous task of managing the pen pal section. With the help of several other selfless individuals, the site has continued to expand. We now have over 1000 pen pal ads, with more coming in daily. The LostVault Newsletter was created to keep everyone informed, enlightened, and entertained, as well as promote the LostVault website. Melissa (aka BabyGurl36) was chosen as Editor-in-Chief of the Newsletter and she assembled her staff. These folks will be working hard to put out a quality publication that we hope you will look forward to receiving monthly. The continuing expansion of our site depends on you. If you like what we do and what we are about, here is how you can help:

- Ö **Share your newsletter** - Because we are a free service, we are limited to a number of newsletters we can print and mail. Please pass yours along to spread the word.
- Ö **Become involved** - Submit poems, artwork, articles, letters to the editor.
- Ö **Visit LostVault.com** - Visit us at [www.lostvault.com](http://www.lostvault.com). If you are unable to do this, tell your friends, family members, or anyone you know with computer access to visit LostVault.com. Let us know what you think! Check page two for our contact information, and enjoy!



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# LostVault

## Who We Are and What We Do

LostVault.com is the biggest and best completely FREE prison pen pal site on the web. Founded in September of 2003, we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a free place for inmates to find pen pals. Unlike many of the other prison pen pal sites, we do not charge the inmate OR you for this service. Our services are free for everyone, all the time, with no exceptions. We exist solely on donations from our members and by receiving donations in the form of postage stamps from inmates; however, we will never ask or expect anything from you in return for our services.

## WANT A FREE PEN PAL AD ON OUR SITE?

To obtain information on how to submit a free pen pal ad for our website, please send a SASE to the following address.

**LostVault.com**  
**P.O. Box 66010**  
**Baltimore, MD 21239-6010**

If you are indigent or are residing at an institution that does not allow the mailing out of postage in any form, let us know and we will send you an application. Please specify the reason you are unable to mail return postage or your request will not be honored.

Please note that we are in the process of changing our mailing address. If you previously submitted a pen pal request to us at the old address, there is no need to resubmit a new ad, as the old post office address will remain active until we have notified all our ad participants of the change.

*LostVault: Unlocked* is a monthly publication of LostVault.com, a volunteer-based website offering free pen pal ads to inmates incarcerated worldwide.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Michelle Bean (Sewergrrl)

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:** Melissa Ray (BabyGurl36)

**COPY EDITOR:** Matthew Allen (CipherCode)

**LAYOUT AND DESIGN:** Lisa Maurer (WVGirl)

**MONTHLY COLUMNISTS:**

Chele Thomas (QQin4meboo) - QQ/Motty Says

Dawn (Dawna) - Spirituality

Dee from MA(Lucidity) - Spirituality

Greg K. (EaglesFan) - A View From Inside

Jessica C. Snyder (Jessica) - Jessie's Jokes & Junk

Joanna L. Massing (Libbie) - Dear Libbie

Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi) - Prison News & Death Row

Morrigan Johnson (Motty) - QQ/Motty Says

**CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS**

David Aguirre - Richmond, TX

Brett Bogle - Raiford, FL

Loran Cole - Raiford, FL

James Diaz - Rosharon, TX

*LostVault: Unlocked* mailing address:

**LostVault Newsletter**  
**P.O. Box 294**  
**Washburn, TN 37888**

## From The Editor's Desk

### Letters to The Editor



Welcome to the first edition of LostVault's monthly Newsletter, *LostVault: Unlocked*. My name is Melissa Ray, aka BabyGurl36 and I'll be your fearless Editor-in-Chief.

A little about me...I am a mother of two teenagers, a 17 year-old girl and a 16 year-old boy and I am very proud of them. I own a pet grooming shop and I also recently opened a pet shop next door. I am so excited and things seem to be going so well. This has been a life long dream for me. Anyone can do it...all you have to do is "Believe." My children and I live in Tennessee - out in the country (boondocks would be a better word). I live so far out in the sticks that the postman doesn't even run out to my house! We have a 5 acre mini-farm...it's my little piece of heaven. We presently have three horses and two HUGE German Shepherds that roam our property. Inside, we have a poodle and we also have a male cat.

I got into writing to inmates back in the late 90's. I have two half brothers serving time in a North Carolina prison. After writing to both of them for awhile and hearing all of the stories from them about how they and other inmates at their facility were treated, and about how lonely so many of the men there were, I decided to start writing a few others. From there, I have gained more and more incarcerated friends as time has progressed. I don't know who gets more enjoyment out of all of this...me or the ones I write to. Mail is the one thing that is really precious to these men and women behind the walls. I go at this like it's work, but it's something I really enjoy! I'm very dedicated to "the work" and hope to touch many lives through my words.

