

# LostVault: Unlocked



## Logo

*We are soliciting a logo from talented artists*

*~First Prize \$50~*

*Please see Page 10 for details*

### Prison Brutality in the United States: Verified Stories

by: Melissa Ray (BabyGurl36)

I am writing this as a three part series, with the first being on prison brutality cases. In this installment I have covered many different verified stories of prison brutality. In the second part I will be covering the investigations that prove this abuse, and in the third part I will be covering how these situations are handled. The maximum control facilities scattered throughout the United States are hosts to daily systematic torture and prison brutality of its inhabitants. Stories surface from all over, of inmates being brutally beaten and tortured. Over the last several years stories have surfaced from all across the United States of prisoners dying due to beatings given by Correctional Officers (COs), or taken from another inmate while the COs had their heads turned and allowed it to happen.

Let's take a look at a California maximum facility, that back in 1995 was in the spotlight for being brought up on charges for the brutality that was used against 36 African American inmates. The incident was seen and described by a civilian worker as "bone-chilling." The worker watched as officers, wearing black gloves and tape over their name tags, created a gauntlet of batons, combat boots and fists for the inmates to walk through shackled and uncuffed as they were unloaded from a bus. The inmates were sent through one by one, and many of them ended up with broken bones. Two dozen others were forced to their knees and their heads were shaved. The guards who attacked these men were from an elite group of officers at the prison known as "The Sharks," who were known for their reputation of attacking without warning. The Sergeant who led the attack was later promoted to Lieutenant.

In 2002, an inmate residing at an Indiana Maximum control facility was attacked by some control unit officers who slammed the inmate to the floor and his head and face were smashed into the concrete floor by the boot of one of the guards at the prison. The inmate also suffered burn marks about his face and neck due to being repeatedly shocked by a stun gun.

In 1999, a man on Florida's death row was brutally beaten to his death by 11 prison guards. They were heard by other inmates discussing which officer was "going to do it." After hearing this conversation, the guards were heard spraying mace on the inmate and about half an hour later, the beating began. Witnesses said the guards continued beating the inmate for a time span of 20 minutes then stopped. Witnesses reported hearing the inmate groaning. The guards re-entered the inmates cell and continued beating the man. Then they dragged the man out of his cell and dropped him. The sound of the man hitting the floor sounded like "wet meat from the butcher shop," said the witnesses. He was pronounced dead at the hospital several hours later, resulting from severe injuries about the head and face, all of his ribs were broken and many of his vital organs had ruptured and were bleeding internally.

In a 1997 video tape taken from a Texas maximum control facility, guards were shown kicking inmates, attacking them with stun guns, and using a K-9 dog to attack the inmates. These inmates were shackled, handcuffed and laying on the floor. These inmates who were attacked by prison personnel live a meager existence already, without the added stress and abuse that they are subjected to on a daily basis. Maximum control facilities differ from one another in some details, but they all share certain defining features, such as:

1. Prisoners are kept in solitary confinement cells, usually six feet by eight feet, for between twenty-two and twenty-three hours a day. There is no congregate dining, exercise, or religious services of any kind for these inmates.
2. These conditions exist permanently and as official policy.
3. These conditions are officially justified not as punishment for prisoners, but as an administrative measure. Prisoners are placed in the control unit facilities during administrative moves and since there are no rules governing such placement, prisoners are denied any due process and prison officials can incarcerate any prisoner in a control facility for as long as they choose, without having to give any reason. Prisoners in these facilities are often subjected to illegal and excessive x-ray examinations for contraband. In many cases, guards rip off the prisoners' underwear and conduct forced rectal searches. One witness from an Illinois prison describes the brutality he saw inflicted upon a fellow inmate, "I seen them carry one inmate down the corridor with a guard on each leg and one on each arm. The assistant warden comes down the hall and grabs the inmate's testicles and starts yanking on them, saying, 'Who's doing it to who now, boy?' Well that was a signal for every guard in the place to do whatever the hell he wanted. I can't describe it to you - I never seen beatings like that. At least fifty guys got it, maybe

**Continued on page 7**

### IN THIS ISSUE

Ads .....	10
Dear Libbie .....	7
Death Row .....	4
From The Editor's Desk .....	2
Inmate Art & Poetry .....	8
Jessie's Jokes & Junk .....	9
LostVault - Who We Are And What We Do .....	2
Pen Pals of The Month .....	6
Prison News .....	3
QQ & Motty Says .....	6
Spirituality .....	5
View From The Inside, A .....	5



# LostVault

## Free Pen Pal Ads

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

**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

Connie (Connie)- A View From Inside

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

Joanna L. Massing (Libbie) - Dear Libbie

Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi) - Death Row

Morrigan Johnson (Motty) - QQ/Motty Says

**CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS**

David Bautista - Lovelady, TX

Hamilton Green - Lovelady, TX

Angel Rivera - Livingston, TX

DeAndre Williams - Malone, NY

*LostVault: Unlocked* and its monthly columnists collect all of its information contained in the articles from a vast array of sources using the internet and other parties. *LostVault: Unlocked* cannot be held responsible for the contents or accuracy and does not necessarily share the opinions of its columnists. This Newsletter is published and distributed for the sole use of prisoners, prisoner's families and friends, LostVault members, and potential members, and is strictly for amusement and educational purposes only. The articles contained herein are no substitute for legal research and the columnists are not legal professionals. Prisoners seeking to use any of the information in this newsletter should consult their attorney. The articles contained herein are not a substitute for legal advice, nor does *LostVault: Unlocked* provide legal guidance. The use of any portion of the newsletter is prohibited without written consent of a *LostVault: Unlocked* representative.

