



Issue No. 12

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Bali Nine

by Paul McIntyre (Pauli)

Can you remember what you were doing in April 2005?

Me? I was working in a job I disliked and busily trying to take my mind off it by planning an overseas break.

But for a group of young Australians, who soon became known as the Bali Nine, April 2005 was the beginning of a trip away, from which they may never return.

The Bali Nine were arrested in Indonesia twelve months ago on charges of attempting to smuggle heroin to Australia.

There is nothing new about young westerners being used as drug mules, nor is there anything unusual about the general

public reaction – you know the one, we've heard it so many times we can all sing along... "they knew what they were doing, they deserve all they get".

By all accounts the Bali Nine are not the naive, innocent youths some would have you believe. A number of them were caught red handed with the drugs strapped to their bodies. Some of them have previous convictions and several had been to Bali before – enough said, right?

That certainly seems to be the opinion of most Australians. Last month when two of the nine were sentenced to death in front of a firing squad and the remaining seven were given life in jail, a poll conducted here in Australia found that 57% of respondents didn't believe the punishment to be enough.

It's moments like these I wish I had been born in New Zealand.

Once again, I find myself wondering where is the compassion in our society?

It's true drugs can ruin lives, but that is true of all drugs – not just heroin. Alcohol and tobacco for instance can both be damaging and harmful to individuals and their families.

Personally I think it's time we made drugs a health issue rather than a criminal one. Take the stigma away from users, take the profit away from the drug lords, make the drugs safer and let the government make money by taxing them.

Whilst I am no expert on the Indonesian legal system, I think it is curious that the alleged spiritual leader of a terrorist network spent less than two years in prison for his involvement in the Bali bombing – an attack which killed over 100 people, tourists and Balinese alike.

Now don't get me wrong here, I'm not suggesting I know better than the Indonesian Judicial system, however a life sentence gives no

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LostVault

Who We Are and What We Do

LostVault.com is the biggest and best FREE* prison pen pal site on the internet. Founded in September of 2003, we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a free/inexpensive place for inmates to find pen pals.

Want a Pen Pal Ad on our Site?

Send a SASE to us at the address below for an application. Please note that applications are required to place an ad through LostVault; your ad posted via a family member or friend may be posted without a LostVault application. Should your outside loved one wish to request an application, they may do so by snail mail by sending a SASE to the address below, by downloading it from our website, or by sending an email request to LVMotty@yahoo.com.

You may also have a loved one register at <http://www.lostvault.com/penpals/register.asp> and submit your free pen pal ad. **Please note that we cannot take free ads directly sent to us.** The address to send all requests for pen pal application (required):

LostVault
PO Box 261
Washburn, TN 37888

** Ads posted via the internet by free world people are completely free; we charge a \$5 fee for ads placed through LostVault Staff members.*

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

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Please do not mail anything to this address other than items for the newsletter! Note that our columnists cannot personally take new pen pals.

From The Editor's Desk

The Editor's Voice



Happy Easter everyone!

The coldest and darkest time of the year is over for many of us, myself included, and we can start to look forward to spring.

On LostVault things are pretty much the same with Sewergrrl continuing to make LostVault a more-user friendly recourse for inmates and those outside the prison walls. We always have new members joining us, and some that leave for various reasons. One of the things all members like about LostVault is that our message board is more or less drama free. Our website consists of members from all over the world and we are all unique persons with our own opinions and lives and we don't always agree, but personal attacks on members are rare. I believe that most new members feel very welcomed by other "newbies", "old timers" and staff.

To move on to something completely different and on to a more personal note, since our last edition some good things and some bad things have happened in my life. One good thing is that I graduated English with the best result possible. Yeah!! On the bad side I lost someone special to me due to insensitive behaviour on my part. I wasn't considerate enough, and because of that my life feels a bit emptier. For every action there is sometimes a consequence and I encourage everyone to think things through if what you are about to do affects someone else. On a very good side my children are all in good health and looking forward to Easter morning to go egg hunting.