Late last year, the LostVault members had the idea of publishing a newsletter for our members that we could also print and send to our pen pals. I was chosen as Editor-in-Chief of this publication and given the difficult task of choosing a staff. Through careful consideration I assembled a group of people dedicated to writing inmates to serve as monthly columnists. I feel I couldn't ask for a better staff and am blessed to know each and every one of them. They aren't just my staff, but I also consider them my friends. Without their hard work and dedication, this newsletter dream could not have become a reality. I cannot thank them enough for everything they have done for me and for the inmates.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. We will constantly be improving the content and layout and need your input! Please direct any questions, concerns or comments to me at the address on the bottom left of this page. At this time, I may not be able to respond personally to all inquiries, but your words are very important to me!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Take care,  
 ~"Baby"



**Happy Birthday**  
**Lonnie Earl Johnson!**  
**(March 19th)**



When submitting articles, poems, artwork or letters to the editor, please include how you would like your name credited. Also indicate if you wish to have your facility listed. For example: Chris B. ~ Beaumont USP, Beaumont, TX



## Prison News

### News From Around the Globe

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

#### Know Your Rights: Mail in Prison

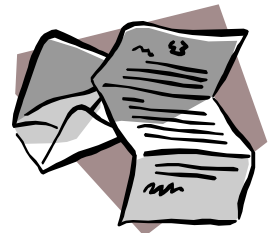
November 13, 2003

Source: <http://www.aclu.org/Prisons/Prisons.cfm?ID=14391&c=26> (American Civil Liberties Union)

The Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment of the Constitution entitles prisoners to receive and send mail, subject only to the institution's right to censor letters or withhold delivery if necessary to protect institutional security, and if accompanied by appropriate procedural safeguards. Thus, institutions should have a rational security reason for every restriction placed on the receipt or sending of correspondence – be it the limited number or length of letters received by inmates or what cannot be sent to the inmates.

If the institution cannot present a rational security reason for a restriction, then the restriction should be challenged. However, an institution may have the authority to read certain inmate's mail if it has probable cause to believe the inmate is conspiring with persons outside the prison to traffic in contraband or to arrange a breakout.

It is important to remember that any "arbitrary opening and reading of . . . mail [with] no justification—other than harassment" may violate the First Amendment. Prison officials' ability to inspect and censor mail depends on whether the mail is non-privileged (commercial mail), "privileged" (attorney-client mail), or "general" correspondence (letters from family members, friends, and businesses).



#### Non-Privileged Mail

The Constitution permits incoming non-privileged mail to be opened outside the inmate's presence. Prison officials can read non-privileged mail for security or for other correctional purposes without probable cause and without a warrant. Business and commercial mail may be treated as non-privileged; disagreements exist, however, regarding whether or not mail to and from the media is privileged. Some courts restrict the reading of outgoing mail.

Although some prisons have sought to restrict inmates' access to downloaded information from the Internet, courts have held that inmates can receive snail mail that contains Internet-generated information.

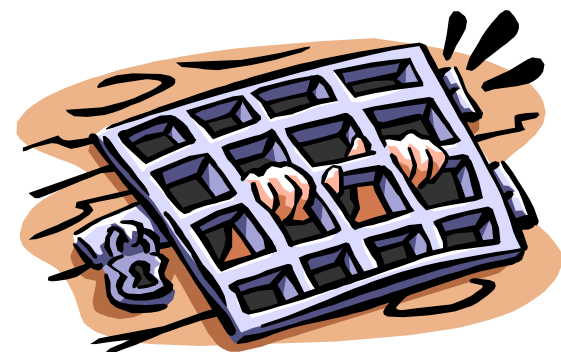
#### Privileged Mail

"Privileged" mail is entitled to greater confidentiality and freedom from censorship. Privileged mail may be briefly held to verify the identity of the addressee. In order for mail to be treated as privileged, it must be clearly marked. Privileged mail may be checked for contraband but cannot be read in the ordinary course of prison routine. The "contraband" check must be conducted in front of the inmate. Outgoing privileged mail may generally be sent unopened.

Some courts have also accorded privileged status to mail to and from various public officials and agencies of state, local, and federal government.

What Can a Prisoner Do If Privileged Mail is Opened Outside an Inmate's Presence?

An inmate may choose to file an action in federal court concerning a single piece of legal mail that was opened outside his/her presence; however, a court will probably dismiss the case. This is not because an inmate's rights were not violated, but because a federal court may rule that a prison receives a large volume of letters each day and may make a mistake once in a while. On the other hand, a court may not dismiss the lawsuit if there is a showing that the inmate was actually harmed by the opening of the letter outside the inmate's presence. Examples of actual harm would be if the prison official's policy is to open all privileged mail outside the recipient's presence, if the letter is copied, or if information contained in the letter is used against the inmate.



When an inmate receives a piece of privileged mail that has been opened outside his/her presence, s/he should file a grievance. It is difficult for prison officials to deny that this error did not happen since most prisons require an inmate who receives privileged mail to sign for it or a guard to sign a book to acknowledge that the inmate received the mail. Usually, prison officials will admit that they erred, and that such accidents will not occur in the future. The inmate should keep a copy of this grievance in case this act happens again. If the error happens again, the inmate should file another grievance, mentioning the previous one and the prison official's response. If s/he can establish that the prison has a policy to open privileged mail outside the recipient's presence, then the inmate may win a lawsuit.



## Death Row

### Capital Punishment Talk

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

Howdy ya'll, my name is Lene (pronounced Lee-nee) and I have been trusted to give you Death Penalty news and Prison-related news. On LostVault I am known as Cassi and this nickname is put together by the first letter in my children's name. I am from Norway, and needless to say I am strongly against the death penalty. I come from a country that doesn't have the death penalty and most people are against it. The prison system here is also completely different than that in the United States. We believe in rehabilitation and the longest prison time one can do in Norway is 21 years.