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

## From The Editor's Desk

### Letters to The Editor



Hello and welcome to all! I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and determination in our first edition newsletter. I would also like to thank all of our readers for all of the positive feedback on our first edition of "*LostVault: Unlocked*." I want to take this opportunity to publish the first ever letter to the Editor, which comes from a very respected man who is familiar to many in the prison communities, especially in Texas. That man is Ray Hill from the "Prison Show" radio show broadcast on KPFT 90.1 FM out of Houston, Texas (89.5 in Galveston). Thank you Ray - we love your show! Take care,

Baby

*Congratulations on your first issue! We at The Prison Show are very excited about our connection to LostVault and wish all of you the very best. If you do not mind I may from time to time offer something that I have written for your consideration to print. My initial response to the article about mailroom rules is that while those rules were codified in a Texas case filed by Guadalupe Guajardo (1972) in which the lawyers for Texas prisons and Texas Attorney General signed consent decrees to comply with these rules from then on, their compliance stopped some time ago. There are no judges left since the Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Bush administrations appointments that will hold prison officials in contempt for violating court rulings and/or consent decrees. Any inmate in a Texas prison who expects TDCJ-ID to allow sealed mail off his or her unit is going to be disappointed. The Prison Show has a better chance of receiving sensitive information from an inmate putting his letter in the mail pick-up unsealed than trying to send it out sealed. It has been our experience that sealed mail is always opened and read very carefully, while unsealed mail is quickly scanned by the mailroom personnel and sent on with other mail to friends and family. Most of the mail that is sent sealed is often discarded in the mailroom or by the warden. Nothing will happen to them for violating these rules and the inmate may suffer retaliation for trying to get information out under the cover of special mail. I wished I had better news but that has been our experience.*

Love,

Ray



*LostVault: Unlocked* mailing address:

**LostVault Newsletter**

**P.O. Box 294**

**Washburn, TN 37888**

The Staff of  
*LostVault: Unlocked*  
 would like to wish you  
 and yours a very happy  
 Easter!



## Prison News

### News From Around the Globe

#### Ohio Rakes Info on Ex-Cons Off Web Site

Stephen Ohlemacher  
Plain Dealer Bureau

Columbus- It's not as easy as it used to be to find out if your neighbor is an ex-con.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction removed the names, photos and records of all former prison inmates from its Web site about three weeks ago. In all, the department removed information on an estimated 300,000 people, dating to the late 1970s, department spokeswoman Andrea Dean said.

Computer users can still get information from the Web site about current inmates and those under community supervision. But residents now have to call the department to get information about former inmates. Corrections Director Reginald Wilkinson decided to remove the names after fielding complaints for years from former inmates and their families, Dean said.

"They were saying how hard it was getting employment," Dean said. "Having their pictures on the Web was a barrier to them moving forward." David Marburger, a Cleveland lawyer who specializes in public-records law, said state agencies are not required by law to even have Web sites. But, Marburger said, he disagrees with the policy of removing the information.

"We can safely assume that there is a public benefit to being able to review sort of a catalog of people who have been incarcerated," said Marburger, who represents The Plain Dealer.

Frank Deaner, executive director of the Ohio Newspaper Association, said public records should be easily accessible.

"The convict's record remains accessible by making a phone call," Deaner said. "To me, if you're going to make it accessible at that point, what's the difference in putting it on the Internet?"

The newspaper association is trying to amend a bill in the Ohio Senate to create a study commission to review what public information state agencies should make available on their Web sites, Deaner said. The corrections department has posted information about former inmates on its Web site since 1998, the prison system's Dean said.

"The purpose of the offender search wasn't for people to see if their neighbor was an ex-offender," Dean said. "The purpose was so that victims could see when their offenders would have a parole hearing, or when they would be released. They can still do that."

David Singleton, executive director of the Cincinnati-based Prison Reform Advocacy Center, said removing the information will help former inmates get on with their lives.

He said there are other safeguards to protect the community, such as registries for sex offenders and background checks by potential employers.

"We've worked with plenty of prisoners who have had trouble re-entering society," Singleton said. "Whenever prisoners have difficulty getting their lives back together, all of us suffer."

#### Menard Inmate Died of Hypothermia in Unheated Cell

March 31, 2004

(Chester-AP) — An inmate at the Menard Correctional Center died of hypothermia on the floor of his unheated cell.

That's the ruling from a coroner's jury that yesterday also found the death of inmate Charles Platcher an accident.

Platcher was on what's called a "strip-cell suicide watch." That's when

inmates are left in cells alone without their clothes and with a single blanket that can't be made into a noose.

The convicted McHenry County murderer was lying naked on the floor of an unheated cell when guards found him unresponsive last Christmas Day. Prison investigator Richard Harrington says the heat broke down in the area where Platcher was being held. And guards said they didn't know he was cold.

Officials say a prison nurse was fired and two other Corrections Department employees were disciplined in the case.

#### Editorial

#### Prison Population at its Highest Ever in the United States

By: Melissa Ray (BabyGurl36)

The United States takes pride in itself for leading the world in many areas, but this country should be totally appalled at one of its most recent achievements, prison population. The United States now has a higher percentage of its citizens behind prison bars than any other country in the world.

The prison population is excessively disproportionately high for young black men in this country. Last year, one in eight of the black men in this country in their 20s and 30s were locked up. The incarceration rate for black male high school dropouts is even higher— 41% of these men between the ages of 22 and 30 were locked up in our American prisons in a count taken in 1999. That is an extremely high rate concentrating around one race and age group.

What is causing these statistics to be so high? What is it about the American society that is leading so many of our citizens to commit crimes that land them in the prison system? Why does it seem that our law enforcement officers and our judicial systems that seems to single out the young, black male population in this country?