Take care everyone and stay safe!
Bye for now, but never forever!

Lene



Death Row

Capital Punishment Talk

by April Star (Interbizo4)

Growing up my mother always told me to stand up for what I believe in. Throughout elementary and junior high school, this same idea was ingrained into my head. I remember signs being posted in hallways and in classrooms that read, "What is popular is not always right, and what is right is not always popular".

Being a Texan against capital punishment, I know first hand how true these sentiments behind the saying are. After graduating with honors from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, -the state's hub for executions-, I took a job for a newspaper in a small East Texas town.

Before I continue this story, it is important to interject that I have always been on "the right side" of the law. In fact, I have yet to earn a speeding ticket and I have never participated in any illegal act that would label me a threat to law enforcement. When I moved to this small town in December of 2005 I was instantly accepted into the community. There is one thing truly special about small towns in Deep East Texas, they are known for their hospitality.

After only a few weeks of residing in my new hometown, I had the opportunity to ride in a fire truck to a grass fire, sit on the bench at county court and even had offers by the local police department to do ride-alongs once the new year kicked off. I also had a bumper sticker on the back of my car that read: "Stop Capital Punishment".

One day, while doing an interview with the chief of police, an officer popped in and questioned me about the bumper sticker. "Are you the one that put that sticker on the back of your car?" he asked. Knowing he had family ties running deep into the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, I decided debating capital punishment with him in front of the police chief would be in vain.

I acknowledged his presence and stated that I had in fact put the sticker on my car. "What do you propose we do with them?" he questioned. After giving him my answer he stepped out, and I continued my interview with the chief.

A few weeks later the publisher of the newspaper I work for called me into his office to tell me the police chief had banned me from the police department because I had a friend on death row. The next afternoon I scheduled a meeting with the chief to discuss his decision. Being a naive 23-year old American who believes in democracy, I thought the meeting would accomplish something. After all, one of the great things about living in a nation that claims to be a democracy is not having to fear persecution for your beliefs.

Unfortunately, I was wrong. The only thing the meeting successfully accomplished was officially marking my first time of being persecuted for being a friend to someone in prison. The police chief never asked about my aunt serving a life sentence in Missouri for murder. I have often wondered if he would have persecuted me the same way if my friend in Texas was my brother. His reasoning for banning me from the department stems from his belief that information I gather could be passed along inside the prison walls, which could hurt the department. I tried to explain to him that any and all information he gives to a reporter is considered public information. But it was in vain. In the chief's defense, he has continued to work with our newspaper, so long as I'm not his contact.

Some people have asked me why I have decided to continue speaking out against capital punishment when it seems to cause problems. The best response I can give them is, "What is right is not always popular and what is popular is not always right."

Capital punishment may be the popular belief in the state of Texas, but in my opinion, it is far from the right belief. If we bow down to the pressure of those who favor a wrong act simply to escape persecution for our beliefs, then we are condoning their beliefs.

On Wednesday, March 15, the state of Texas executed Tommie Hughes. About 5:30 that evening I gathered with the same group that stands on the corner outside of the Huntsville "Walls" Unit to protest each execution. Unlike most protests on "the corner", where only a handful of people show up, there was a crowd of students there protesting the execution. The students had chartered a bus from Austin, where they were gathering to participate in the 2006 Anti-Death Penalty Alternative Spring Break, sponsored by Texas Students Against the Death Penalty. Their presence was a reminder to the small group of us that gather to protest each execution that there are many people across the state of Texas who oppose capital punishment. They may not all be able to protest on the evening of an execution, but they dedicate their spare time to helping bring an end to an unjust punishment that has become the most talked about form of "Texas Justice".