I have several friends in U.S prisons both on and off the row. I have been asked many times why I am so active in issues that don't concern Norway at all...and what can I say? I care and I stick my nose where some think it should not be. I am more amazed by those that DON'T care. How can we NOT care? We have one planet – boundaries are man made. Ignorance is one of the worst enemies amongst the people if you ask this chick.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will do my best to serve you news that you may enjoy, find interesting or what-have-you. Each month I will provide a variety of straight news, stories, commentaries and statistics for your reading pleasure. If you have questions, suggestions or something you would like to share send it in to the Newsletter address and I will have a look-see. \*Smile\* Please mark the letter in a way that makes it clear that you want to get a hold of me.

Regards,  
Lene

### Dignified Death?

*"The policy of lethal injections is to carry out the death penalty in a professional, humane and dignified manner."* - from Administrative regulation, Colorado Department of Corrections

Professional manner? Is it professional when a trained physician participates in a procedure to end someone's life? The Hippocratic oath sworn by every doctor states, "I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel." This oath seems to be ignored for what may be their own personal opinions about the death penalty. Is that what we call professional?

Humane? Is it humane to end someone's life? Is it equally humane to assist in the procedure of execution? This would be a capital crime in most states. Who is lethal injection more humane for? Is it possible that it looks cleaner for the witnesses and the staff? Surely it is less dramatic to witness than execution by electricity, hanging or shooting, but this 'humane' form of ending someone's life is overall a much longer process for the condemned (30 – 45 minutes from the strap down to the gurney till they are dead – IF they are able to find a vein). How many lives do they live in those long minutes? Is it more humane to subject a human being to this anguish? Is it humane to be strapped down and a gurney, stuck by needles and know that soon – soon – soon your life will be over. Is it humane to draw the curtains aside to let people witness the last breath?

Maybe that is what is called dignified manner? Recently Ohio let the witnesses observe the entire execution – from the walk to the gurney till the bitter end. I wonder if the guards and witnesses are left with thoughts like "professional, humane and dignified manner" after watching a condemned man fight, beg and plead for his life.

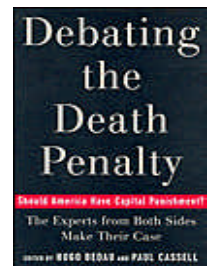
Personally I find nothing professional, humane or dignified about premeditated murder.

## News From Death Row

Texas: On February 24th 2004 the Supreme Court overturned the death sentence of Delma Banks Jr. because he was denied a fair trial due to prosecutors in Texas failing to disclose key information. Banks was only minutes from his scheduled execution last year when the Supreme Court intervened. This decision remands the case back to a lower court so that new evidence may be considered.

South Dakota & Wyoming: Governors Mike Rounds of **South Dakota** and Dave Freudenthal of **Wyoming** have signed into state law bipartisan legislation banning the execution of those who were under the age of 18 at the time of their crimes. Of the 38 death penalty states, 19 forbid the death penalty for juveniles. The federal government also forbids the practice. Twelve additional states do not allow the death penalty at all. The U.S. Supreme Court will consider the constitutionality of the juvenile death penalty this fall when it hears arguments in *Roper v. Simmons*.

**"Debating the Death Penalty: Should America Have Capital Punishment?,"** a new book edited by Hugo Bedau and Paul Cassell, brings together judges, lawyers, prosecutors and philosophers to debate the death penalty in a spirit of open inquiry and exchange. The book discusses issues such as deterrence, innocence, life in prison without parole, and race. In addition to the editors, those who have chapters in the book include: Judge Alex Kozinski, Stephen Bright, Joshua Marquis, Bryan Stevenson, Professor Louis Pojman and former Governor George Ryan. (Oxford University Press, 2004)



**Total cost of Indiana's death penalty is 38% greater than the total cost of life without parole sentences. A study by Indiana's Criminal Law Study Commission found this to be true, assuming that 20% of death sentences are overturned and resentenced to life.**  
(Indiana Criminal Law Study Commission, January 10, 2002)

### When the fire is gone....

By Patsy Anderson (Marcsbaby)

*When the fire is gone from my eyes,  
it's not because of my love for you has diminished  
When the fire has gone from my spirit,  
It's not because I've lost my love for life.*

*When the fire is gone from my heart,  
it's not because of who I am or who they claim I am.*

*The fire has left me,  
it's been stolen  
Stolen by years of repression and hate,  
stolen with chains and bars,  
and beaten down by a democratic society.*

*Taken with no understanding  
that I am still, yet a man.*

*The fire has returned,  
in Gods arms I rest, never to be afraid  
alone, hurt or hungry.*

*I have been released from years To be loved... To be loved yet again.*



## A View From The Inside

### An Inmate's Perspective

By Greg K. (EaglesFan), an Ex-Inmate

Writing letters to inmates. It's a strange idea isn't it? For those of you that do it, thank you. For those of you that are thinking about doing it, please give it a try. The difference that one person writing one letter can make is tremendous.

Let's look at what a letter can mean to someone. When mail call arrives, it can either be the best part of the day or the worst. It can either brighten a dark and gloomy place or make it seem darker and more desolate. No matter what type of facility you're in; a county jail, a holding or transfer center, or the worst prison, mail can make a huge difference. When your name is shouted out during mail call, your heart speeds up, your mind begins to race and your day suddenly becomes tolerable. As you quickly look for a familiar name on the envelope, the feeling that you're not alone anymore overtakes you.