We can blame some of it on economics. People who are desperate to live and take care of their families and loved ones can be forced to rob and steal. Drugs are a huge factor, as well. The number of inmates doing time for drug-only offenses since 1980 has risen from approximately 40,000 inmates to well over 450,000, with three-fourths of them being black or Latino, despite the fact that drug use is no higher in those groups than it is among the white population.

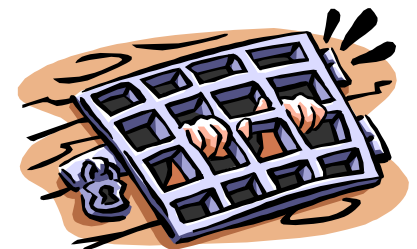
The assistant director of the Sentencing Project, Marc Maurer, which is based in Washington, has been quoted as saying, "Drug abuse cuts across class and race. But drug law enforcement is focused on low-income neighborhoods." These are the neighborhoods where a great number of our young black men are forced to live, thus leaving them as prime targets for law enforcement and the war on drugs.

Another reason for the high prison population is that low-income offenders often don't get the aggressive offenses that more affluent offenders receive.

The fact that the United States now imprisons more of its people than any other country in the world — developed or underdeveloped— even ones that are run by the harshest of authoritarian governments— is hard evidence that something is not right, and that our system just doesn't seem to be working.

The United States needs to conduct a thorough self-examination. Our justice system, legal issues, law enforcement, and societal issues need to all be looked at. From law enforcement, all the way through our judiciary system and even the laws themselves have all had their part in creating this situation. Instead of continuing down the road that we are on now, we need to find a new direction.

America needs prevention, not more and more prisons.





## Death Row

### Capital Punishment Talk

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

#### Ohio Innocence Project Making Life Better

A group of students at the University of Cincinnati College of Law are doing their part to make life better for those who may have been wrongly convicted.

The American justice system is not perfect, but it's the best system available. Sometimes, however, innocent people are sent to prison. As *Enquirer* reporter Sharon Coolidge reported last week, the Ohio Innocence Project re-examines evidence using new technology that may not have been available when crimes were committed. It is one of several dozen such programs throughout the country. It is patterned after the original Innocence Project at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in New York.

The first case addressed by UC students involves the case of Christopher Bennett, who pleaded guilty to vehicular homicide charges in the 2001 death of his best friend, Ronnie Young.

Prosecutors argued that Bennett was the drunk driver of a van that crashed into another car, killing Young outside Canton. But Bennett, who suffered brain damage that erased his memory of the accident, has since written to the Innocence Project, which agreed to look into his case. Students have found evidence, including blood, scalp fragments and hair in the wrecked van that places Bennett on the passenger's side and are lobbying for a reversal of his conviction.

When the Innocence Project was first announced in September 2003, Cincinnati defense attorney William R. Gallagher, who is the project's legal adviser, rightly said: "The Innocence Project is necessary in Ohio. It's clear that every state has some population of innocent inmates not released in the normal process."

The actions of former Illinois Gov. George Ryan offer an example. He issued a moratorium on the death penalty after Northwestern University Journalism students found numerous flaws in cases. Thirteen death-row inmates were exonerated.

Our justice system rightly places most criminals behind bars when they are convicted of crimes, but it's useful that programs such as the Innocence Project are available when the system fails.

*As of 03/31/04, there have been 907 executions in the United States since 1976*

*35% of those were in the Texas (321 total)*

#### Former Death Row Inmate on the Campaign Trail

It's obvious Aaron Patterson hasn't lived in the district he wants to represent on Chicago's south side for the required 2 years. He was only released from death row 14 months ago. There may be no more unusual candidate on Tuesday's primary ballot than the 39-year-old Patterson. He's trying to unseat Sixth District Representative Patricia Bailey. He's doing it in the most unorthodox fashion. For one thing, Patterson is a former gang member and he is using past and present gang members to help him campaign. He also disdains the word "politician." He prefers to call himself a revolutionary or a freedom fighter. Patterson is a long shot. He says he's raised less than three thousand dollars and Bailey counts among her supporters such powerful mainstream politicians as House Speaker Michael Madigan (Associated Press).

#### DNA Lab Audit Reveals Problems Throughout Texas System

According to a 2003 internal audit of the Texas Department of Public Safety's (DPS) crime labs, procedural flaws, security lapses and shoddy documentation problems continue to undermine the quality of DNA laboratory testing results throughout the state. These same problems previously shut down criminal laboratories in Houston and McAllen, and the new findings could throw thousands of criminal cases into doubt. According to public records obtained by the Houston Chronicle, an audit of labs in Houston, Austin, El Paso, Garland, Lubbock, Corpus Christi, McAllen and Waco revealed the following:

- DNA analysts who do not understand how to interpret test results.
- The failure of analysts to run blank samples to make sure instruments are not contaminated with DNA residue from previous tests.
- DNA reports that do not include important statistical probabilities.
- Possible cross-contamination of blood samples.
- A lack of lab security.
- Failure to document critical analytical procedures at the state lab that inputs DNA profiles into the FBI national DNA database.

Last year, state legislators passed reform measures to improve Texas DNA labs. It entrusted DPS with overseeing the accreditation of all public DNA labs in the state by September 2005. Since then, internal problems uncovered at DPS labs have caused concern about the quality of the information and the recommendations that the department has provided to lawmakers. "I have lost confidence in DPS and their ability to oversee these labs. Clearly we're going to have to hold hearings and ask them to come forward and give us their analysis of what's going on," said state Representative Kevin Bailey, who chairs the Texas House Committee on General Investigating (Houston Chronicle, March 28, 2004). Texas is by far the leading execution state in the country.