In Memorium - May They Rest in Peace

02/07/06 - Glenn Benner (OH)
02/08/06 - Robert Neville, Jr. (TX)
02/15/06 - Clyde Smith, Jr. (TX)
03/15/06 - Tommie Hughes (TX)
03/17/06 - Patrick Moody (NC)
03/22/06 - Robert Salazar, Jr. (TX)
03/29/06 - Kevin Kincy (TX)



Continued from page 1 - Bali Nine

opportunity for rehabilitation. The Bali Nine did the wrong thing, yes – but that doesn't mean they are incapable of becoming worthwhile contributors to society. A life sentence doesn't even allow the possibilities of the inmates being returned home, so at the very least they can be in the same country as family and friends.

Sure, it demonstrates a tough on drugs policy but the fact that nine young people with their whole lives ahead of them were still prepared to risk it all for a quick buck would suggest to me that such harsh sentencing doesn't really work as a deterrent.

Another aspect of the case is the involvement of the Australian Federal Police, who, having been contacted by the parents of one of the nine let him leave the country, then informed the Indonesian authorities of his activities. The parents had been trying to help their son, believing he would be detained on Australian soil, instead they were betrayed by the AFP who were more interested in a result than the welfare of an Australian citizen.

It's a complicated issue but as the heart of the matter is the fact that two young Australians may die a painful death in front of a firing squad while seven others will spend the rest of their days in an Indonesia prison. What writing to my friend in prison has taught me is that a person is not the totality of their mistakes. People in prison are individuals with hopes and fears, they love and care about others.

While I don't defend or justify the actions of the Bali Nine I would like to belong to a society that doesn't condemn without understanding and doesn't indulge in retribution without the hope of rehabilitation. I hold my breath. ■



A View From The Inside

A View From Within

The TDCJ continues its policy of harassment and discrimination towards Native Americans and those who choose to participate in Native American religious or spiritual practices. While the TDCJ goes out of its way to kowtow to the Muslim and Christian religions and their practices; it stubbornly maintains its stance of prejudice and intolerance towards Native Americans.

Christians are allowed to have church groups visit the various prisons throughout the state. They have week long revivals or even have various church groups come to the units to hold sports tournaments and other activities. One popular seminar/ revival even allows the church group to bring in homemade or restaurant food such as pizza or Subway sandwiches to those participants selected to attend the week long event (KAIRO).

Those of the Muslim faith are allowed special shower rules and hours. During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims are allowed to have specially cooked meals prepared by others of the Muslim faith. Muslims are also allotted religious activity space and time for their special holy times of the day or week. Muslims are further allowed to order special prayer rugs or mats without a test.

Native Americans on the other hand must meet special qualifications set forth by the state just for Native Americans. For many Native American tribes, the hair is worn long and not cut except in shame or mourning. It is part of the Native American culture and identity. The TDCJ ignores this and getting a haircut is one of the first things done upon entering prison in Texas. Most other states in the Union respect the importance of long hair to Native Americans and don't force their prisoners to cut it. Texas punishes you every time you refuse to cut your hair. If you grow your hair long, your property will be confiscated, you will be denied all privileges and be locked in certain solitary or loss of privilege cells. Another thing that Texas does is to isolate all of those identified as Native American worshippers on the 5 or 6 units designated as Native American units. These units are the only ones that allow Native Americans to gather together and have circles or worship services. Only these units are allowed an outside representative, one person allowed to attend and lead these gatherings. No where else are we allowed to have worship services except in the personal cell or cubicle. In order to get one of these so called Native American units, you are required to take a test made up by the TDCJ Christian chaplaincy department. This outrageous test is a homogeneity of facts from various points of Native American history from various tribes. If you don't take and pass this test, which is not set forth as the Native American religion, the chaplaincy department rules that you cannot go to a Native American unit. No other group or religion is required or targeted to take such a test, which has been specifically prohibited by the U.S. Supreme Court. I know from personal experience that even on a native unit, we Native Americans are shown no respect. On the Hughes Unit, in Gatesville Texas (a Native American unit), Deacon Beltran, the unit Chaplain and staunch catholic, stuck 19 Native Americans and/or practitioners in a large outdoor cage during a rainstorm. A Muslim group was slotted to have a religious gathering at the same time and were taken to an indoor gymnasium. We were put in the cage and told, "you're Indians, you should like the outdoors and ought to be used to it." At the same time, another indoor gymnasium remained unused.