*When your name is shouted out during mail call, your heart speeds up, your mind begins to race and your day suddenly becomes more tolerable.*

As you pull out the letter and carefully read each word, the world outside your small confines become real again. As the news from friends, family or penpals pours from the page; you feel like you're a part of their lives once more. All of the struggles that you go through during the day fade away. You quickly begin to think about what to write back, what questions you want to ask and how

to say the things that you're thinking. You suddenly have something to occupy your mind, and that makes the time go faster.

If your name isn't called during mail call, you look dejectedly down at the floor and wonder what happened. Why aren't they writing? You try to look like it doesn't matter to you, but inside it's tearing you apart. You look with envy at the others who received mail, and wonder why people care about them and not you. You become bitter and angry. What might have already been a bad day becomes terrible. After several days of this, you begin to dread mail call, and the thought that recurs every day that no one cares about you.

In short, a letter can make a tremendous impact in someone's life. People that take the time to write someone that they don't really know are a unique group. The kindness and compassion that these people show is amazing. The amount of comfort and friendship that is transferred with the stroke of a pen can be a source of wonder for both the sender and the person getting their name called by the C.O.

Prison is an easy place to lose your hope and faith in people. It's an easy place to lose hope and faith in yourself. It's an easy place to become hardened against life and love, friendship and compassion. A simple thing like a letter can make a hardened person better, and quite possibly help save someone's life.

Many facilities have little or no phone contact. Letters might be the only window to the outside an inmate sees. Please help to open that window. Please make a difference to someone that feels like no one cares. Please let someone know they're not forgotten. When it's you on the receiving end of that letter, you have no idea what it means to have your name called.

## Spirituality

### Inspirational Words

By Dee From MA (Lucidity) & Dawn (Dawna)

#### *Tsalagi/Cherokee Blessing*

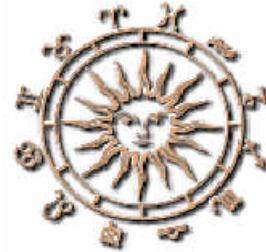
May the warm winds of Heaven blow softly on your home,  
And the Great Spirit bless all who enter there.  
May your moccasins make happy tracks in many snows,  
And may the rainbow always touch your shoulder.

#### *Tsalagi/Cherokee Prayer*

Oh Great Spirit,  
grant that I may never find fault  
with my neighbor until I have walked  
the trail of life in his moccasins.

#### *Navajo Blessing*

We walk in our moccasins upon the Earth  
And beneath the sky  
As we travel on life's path of beauty  
We will live a good life and reach old age.



#### Words of Inspiration

"Life is like a great big grinding wheel. Whether it wears you down or polishes you up depends on what you're made of." - Author Unknown

"Everything is as good or as bad as one's opinion makes it." - Unknown

"Live in such a way that those who know you, but don't know God, will come to know God because they know you." - Unknown

#### Religious Holidays for March 2004

- 1st - St. David's day (Celtic, Christian day)
- 2nd - Ashura (Islamic one day fast)
- 3rd - Ramanavami (A Hindu celebration)
- 6th - Holi (Hindu festival)
- Lanternfestival (Buddist)
- Maghapuja day (Buddhist)
- 7th - Hola Mohalla (Sikh celebration)
- Purim (Jewish celebration)
- 17th - St. Patrick's day (Christian)
- 20th - first day of Spring or Vernal equinox
- 21st - Norooz (the new day)
- Ostara (Pagans celebrate spring)
- 26th - Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)



## QQ & Motty Says

### Voices with Flavor

By *Chele Thomas (QQin4meboo)*

& *Morrigan Johnson (Motty)*

Here we are. Two women, who speak their minds, from different parts of the US, but they may as well be two different worlds! I'm Motty, the neighborhood blue haired, 8th wonder of the world! Why? Because no one can quite figure out what's wrong with me. \*Smile\* I'm the "younger blood" of this partnership at 22, the one who's hair and nail colors are sometimes bright enough to burn your retinas out. I have a passion for tattoos, animals and life in general. I'm currently living in TN, but have lived in a lot of places. Stick around, with my girl QQ and I...we are sure to entertain, enlighten, and maybe even make you think! Heck, QQ may even break out the fried chicken and Kool-Aid for ya one day! Da dat da...now for QQ!

Yo wassup!! This is QQ AKA ...Da Ghetto Princess, kickin' it like my name was bruce~~etta~~ lee, live and in u face. I'm callin' it like I see it and I hope u ain't sensitive! But if u are, and U get ya feelings bent, I may not send a card, matter of fact my realness scares many! A lil about me, I am married, raising three kids, 14 years with my \*\*Tupac\*\*, and I am still his \*\*Gold Digga\*\*!! And he is still \*\*Da Man\*\*!! The system ain't no stranger to any of us IN MY CRIB, and I make myself familiar with many FOLKS, I keep it real~~er then stank on day old fish, and yanno dats funkeeeeeeeeeeeee!

Hmmm, QQ sayzzzzzzzz...r u ready ? Ain't a thang , wrong wit Motty, matter of fact, we are from 2 different worlds, but we girlzzzzzzzzzz...4 real 4 real...

Now...r u really ready for this tag team ? AND R U SURE? HA HA HA

### QQ/Motty On: Marriage

#### QQ Sayzzzz...

Okay marriage, QQ has come to the conclusion that many folks think the task at hand is catchin a mate and makin them marry u. QQ says that isn't even half the battle - matter of fact the battle hasn't even begun, this is the competition stage, dating writing, fallin in love.