#### VICTIMS' VOICES: Victims' Family Members Agree, Information Outweighs Death Penalty

Victims' family members in New Jersey and Pennsylvania who may have lost a loved one because of the actions of Charles Cullen, a nurse charged with multiple killings, have voiced support for sparing Cullen the death penalty in exchange for his agreeing to provide information on victims. New Jersey Attorney General Peter Harvey and seven prosecutors in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania consulted with the victims' families in deciding whether to seek the death penalty. "It means more for me to have the information than to have him put to death," said Kristina Toth, whose father died in 1998 of a heart medication overdose that has been linked to Cullen. Lucille Gall, another victim's family member who feels that putting Cullen to death would leave too many family members wondering whether he killed their loved one, noted, "I don't believe in the death penalty because I don't think it solves anything. It's a chicken's way out" (The News Ledger, March 27, 2004).

#### In Memorium - May They Rest in Peace

03/03/04 - Marcus Cotton (TX)  
 03/09/04 - David Jay Brown (OK)  
 03/18/04 - Brian Lee Cherrix (VA)  
 03/19/04 - David Clayton Hill (SC)  
 03/23/04 - Hung Thanh Le (OK)  
 03/26/04 - Lawrence Colwell, Jr. (NV)  
 03/30/04 - William Wickline (OH)  
 03/31/04 - Dennis Orbe (VA)



## A View From The Inside

### An Inmate's Perspective

By Connie

Hello to everyone reading this, my name is Connie and I will be selecting future stories for the "Lost Vault News From the Inside Column." I am 30 years old and I have been writing to inmates for almost a year now. I am currently enrolled in college getting my BS in Criminal Justice. With help from my pals I have decided to be a probation/parole officer. For this section of the LostVault Newsletter I need to hear from you! Write to me and tell me your personal stories from the inside! Don't be shy and let me know exactly how life is behind those walls. We want to know the good things along with the bad. Let the outside world know how you are treated. This is your chance to be heard! You can send your personal stories to:

LostVault Newsletter  
c/o Melissa Ray  
P.O. Box 1688  
Harriman, TN 37748.

*Welcome Connie,  
our new LostVault:  
Unlocked columnist!*

All mail will be sent to me unopened. So please, on the outside of your envelope, write "From the Inside."

Each month I will pick a different story. I will take no respon-

sibility for the writings. Please let me know if you would like your name and location posted in our newsletter, or if you would rather it be posted anonymously. Everything will be in the inmates own words! So, come on, let your voice be heard loud and clear in the "Lost Vault from the Inside Column!" Hope to hear from you soon!

~Connie

## Vaulter of the Month

### One of LostVault's Finest

The Vaulter of the month for April is Kerri, otherwise know by her user name Florange20. Her title here is "Basket of Cheer."

Kerri has been a member of the LostVault since September 5, 2003, right from the beginning. Kerri is a 38 year-old mom of twins and lives in Florida. She considers herself a "people person" and likes to help others when she can.

Kerri says someday she would like to meet her pen pal who she considers very special. "Writing has been a very rewarding and awesome experience and I try to brighten their day with each letter sent."

When asked what is the one thing she would like to begin, her reply was "If I ever win the lottery I would like to start a homeless shelter and a place for inmates to get help upon their release. There are a lot of homeless people where I am at, and from what I have read, inmates have many problems dealing with the outside world upon their release. I think it would be neat to have a place where they could go and hang with others that are dealing with the same problems. A place to hang out and talk."

Kerri, thanks for being YOU!



## Spirituality

### Inspirational Words

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



#### The Origin of Easter

Although Easter is now a "Christian" holiday, Easter was originally a Pagan festival. The Saxons celebrated the return of Spring with a festival honoring their goddess of offspring and of springtime, Eastre.

Since the Pagan festival of Eastre occurred at the same time of the year as the Christian observance of the Resurrection of Christ, Eastre was eventually changed to it's modern spelling of Easter. Easter was once celebrated on various days of the week. In the year 325 A.D. it was determined that Easter would be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon, or vernal equinox which is always on March 21. So Easter is now celebrated on a Sunday between March 22, and April 25th. This year Easter Sunday falls on April 11th.

#### The Origin of the Easter Bunny

The Easter Bunny is not a novelty for children to enjoy Easter. The symbol originated with the Pagan festival of Eastre. The Goddess Eastre, was worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons through her earthly symbol which was the rabbit. It was the Germans who brought the symbol of the rabbit to the United States after the Civil War. Easter itself was not celebrated widely until after that period of time.

#### The Christian View of Easter

Despite Easter's pagan origins, the day is now also associated with the Christian religion. For Christians, Easter is a time to celebrate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who is believed to be the son of God. Easter is preceded by the Holy Week, which celebrates such things as Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, and the crucifixion itself, which is celebrated on the Friday before Easter. Easter itself, in the Christian religion, is the day Jesus arose from the dead. The King James Version of the Bible mentions Easter in Acts 12:4, but the first Christians did not celebrate Easter. Easter was not celebrated by Christians until the second century, AD, and more modern translations now substitute "Passover" for "Easter" in Acts 12:4.