Native Americans are a very, very small minority in Texas thanks to the very vigorous campaign to drive all Native Americans from the state, early on in its statehood and even before. This is not meant to be a diatribe against the Muslim or Christian majorities or religions. Many of those same Christian groups pass out cookies or hygiene goody bags to everyone on the holidays, regardless of religion. This is just to bring to light the bad state of affairs and a cry for equality and fairness.

It's sad but true that this sorry situation isn't going to change anytime soon, but maybe, with a little bit of publicity or awareness by the public, something can be done. Texas doesn't have a large awareness regarding Native Americans or our concerns, or even a large Native American population, in or out of prison. We don't have the wealthy and powerful Christian or Muslim backers or supporters out in the free world. We need and can use all the help we can get.

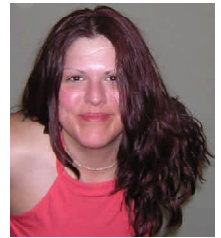
~ L. Aguirre, TX

A View From The Outside

A Free World

Perspective

by Michelle Bean (Sewergrrl)



"An Eye for an Eye..."

If someone killed your loved one, would you want the offender to die? For those you that said yes: if your loved one committed murder, would you want your loved one to die? Most of the time stories change when it's personal to you. Executions are essentially revenge and very often create an entirely new set of victims. They really don't solve anything and they surely cannot bring anyone back from the dead. But if the hate in someone's heart is so great that the only thing that will help them move on with their lives is the death of someone else's loved one, then I hope it helps them get the closure they need. I do not agree, but can at least respect that opinion.

Many death penalty supporters are Christians and often quote the biblical law, "an eye for an eye." This rule clearly states in Leviticus 24 (Old Testament), "*Anyone who kills a human being shall be put to death.*" The problem with using this quote as your entire argument is that it completely disregards the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is common knowledge that Old Testament governed most parts in the time of Christ; in fact the church elders used the teachings of the Old Testament to condemn and eventually crucify him.

To call yourself a CHRISTian, you are declaring you are following the teachings of Jesus Christ himself as outlined in the New Testament. You mustn't ignore his teachings at the square when he intruded upon the impending stoning of a prostitute – stating that only "he who is without sin should cast the first stone." Or the compassion he displayed on the hills at Calvary, where just before his death asked his Father for the forgiveness of his assassins, "*...as they know not what they do.*" To call yourself a follower of Jesus Christ and to use the quote "an eye for an eye" as biblical justification for execution seems irresponsible of a Christian. As such, isn't it your duty and calling to spread the word of God which includes teaching forgiveness? Isn't it your duty the spread the love of God to those in the world that know not what they do?

Many of the inmates on death row knew no other life and/or knew not of your Lord when they committed their crimes. Is it not your obligation as a Christian to embrace them and help them find repentance before they are to be judged by the only one with the biblical right to judge – God himself? While everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, it seems morally reprehensible to use the Bible as a tool to undo the teachings of Christ. If you are Christian and want to argue for the side of pro-capital punishment, you may be better inclined to choose an argument other than "an eye for an eye".

Remember the words of Mahatma Ghandi: "An eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind."

My friend has a date with the Texecutioner next month. I am fully aware that there is a good reason my friend is living behind bars, but what I cannot understand is why, in addition to losing his freedom forever, that he must also sacrifice his life? I am in no way insinuating that murder is excusable and that my friend, or anyone guilty of taking another life, should see freedom again. I just feel there are viable alternatives that aren't quite so final. Of course I am biased because this is **my** friend!

My friend is not afraid of what lies ahead of him. Should this be the end of his stretch on this earth, he is prepared and ready to face his next assignment. He says that even if his body leaves the world - his heart, soul and spirit will no longer be captive in the entity that keeps him confined to a prison cell; he will be completely free.