The battle doesn't begin until the mate is caught and married, and yes, we have to \*\* fite \*\* to keep our mate, scandalous folks out here want what u have - temptation is hard to resist, one smooth word, one flicker of a smile could take what u have worked so hard for...why ??? Cuz u ain't workin hard enuff to keep what u have. Marriage is and will always be a second full time job and if u slack, he or she may do stuff behind u back! And when it all falls apart, ask yourself did I put in the work or did I think I had a \*\* victory \*\* when I got the ring???

#### Motty Says...

I must agree with a lot of what you say about marriage. Seems that most people are all out looking for mates, and that all their troubles will end when they find a mate. UGH! If only they knew that getting a tiny little rock (or a big ass rock in some lucky girl's case) is NOT the end of all of their problems. Marriages today are not holding up. We are losing touch with family values so quickly. Society as a whole just doesn't seem to respect the vows and the rings anymore.

Married men have approached me a few times in my life. And once, I will admit, I failed (I did NOT know at the time he was married, and once I found out the "affair" was over). I have strong beliefs that a marriage is something sacred. It's not something that is entered into lightly and it's also not easy.

Oddly enough I've always felt so strongly about marriage, but yet never wanted to get married. OK OK...as a little girl, I had dreams of being a princess and also of having 7 children, named what else? The days of the week! Hey, way back then, my underwear had the days of the week on them, so why not my kids?

I've since come to my senses and realize that marriage is, as QQ says, "A second full time job." With children, you may as well say it's a third! Marriage takes work. Marriage takes trust. Marriage takes love, compassion and above all else, a totally open line of communication. No marriage can be perfect, but with a lot of love, work and total commitment for the betterment of the couple and family, any marriage can work. At least, that's my opinion and I'm sticking to it.

*The "QQ/Motty says" column is about life. We would like for you to send in quotes or questions, either that you think will inspire us and others to "think" or just something you'd like to get an opinion on. QQ and Motty will gladly share their opinion in this column on any question or subject, as long as it is not crude. We want your input! Please, send any correspondence to: LostVault Newsletter, P.O. Box 294, Washburn, TN 37888. Please note on your correspondence that your are writing to QQ/Motty. At this time, no correspondence can be sent back or directly replied to. \*Please note, we will*

## Pen Pals of The Month

### Inmates Desiring Mail

These 2 men are chosen from our Not Receiving Mail list. To be listed on this special section of our wesbite, an inmate most not receive any mail or receive mail only from family.



**Daniel Angel Plata**  
Livingston, TX  
(Death Row)

Daniel is a person of many dreams, but his main dream is for everybody of this world to live in peace and be happy. His hobbies are working out, reading, drawing, listening to the radio, thinking about his family, and writing. He likes honesty, people who think about the needs of others and not just themselves, and some sports.

*If you would like to write either Daniel or Russell, please visit the pen pal section of our wesbite at [www.lostvault.com/penpals](http://www.lostvault.com/penpals) or send an email to [penpals@lostvault.com](mailto:penpals@lostvault.com) for more information.*

Russell is a writer and an artist (he used to play in a heavy metal band; sort of an Alice in Chains/White Zombie sound). For the last several years, he's been trying to kick-start a career as a novelist and freelance writer (science fiction, horror and suspense mostly). Some of his other interests are motorcycles (he owns and rides a Harley/Shovel Head in the world). He enjoy movies, outdoors, exotic animals (he once owned my own exotic animal/reptile import business), and anything that involves creativity.



**Russell Todd Bright**  
Cleveland, TX



## Dear Libbie

### Advice for the Lovelorn

By Joanna L. Massing (Libbie)



Welcome to the first edition of *Lost Vault: Unlocked's* "Romance Column." I hope this finds you in good spirits and good health! Many people will read this and first thing that pops in to their head is, "oh prison romance...maybe this is something I am not necessarily interested in reading about"...but you should read on! This column will focus on relationships that you, your friends, or your family members might be in with an inmate. It could be the first blush of romance blooming, many long, dedicated years you have with your loved one, or maybe just a pen pal friendship that might be turning into something more. Whatever it is or might become, please note that this column is here for you the reader. Feel free to ask, respond or propose any subject matter you would like to read more about. Maybe by chance, by reading another persons view or answer to a question that they have, you will also get the information you might be seeking.

I have talked to a few people regarding their prison romance and the majority of them have said to me, "If you asked me a year or two ago....would I be involved with an inmate in a romantic sense.." and most of their answers were an honest "No." The majority of the world's population sees any form of involvement, whether it be romantic or a penpalship, as some sort of taboo. I even felt that way until that fateful day I was surfing the web and an article struck my curiosity. The same AOL article that captured many others curiosity, the famed "Susan Smith" article that many of us have given just the SS initials now when discussed.

That day out of curiosity I went to the website that housed SS's ad for a pen pal and was amazed. I had no idea that inmates actually could have ads for penpal correspondence! And one part of me was even mortified because I was also brought up with the thought that "All" inmates were bad people so they didn't deserve to correspond with "Us." But as I read through the ads out of curiosity, that was there I felt my first pangs of the majority of the feelings coming from the ads and that was an undeniable amount of loneliness.