#### Some Religious Holidays for April:

- 4/1 to 4/4:** Iroquois Thunder Ceremony—in thanksgiving for the rains. Iroquois believe Awenhai/Sky Woman descended from the Sky and created Earth.
- 4/4:** Palm Sunday—Christian feast marking Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem
- 4/5 eve to 4/13 eve:** Passover/Pesach—Jewish festival recalling their deliverance from slavery in Egypt.
- 4/7:** World Health Day—Day to pray for healing of all those chronically and seriously ill.
- 4/8:** Maundy Thursday/Last Supper of Savior Jesus
- 4/8:** Hana Matsuri—Zen Buddhist celebration of the Buddha's birth (563 BC).
- 4/9:** Passion Friday—Fast day to mourn the torture and killing of Jesus
- 4/9:** Baha'i feast honoring the one Deity as Jalal - Glory.
- 4/11:** Easter/Pascha—Christian celebration of Jesus' resurrection
- 4/13:** Vaisakhi/Indian Solar New Year—Hindus ritually bathe in the Ganges River to purify themselves.
- 4/14 to 4/25:** Old Norse Summer Days Feast
- 4/18:** Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 4/21 to 5/2:** Ridvan—Baha'i celebration of Baha'u'llah's declaration identifying himself as the New Prophet.
- 4/22:** Earth Day—Day to honor the Earth and to meditate on Deity manifesting as Mother Earth
- 4/26 to 5/3:** Mayan Rain Festival—honoring Rain God Chac and His attendant Chacmool, and welcoming the fructifying rains.
- 4/30 eve to 5/2 eve:** Beltaine—Old Celtic/Welsh feast of Blodeuwedd (Goddess of Flowers) and Llew (the Oak King - God of the waxing Sun).



## QQ & Motty Says Voices with Flavor

By *Chele Thomas (QQin4meboo)*  
& *Morrigan Johnson (Motty)*

This month the QQ/Motty column is about us. It's to let you know a little more about us and where we are from. To let you into our minds a little more and see that although we are alike in some ways, we are very different in others. Enjoy!

We each have different backgrounds, and we each have a passion in our hearts, making sure prisoners get mail. We have been brought together by our passion, working for a common cause. LostVault is a portal for those of us that have a common cause, bringing together total strangers from all walks of life. Not only are there bonds formed with those in prison, but friendships with those who write. QQ and I have become friends thanks to the internet, and having at least one common interest. We aren't the only ones, but lucky for us we happen to be the most outspoken. \*Smile\*

### Motty Says...

I live on a 100 or so acre farm in Tennessee, my closest neighbors are cows. Here "going to town" is actually an event you dress up for once a week to go get groceries from an hour away in "the big city." I've had homemade butter, milk just about straight from the utter, like to hunt, work on cars and garden. My graduating high school class was 19 students, and unlike most of them I'm still unmarried and have no children (other than the animals that call my house home.) I say 'ya'll,' 'you'ens' and 'jeetyet' (you all, you people/you people over there, did you eat yet). Contrary to popular belief, I do have an extensive vocabulary and even made it through college.

I've lived in 4 states for more than 6 months due to being a military brat. I speak and read 4 languages and am working on more. I'm in the country now, but still a city girl in some ways. In other words, I am the local "freak." I've had purple, red, blue, green and pink hair. I have a tattoo, I may have some piercings, but that's really none of your business. I wear a lot of black, but not because I worship satan. It's because I am always cold and black attracts sunlight. Also because I have a big ass and they say black is slimming. No, really, it's one of those "you can set a plate on" kind of asses or I wouldn't care!

I could never fully describe myself, but maybe a cross between a goth/hippie/country/poetic/freak? Who knows. I am me and that's just something I've come to accept. So, this is my life in the long and short. And now you know a little of Motty, the city girl in disguise.

### QQ Sayzzzz...

Who am I, hmmm I am QQ da ghetto princess to some, to others I am Chele, and to my family I am my first name, (don't even ask). I am gonna be 37 on Easter, I am still a lil youngin at heart, I have 3 children and they are my heart, my life, my world...4 real 4 real.

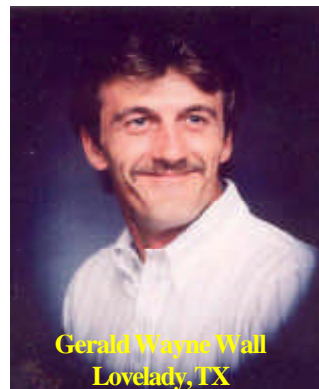
As far as who I am, well that has changed a lil bit recently I am now a stay at home mom, "she has juicy juice" mom, "ur kids are in my yard" mom, "u call me on dis block to say send ya kid home" mom, "I'm grillin what u want put on da grill" mom, all dat and sum!! I'm the lady in the hood, that has the kids back, I'm the lady whose yard they play, I'm the lady that plays with em , bikes, ball, whatever. I'm also the lady that spreads love, kindness, time and understanding to those that need it, I do the \*\*work\*\* and I know where I have been, what I have seen, and what I do, all make a difference to someone, see I ain't new to the system , the system ain't new to me, I live every day, knowing where I came from, and where I want to be, and struggling to get there!! I love to all my peeps!!

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 you are writing to QQ/Motty. At this time, no correspondence can be sent back or directly replied to. \*Please note, we will NOT publish your name, only first initial and state, not facility. If you would rather remain totally anonymous, please specify in your correspondence.



## Pen Pals of The Month Inmates Desiring Mail

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

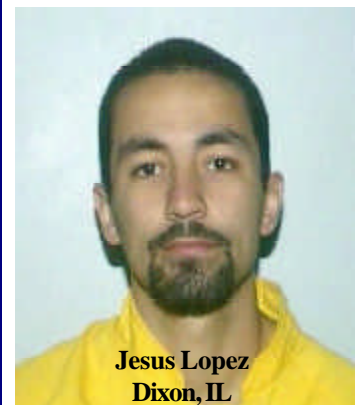


Gerald Wayne Wall  
Loveland, TX

Wayne has 2 children, a boy age 12 and a girl age 7. He believes in always being a gentleman and is considerate of other's feelings. He passes the time by reading good books, sitting and talking with good friends or just being quiet with his thoughts. Wayne also said, "If you need a good friend, here I am!"