The man I know is a kind and gentle soul who was once a very different person. In essence, going to prison saved his life, as his path would have

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LV LadyLove

Love Advice for Those Locked Up in Body but Not in Heart

by Tammy Lynn LaFramboise (RaspberryGal)

Dancing with the green-eyed devil of jealousy, one of the most disturbing, damaging and destructive emotions, is nothing more than a devastating tango. Jealousy is like an abyss, an immeasurably deep pit of fear; a self-imposed confrontation with our ego. Whether you are the jealous partner, or are on the receiving end, jealousy and envy when it gets intense and irrational can easily destroy relationships that otherwise were perfect. The first thing we come to fear is loss. Jealousy sees many things that can be lost. The fear in losing love is the greatest.

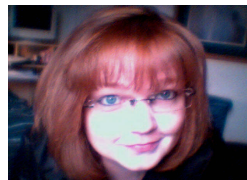
All jealousy is caused by an over-active imagination. Creating scenarios in your mind of what your partner is thinking or doing is the perfect way to torture yourself. As a compulsion, it can almost feel impossible to keep the jealous thoughts from your mind.

Your own thoughts foster a feeling of being in competition, questioning your worth to someone else. They tempt you to try and control the situation, manipulate whatever is necessary to protect yourself. Jealousy is jealousy. It is neither good nor bad. It simply is what it is, an emotional reaction.

Think about it, when your partner talks so fondly about or protectively about his ex (maybe she was his first true love) or other women he's writing to, the last thing you feel is unique and special. You might start worrying whether he wants to get back with his ex or empower his masculinity, testing his virility by seducing and starting something with someone new and exciting. You fear the support, love and passion you know he needs and openly share with him will be compared to or infiltrated by the lure of others. He lives in a very cold, distant and violent place away from you. He craves the gentle warmth of a woman, their feminine spark and loving, nurturing nature; everything opposite what his days inside presents him with. Can you sustain him? You begin to question whether you are woman enough to keep his focus and manly needs fulfilled. What if your partner talks about all the places she's going, experiences she facing and people she's out meeting while enjoying a freedom and a life that you're not there to be witness to and participate in. You worry if your mistake, your punishment to prison will invite free-world men into her life who are able to protect her, physically love her, and provide her the house and home you believe she deserves and all that you wish you still had the power to do for her. You fear this all will entice her to move on and leave you alone. Suddenly your relationship doesn't seem so strong. But no matter how much any of this provokes you (and it will), the first step to dealing with your jealousy is to see it for what it is – your problem.

Jealousy guarantees you only one thing, to have your life be affected by the changes in your behaviour. A relationship that can fall apart will, not because of the jealousy but from the effects of the accompanying behaviours. Once you are able to get a hold on the internal automatic reactions that go along with jealousy, you can remedy it by eradicating it through simple communication.

The most inappropriate way to deal with jealousy is trying to control your partner. Frankly, it's ineffective. Jealousy is not within the relationship, it's within you; that's the only place you can heal it. Examine jealousy for what it really is. Beneath jealousy often lies insecurity. Insecurity about your looks, about being dumped, about not being good enough. Rather than focus on those feelings, it's easier to attack, get angry or worse; push them away. Blaming another for your feelings isn't fair. Talk about how you feel, and what they can do to help you feel more secure. If they are the one with the jealousy problem, get them to tell you how they're feeling. Reassure them that they can trust you; help build their confidence. Once the insecurity goes, so does the jealousy. Part of acknowledging the problem is actually admitting it. People who cannot



admit they are jealous are the ones who suffer its damaging effects the most. When your partner truly loves you they will be invested in helping you through it, but only you hold the power to effect the change.

Don't fear being honest. How will you ever uncover the truth and heal if you can't be truthful to yourself, to your partner or them to you? Express your needs. When we leave these needs unspoken, they lie in wait until a situation exposes them. It is essential to get very clear and explicit with your partner about your needs and expectations. What you in turn end up loving together is truth. That everything real has to be shared; everything else has to be dismantled. Genuine love cannot pass between two hearts, minds and souls lived in lies. Believe me, truth is truly an erotic approach.