I even scoffed at the idea of writing and finding a pen pal of my own....gee I thought I am not "one" of those people that would do this...but something drew me to that site and almost nightly I would visit it and read the ads. Eventually I came across one where this person sounded so very sincere and wanted just to write to another human and form a friendship. Pen in hand I wrote to this person, hesitantly but then with gusto and I mailed that letter out with my newly acquired P.O. Box address and waited with anticipation and even dread...did I do something wrong? Maybe I shouldn't have written to a "prisoner" I thought. During that wait I found the forums where I became acquainted with many wonderful and not so wonderful people but I found an immense amount of support, advice and even friendship from these people I had never met face to face.

Weeks went by and I never received a reply from the person I chose to write and was ready to scrap the whole pen pal idea. My newly acquired friends from the board said no even if you choose not to write stay on the board. So I did and the weirdest thing happened...I went to go look at an ad that a friend of mine said she was writing to and another man's ad came up and my computer just froze at that point. I couldn't get it to move, I was stuck! So in my frustration I kept pushing control/alt/delete to no avail and when I finally looked up at the ad my monitor was screwed up so I couldn't really make out this persons face but I read his ad and was like a rush of cold water was dumped upon me. Even though his sense of humor, his anecdotes and his description of his beliefs, I saw the underlying sadness that was there and I noticed his

birthday was a few days away so I said why not and sent him a birthday card.

I never expected a response, but by the third letter...it was strange it was like I had known this man before but I didn't say anything to him or anyone. How could I? This person was in prison, not the type of thing you would bring up at dinner and say, "Hey Mom & Dad, my new boyfriend is in prison." But I remember it very clearly it was the day of the blackout in NY and I had gotten home in a bad mood, my dog had bitten the mailman (smile), my car got hit in the parking lot, and now I had no electricity, and it was a sweltering night! But sitting in my mailbox was an envelope with "Mail from an Offender" stamped across it and I stuffed it in my bag. That night as I read his letter by candlelight and it so deeply touched me and I responded to him with all the truthfulness in my heart. He will even say to you that those two letters that night were the change of our relationship. I realized that this is the person I was meant to be involved with as he felt the same way. It's not tangible what I felt reading and holding that letter but from that day on our relationship changed and has grown to what it is now.

I tried very hard to fight these feelings at first but in the end I have realized you don't find love, no matter where you look or how much you want it, you won't find it. When you least expect it, it will come and find you; if you are lucky enough to really see what it is before you then accept it with open arms but with a head screwed on tight. Yes my love and I have many hardships ahead but we also have many plans for a future. Not a future where we will constantly be doing this or that...just a plain, boring future where most of all we will just be together and grow old as one. For you see to my love and me the only difference between our relationship and having one with someone in the free world is the bars. And one day those bars will be gone.

So that is my story....now what is yours? Please feel free and submit your story we would love to hear about it or any questions you might have. You can submit your questions, thoughts, stories to Libbie by either visiting [www.lostvault.com](http://www.lostvault.com), by private messaging me, by email: [Dearlibbie@yahoo.com](mailto:Dearlibbie@yahoo.com), or by snail mail at: LostVault Newsletter, P.O. Box 294, Washburn, TN 37888. Please make sure you note that you are writing to the Dear Libbie column.

#### Today's Question is:

Dear Libbie:

I have been writing to my pal for over 8 months, I am beginning to have feelings for him would it be wrong to send him some money. I don't want him to get the wrong idea that I can do this all the time but I know he could use a little to buy some commissary. Is it wrong to start sending money?

-AnxiousGal in Georgia

Hey Anxiousgal,

*If you feel like sending your pal some money and can afford it then I don't see a problem. I also suggest that in your letter just state you knew he was having a hard time and could use a little money and you had some extra. You could also sort of word it and say this is something you couldn't do all the time. I would also suggest you find out if the facility he is at allows this because sometimes you need to be on their visitor's list in order to send a postal money order. But just remember don't go beyond your means.*

*I know when I send some of my pals a little something I first disclosed to them that I was sending it to help them buy commissary NOT for things I wouldn't approve of. Funny thing is they will actually send me the receipts of what they got and I never asked for them. Just be up front and again don't go beyond your means, it is very easy to fall into that and you have to take care of yourself first.*

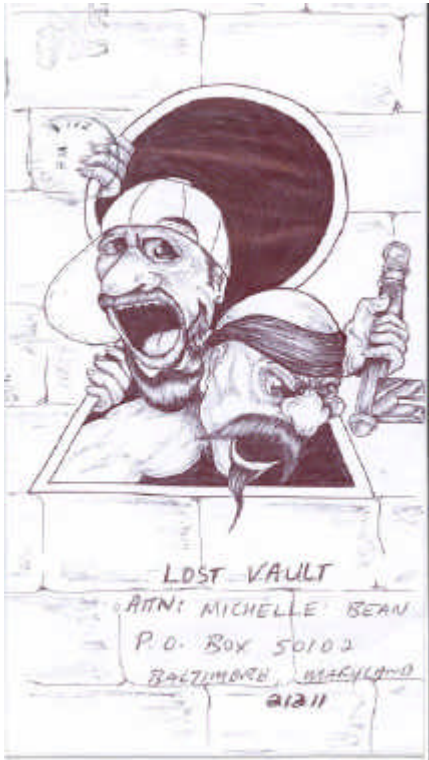
Good luck!