*If you would like to write to either Wayne or Jesus, please visit the pen pal section of our website 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.*

Jesus is a pretty cool, mellow guy. He's been in since the age of 17, and recently turned 25. His time has been productive, as he's obtained his G.E.D. and completed a few college classes. Jesus writes. "I'm going to be an honest friend. I'm not going to try to run game on anyone that writes to me. I'm only looking for someone to write and talk to. Being locked up, you don't really hear things from a female point and that's what I'm looking for."



Jesus Lopez  
Dixon, IL





## Dear Libbie

### Advice for the Lovelorn

By Joanna L. Massing (Libbie)



A Proxy Marriage is a marriage where an individual/agent, known or unknown to you, stands in for the other party. This agent acts on behalf of the missing party based on power of attorney. A marriage license must be obtained prior to this ceremony. A handful of states recognize proxy marriages and some states will only recognize proxy marriages as a "common law marriage".

For some inmates and their loved ones proxy marriages offer the ability of marriage where one or none of the parties need to be present. The states that allow legally recognized proxy marriages for inmates are Texas, Montana and Colorado but for each state there are certain requirements and restrictions. For instance the bride & groom do not have to be present at the time of their ceremony but in Texas and Colorado they do require at least one party to be present while the other party must verify their identity via telephone. In Montana the inmate is allowed to get married without the other party present.

Proxy marriages have been around in history for a long time. Emperor Napoleon was one of the first to marry by proxy. Most recently Diane Zamora the convicted murderess now serving life for the murder along with her accomplice former Navy Cadet David Graham has petitioned for a marriage license. In this situation it will be an unusual case because a double-proxy ceremony is requested. Soon to be released inmate Steven Mora is to be her potential future husband.

Larry Fitzgerald, a spokesman for the TDCJ, commented on the Zamora/Mora request and stated, "We have proxy marriages all the time...for a double-proxy wedding two ceremonies are conducted when proxy marriages take place. A civil ceremony in the free world with a proxy standing in for the inmate and another ceremony conducted in prison by the prison chaplain, with a proxy standing in for the free spouse. To conduct a double-proxy wedding, four stand-ins and three ceremonies would probably have to take place. A free-world ceremony with two proxies, and two prison ceremonies with one proxy each."

Proxy marriages have their own set of pros and cons. Although seemingly a very unromantic and unloving occasion, I think when dealing with the restrictions placed on the inmates and their loved ones, proxy marriages may be a God-send for the lucky few who have this opportunity to be able to share their life and marry his or her loved one.

#### ***This Month's Question:***

*Dear Libbie:*

*I have not heard from my pal in weeks, I got a call from a friend who has been writing the same pal...a letter from him revealed to her that he is in love with me.... He asked her not to tell me but she felt I needed to know....his letters to me have always been sweet, funny and always about friendship and he has never hit on me. The problem is I don't think I can ignore it. I am not in love with this man but I do love him like a very good friend. Knowing he feels the way he does, I find myself at a loss for words and I want to cry. He is a very good person, and deserves to find love and happiness and I don't want to hurt him. ...I am worried that this will eventually cause the downfall of our friendship and I do not want that to happen. I was in a similar situation my best friend was a man that fell in love with me. We do not speak now because he is still in love with me and he can't stand to see me with my husband. I am afraid this is going to ultimately happen with my pen pal...I don't want to lose my pal but that is all I can see happening.*

*Anonymous, Illinois*

*Dear Anonymous,*

*This is a hard situation to be in but if you two are truly just friends and have a tight friendship then you need to be upfront with him. Does your pal know you're married? Has your pal expressed his feelings to you directly? It's a touchy subject because you don't want to offend his privacy by telling him his other pal, your girlfriend, showed you his letter to her. That might cause problems all around and all three of you will lose each other. You can always tell him the story of how you and your best friend ended up because you couldn't reciprocate his feelings and it destroyed your friendship....then go on from there and broach the subject regarding his growing feelings for you. If he tells you the truth and your heart only desires friendship then you must nip it at the bud. You aren't being a real friend to him as he is not to you if you both don't come clean and tell the truth. The longer the flames burn the harder it will be to put out and you are right in the end it will most likely be the inmate that gets burned and hurt.*

#### ***Prison Brutality cont. from page 1***

more." Male officers are sexually abusing female prisoners as punishment. The use of electroshock weapons is becoming increasingly widespread throughout the jails and prisons in the United States. In 1996, a Pennsylvania prison staff member used a "Electronic Body Immobilizer Device" to subdue a woman prisoner after her death warrant was read. At an Arizona prison facility, stun guns were reportedly used to wake prisoners.

In Pennsylvania, prisoners have filed dozens of lawsuits asking the courts to protect them from the brutality they receive from so many of the guards. The prisoners requests were, of course, tossed out. They explained in detail of the verbal abuse, sexual assaults, and brutal beatings they were receiving. The staging of "gladiator fights" in a California prison where prison officials and personnel would make bets on the outcome. These fights had a "two men enter, one man leave" theme.

**...prisoners have filed dozens of lawsuits asking the courts to protect them from the brutality they receive from so many of the guards. The prisoners requests were, of course, tossed out.**

In August of 1995, there was an incident in an Arizona prison where the inmates were forced, by guards, to remain outside, while being handcuffed for 96 hours. They were required to defecate and urinate in their clothing. Many of these men suffered from heat stroke and exhaustion, severe sunburn, and dehydration from being out in the intense heat.