Libbie



# Inmate Art & Poetry

## A Look Within



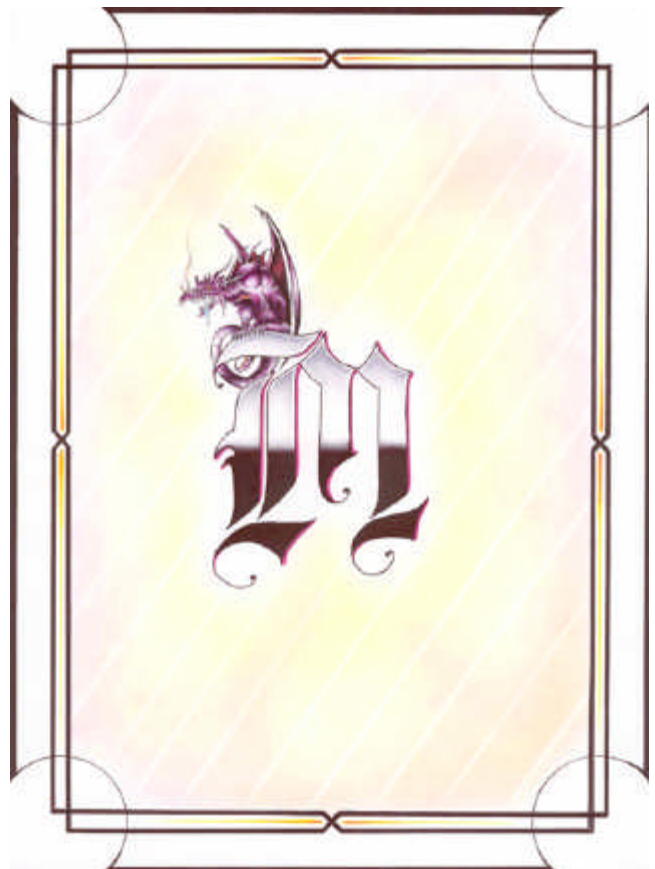
Pen on Envelope  
*David Aguirre - Richmond, TX*



Pen  
*Loran Cole, Raiford, FL*



Watercolor  
*James Diaz - Rosharon, TX*



Colored Pen  
*Brett Bogle, Raiford, FL*





# Jessie's Jokes & Junk

## ...The Fun Side of Life

By Jessica C. Snyder (Jessica)

### ~Joke of The Month~

#### A Mismatched Pair of Gloves

A young man wished to purchase a present for his sweetheart that he had not been dating very long. After careful consideration, he decided on a pair of gloves. Accompanied by his sister, he went to a department store and bought a pair of white gloves. The sister purchased a pair of panties for herself.

During the wrapping, the items got mixed up. The sister got the gloves, and the sweetheart got the panties. Without checking the contents, he sealed the package and sent it to her with this note....

Dearest Darling: This is a little gift to show you I have not forgotten your birthday. I chose these because I noticed that you are not in the habit of wearing any when we go out in the evening. If it had not been for my younger sister, I would have chosen the long ones with the buttons, but she wears the short ones that are very easy to remove. These are a delicate shade, but the lady I bought them from showed me a pair she had been wearing for three weeks, and they were hardly soiled. I had the sales girl try them on, and she really looked smart. I wish I could put them on you for the first time. No doubt other men's hands will come in contact with them before I have a chance to see you again. When you take them off, blow in them before putting them away as they will naturally be a little damp from wearing. Be sure to keep them on when you clean them, or they might shrink. I hope you will like them, and will wear them for me on Friday night!



### St. Patrick's Day Word Seek Solution

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T + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
U + + D + + + P A R A D E H +
C + + N + + + P + S + G +
K C O R M A H S O + E + K U W
V + + + T + T L + K + C + O A +
S + + + + E O E + I + + + B R +
H + + + + G + R N P + + + N B +
I + + + O + B S B O I T R S B O I
L + + T + E L + + + + + A G +
L + + D + E G + P + + C + + + R N +
E + R + + T L + + + H + + I +
L + + + N + + E + + + A + R +
V + + I + + + + E + + + U E +
G + V + + + + + N + + + N +
H S + B + A L B A R N E Y S T O N E
    
```

### ~Fun Facts!~

In Britain, 2 women were killed in 1999 by lightning conducted through their under wire bras, according to the West London Coroner's Office.

Every time you lick a stamp, you're consuming 1/10 of a calorie.

The phrase "rule of thumb" is derived from and old English law which stated that you couldn't beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.



This guy appeared on television around 1972. Remember his name?

### St Patrick's Day Word Seek

```

E N O T S Y E N R A L B O S H
T N R P O N O G K W U B A M G
H E U L L O E M Y C N I H Z A
Z R F A N K R E Q Y N F B A L
L I F B H J K I R T T I R P E
R N T R D C Y A P G K E D U L
A G U H J T E A K C E L A P L
I O Q H B I T R S B O B W Z I
N B A G F R R N P G E D I A H
B R D L I A A E O E M O A U S
O A Q C O K R T L F L R B R Y
W U K E E F O S H A M R O C K
K G W S Y P C L A A N J J K C
M H E D A R A P I K O D M H U
G M X W Z U O M J Q Z Q U Q L
    
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- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| BEER           | PARADE        |
| BLARNEY-STONE  | POT-O-GOLD    |
| ERIN-GO-BRAUGH | RAINBOW       |
| GREEN          | SAINT-PATRICK |
| IRELAND        | SHAMROCK      |
| LEPRECHAUN     | SHILLELAGH    |
| LUCKY          | SNAKES        |



# LostVault Ads

To place an ad in our monthly newsletter, please see our website for pricing information. If you are an inmate and wish to place an ad, please send a SASE and your request for information to:




LostVault Newsletter

c/o Melissa Ray

P.O. Box 1688

Harriman, TN 37748

Ad prices range from \$5 to \$30; all proceeds benefit LostVault.com and help keep us free. Your ad may not contain sexually explicit wording and ads soliciting products, services, or legal advice are not permitted from inmates.