In Nebraska prisons, rape of male prisoners by other inmates is very widespread. In many cases, the prison officials would place certain inmates together with the knowledge that sexual abuses will most likely occur.

In March of 1997 a prisoner in Utah died from a blood clot after being held in a restraint chair for 16 hours. His feet had been secured by metal shackles and the seat had a hole to allow him to defecate and urinate.

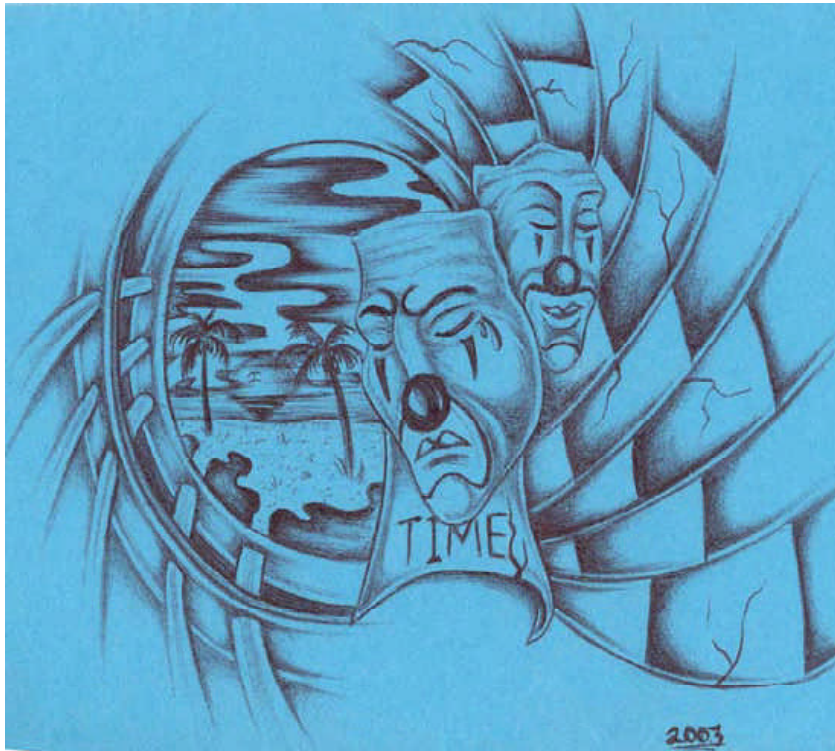
In June of 1996, an Arizona man died after being placed in a restraint chair, and having his face covered with a towel. He asphyxiated. These horror stories of prison brutality continue to surface all over the United States. Very little is being done about the things that are done by these barbaric prison guards who constantly threaten the safety of the men and women locked away in our prison facilities. Many of the guards who lead or participate in these "attacks" are being rewarded with promotions. Some are granted time off WITH pay... brief suspensions or anything considered to be a slap on the wrist.

Next Month: *Prison Brutality in the United States: Proof of Abuse*



# Inmate Art & Poetry

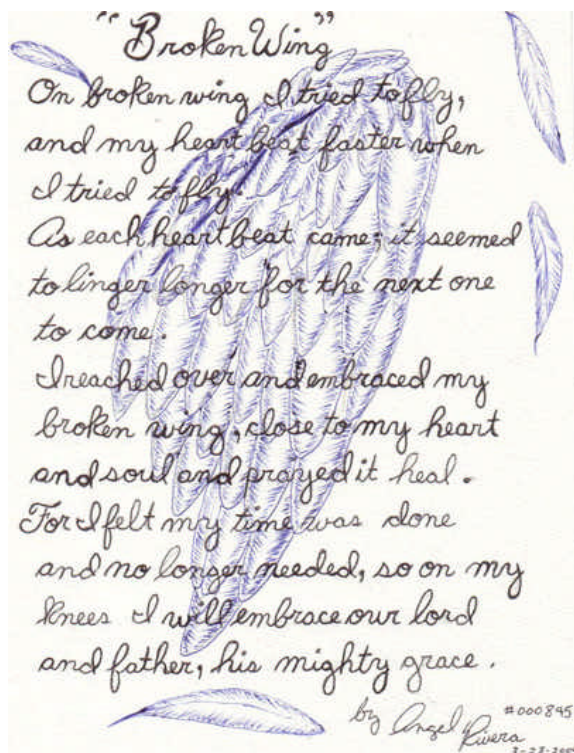
## A Look Within



Envelope Art - "Time"  
Hamilton Green ~ Lovelady, TX



Envelope Art - "Thinking of You"  
David Bautista ~ Lovelady, TX



"Broken Wing"  
Angel Rivera ~ Livingston, TX



DeAndre Williams ~ Malone, New York





## Jessie's Jokes & Junk

### ...The Fun Side of Life

By Jessica C. Snyder (Jessica)

#### ~Joke of The Month~

An Australian buys several sheep, hoping to breed them for wool. After several weeks, he notices that none of the sheep are getting pregnant, and calls the vet for help. The vet tells him that he should try artificial insemination.

The farmer doesn't have the slightest idea what this means but, not wanting to display his ignorance, only asks the vet how he will know when the sheep are pregnant. The vet tells him that they will stop standing around and instead will lie down and wallow in grass when they are pregnant.

The man hangs up and gives it some thought. He comes to the conclusion that artificial insemination means he has to impregnate the sheep. So, he loads the sheep into his Landrover, drives them out into the woods, has sex with them all, brings them back and goes to bed. Next morning, he wakes and looks out at the sheep.