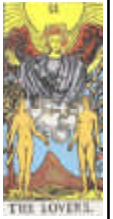
<p><b>Listen to the Prison Show with Ray Hill</b>                  KPFT Houston - 90.1 FM                  Friday Nights 9PM-11PM CST                  Show information:  <a href="http://www.rayhill.info/PrisonShow.html">www.rayhill.info/PrisonShow.html</a>                  Listen live on the web: <a href="http://www.kpft.org">www.kpft.org</a></p> 	<p><b>QQ aka Chele, yanno the ghetto princess</b> wants to shout out to her <b>**folks**</b> Days when there is no sunshine, u all keep my head up. I am blessed with some great men, 4 real 4 real...  <b>To all da LostVault folks that do the work</b> - I got mad love! With all the work from the pals and the LostVault people, we can't be faded!</p>
<p><b>Hey short-busser,</b>                  Hope everything is going ok in PA. ~Lisa</p>	<p><b>Gene...</b> I love ya Boo and keep ya head up. Everything is going to work out when your court date rolls around. Remember... I am here.</p>
 <p><b>Good luck in the RN program Dawna</b>  <b>You'll make a wonderful nurse!!</b>                  ~LostVault: Unlocked Staff</p>	<p><b>Hey Antonio...</b>"It's Real." Hurry and get yourself home!!  <b>And to my "Soul Sista" QQ...</b>I love ya gurl!!                  ~Huggs, "Baby"</p>
<p><b>Sewergrrrl asks...</b>Does anyone know where I can see the "Cappuccino Thunder" show? I heard he was back in action!! ;-)  <b>To my Death Row guys</b> - Brandy &amp; Brett in FL and Steven in TX - love you guys, sorry I'm such a horrible pen pal!!! xoxo  <b>Shout outs go to:</b> Joe Paul and all my Florida and Texas Prison Show guys - you all are great!  <b>To all inmates:</b> Keep the pen pal ads coming! YOU are the reason we're here. ~Michelle</p>	<p><b>To My LostVault Family:</b> You all are such wonderful people. Some people look at it as just online friends, but I think each of you are all very special in your own way. I want to thank you for pulling together in the time of need for Tokeyna's (Seddi) family and lending a helping hand. She has a wonderful family and you were all there to help them after the loss of their home from the fire. It shows how awesome this site is going to be because we have such wonderful people here already. ~Jessica</p> 

**Tarot Card Readings By Lucidity**

\$10.00 donation

100% of the proceeds benefit LostVault.com

Any 3 Questions Answered



Hello everyone, I'm Lucidity and I have been reading Tarot Cards for close to 30 years. I work with many different decks, along with gemstones and crystals. I am a self taught Astrologer and Reiki practitioner. I am the Spirituality forum moderator for LostVault.com, and also a member of the Massachusetts Citizens Against the Death Penalty.

For your reading I will need 3 handwritten questions, your birthday, a photo (not required) and a SASE. You will receive a typed reading shortly in the mail, or email if you prefer. Please make your money order made payable to "Michelle Bean" or see our website for PayPal information.

**Tarot Card Reading Mailing address:**

Dee Martin

P. O. Box 63095

New Bedford, MA 02746



**To "My Pookie!"**

I will love you long, long time!

Come home soon!

Always and Forever ~ Love, Your "Goofy"

**To Michelle and Matt...**

I want to extend my Thanks and Appreciation to both of you for all that you do here at LostVault. You are two of the most caring and amazing people I have ever met. Keep up the wonderful work... you will both receive many blessings for your hard work and dedication. I love ya both dearly...

~"Baby"

## LostVault Newsletter Logo Contest!

This is the first edition of our a newsletter entitled, *LostVault: Unlocked* and we are soliciting art submissions for the newsletter logo. We will be offering prizes for first, second and third place. All 3 pieces will be featured in the May edition of our newsletter and the 1st prize art will become our permanent logo. The prizes are as follows:

**1st Place - \$50**

**2nd Place - \$25**

**3rd Place - \$10**

**The contest rules are:**

- The words "LostVault: Unlocked" MUST appear somewhere in the logo, but pictures are allowed. Please note that LostVault is one word;
- No more than 2 submissions per person;
- The submission must be no larger than 8½" x 11";
- No nudity or overtly sexually suggestive pieces, please;
- Medium is not an issue (pen, pencil, watercolor, etc.); and,
- Color choices are yours (the art need not be in color).

The prize money will either be deposited into your inmate account or sent to the recipient of your choice. Details will be worked out once we have determined our winners. Deadline for all submissions is April 25, 2004. Winners will be notified via mail approximately 2 weeks following the deadline. All submissions become property of LostVault.com and will not be returned. Thank you and good luck!

Your friends at LostVault.com

Melissa Ray  
 Newsletter Editor

**Please send your submission to:**

**LostVault Newsletter**

**c/o Melissa Ray**

**P.O. Box 1688**

**Harriman, TN 37748**

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