Seeing that they are all still standing around, he deduces that the first try didn't take, and loads them in the Landrover again. He drives

them out to the woods; bangs each sheep twice for good measure brings them back and goes to bed exhausted. Next morning, he wakes to find the sheep still just standing round. One more try, he tells himself, and proceeds to load them up and drive them out to the woods.

He spends all day shagging the sheep and, upon returning home, falls listlessly into bed. The next morning, he cannot even raise himself from the bed to look at the sheep. He asks his wife to look out and tell him if the sheep are lying in the grass. "No," she says, "They're all in the Landrover and one of them is beeping the horn."

#### ~Fun Facts!~

Thirty-five percent of the people who use personal ads for dating are already married.

Jack the Ripper, the notorious murderer in nineteenth-century England, committed his crimes on weekends.

One acre of hemp will produce as much paper as four acres of trees.



Schlepprock!

## LOGIC PROBLEM

### VALIANT VEGGIES



February 1 is a big day in the Vegetable Kingdom, for that is the day when certain knights of the realm are recognized for heroism and valor. This year, King Artichoke's cousin, Lady Lettuce, will be among the noblewomen who will bestow various honors upon five knights (one of whom is Sir Broccoli), each of whom will be presented with a scarf of a different color to commemorate the occasion. Each knight hails from a different province within the Vegetable Kingdom (one of which is Cruciferae), and each will be honored by a different noblewoman of the court (two of whom—Princess Bean and Princess Celery—are princesses, and three of whom—Lady Endive, Lady Lettuce, and Lady Spinach—are ladies). As always, the celebration promises to be a festive occasion, chock-full of the vitamins and nutrients that are necessary for a healthy diet! From the information provided, can you determine the knight upon whom each noblewoman will bestow honors, the province from which each knight hails, and the color of the scarf that each knight will be given to commemorate the occasion?

		KNIGHT					PROVINCE					SCARF COLOR				
		SIR ALFALFA	SIR BROCCOLI	SIR CAULIFLOWER	SIR LEEK	SIR WATERCRESS	CRUCIFERAE	CUCURBITACEAE	LEGUMINOSAE	LILIACEAE	SOLANACEAE	LAVENDER	PEACH	SEA GREEN	SKY BLUE	YELLOW
NOBLEWOMAN	LADY ENDIVE															
	LADY LETTUCE															
	LADY SPINACH															
	PRINCESS BEAN															
	PRINCESS CELERY															
SCARF COLOR	LAVENDER															
	PEACH															
	SEA GREEN															
	SKY BLUE															
	YELLOW															
PROVINCE	CRUCIFERAE															
	CUCURBITACEAE															
	LEGUMINOSAE															
	LILIACEAE															
	SOLANACEAE															

- Lady Lettuce will honor the knight from Solanaceae province. Sir Leek (who doesn't hail from Leguminosae) will be presented with a yellow scarf. The knight from Leguminosae province will receive a scarf (but not the sky-blue scarf) from a princess.
- The woman who will give a lavender scarf to the knight from Cucurbitaceae has more letters in her name (not including her title) than the name of the princess who will give Sir Cauliflower of Liliaceae a scarf. One knight will receive a peach scarf from Lady Lettuce.
- Princess Celery will not be presenting the sea-green scarf, which isn't the scarf that Sir Alfalfa will receive. Neither Sir Alfalfa nor Sir Watercress is from Solanaceae province.

NOBLEWOMAN	KNIGHT	PROVINCE	SCARF COLOR



Solution Next Month



## 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.

**LOST & MAYBE FOUND**



This is the only pen pal I ever want in my life. Does anyone know this wonderful woman? Her name is Kathryn Marie and our love is like a star that will never burn out. I would like to tell her I am very, very sorry for so many wrong choices I've made and one day I will try to make up the time we have lost. I want to thank her for giving "us" another chance. So if you read this Kathy...my answer is yes - I would love to come back home and grow old with you and be the best Father I can to our little girl. I will love you for all eternity and never ever doubt your love again. Please write soon pen pal.

Love Always,  
Ronnie

**Listen to the Prison Show  
with Ray Hill**  
KPFT Houston - 90.1 FM  
Friday Nights 9PM-11PM CST  
Show information:  
[www.rayhill.info/PrisonShow.html](http://www.rayhill.info/PrisonShow.html)  
Listen live on the web: [www.kpft.org](http://www.kpft.org)



**I apologize for my last ad... I didn't mean to**  
offend the others who rode on Mike's bus. ~Lisa

**Write an inmate today!**  
**There are so many that need YOU...**

[www.LostVault.com](http://www.LostVault.com)

### FREE PEN PAL ADS FOR INMATES

**Antonio~~sending you ALL "My Love."**

You are totally amazing to me,  
and I look forward to  
spending so much of "our"  
time together...

I Love You Always~~xoxoxo  
~AntoniozBabyGurl



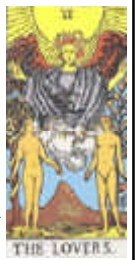
### Tarot Card Readings By Lucidity

\$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.



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.

### Astrology Charts by Lucidity

\$10.00 donation

I will need your date of birth, time of birth and city of birth. I will send you approximately a 10-15 page read-out.

For either of the above services, please make your money order made payable to "D. Martin" or see our website for PayPal information.

### Mailing address:

Dee Martin

P. O. Box 63095

New Bedford, MA 02746

**To my LostVault family, thank you for being so great, you keep me from going completely insane!** I also want to say hi to: Mr. Serious, Chewbacca, Peanut, Casper, Bama, and Silly Bo, you guys are just wonderful and I am so glad I know each and every one of you. ~Dawn

## LostVault Newsletter Logo Contest!

This is the second 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