Recognize also that jealousy is a deep personal opportunity. To enter new levels of self-understanding, to see who you are and what is the source of your suffering. The first step is to clarify what you are about in the relationship. What you choose is not just to increase your happiness together, not even to protect or secure the relationship in some way, but to use the relationship as a means of coming to a deeper and more fundamental understanding of what is possible between you. It truly is a sign of love if you allow it to be that and nothing more. It is love for yourself and for your partner. If you believe you are there to simply create a safe and secure relationship, you will tend to conceal anything that might threaten it. Learn to live uncompromisingly in your truth and to love the other without qualification.

Too often jealousy becomes a vigilant act of guarding a possession. Your partner is a person, not a possession. Your jealousy cannot touch the inner freedom that every human being has. You may control your lover so that he or she appears to love you, but you cannot make a person love you. Manipulating your lover is a poor sedative to your own insecurities. To control outer circumstances by making your lover behave or toe the line in a certain way for you is robbing them of their freedom to live life also on their terms and in a fashion that fosters their happiness. When you try, they will rebel and search their inner freedom to escape your possession of them. You are only projecting your own inadequacies such as low self-esteem on the other with this controlling behaviour.

You are entitled to your feelings, but only you are responsible for the manner in which you present them. Prison life will provoke your emotions. It's intended deprivation, where people live hanging onto what little they have left and cling to hope for more. Take a step back, assess what are your triggers, ask yourself how realistic the threat is and what genuine reasons do you have that your relationship is in danger. Talk this out with your partner. With that, you are at least on your way through dealing with your jealousy.

These words are not here for just you, it's a learning curve I'm also on in my own life journey. I know I personally struggle myself with this issue at times based upon my own past experiences with love, but we simply have to try to challenge ourselves and keep loving more honestly. Surrender to it. Bottom line; learn to love yourself first and foremost. Like a stone that strikes a calm pond, the effect of that love will ripple all around you. A rather incredible individual recently wrote me this empowering statement: "I want you to do your best to love yourself for who you are and not to hate yourself for what you have been through." I send this out to all of you. No matter what struggle you are faced with, no matter how dark the past was or the future looks, someone loves you even if it can't been seen as clearly as you need it to, but it has to also come from within yourself.

Wishing everyone a much brighter and renewed sense of LOVE in their life this Easter season!

Got a love question you'd like answered? A romantic story to share? I welcome your thoughts, feelings & stories to LV LadyLove by visiting www.lostvault.com/forums and private messaging me (username RaspberryGal) or by e-mail at: lvladylove@yahoo.ca or by snail mail at the LostVault address on the bottom of page 2 (please note that you are writing to the LV LadyLove Romance Column).





Lene's Chit Chat



Norwegian Babbling

by Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

I consider myself pretty lucky to have a column in this newsletter. I mean, I have a space where I can chit chat about anything I want to. Well, almost anything. I am sure our "boss lady" would set her foot down if I talked about stuff far out there. Sewergrrl certainly has an opinion about everything under the sun, and she speaks it too! One of the things I like about her is her straightforwardness. She will tell you what she thinks if you ask her (sometimes you don't have to ask even, she will just tell you. Haha!!). I am not going to chit chat about Sewer really, even though she does play a little part in what I do want to write about.

Our last edition was the Valentine edition, and the theme was pretty much about love, love and more love. We have a romance column which was established to cover "love stuff", but being that we are staff with pen pals behind bars, we also find ourselves writing in our respective columns about something that has to do with love and affection. Unlocked is a personal newsletter from us to you. If you like it, we are happy; if you don't, then don't read it. *smile* There will be times it will be more personal than others, and it will depend upon what is happening in my life and the other staff members' lives.

When we get feedback from the readers it is good feedback, so we must be doing something right. In our Valentine edition, I shared my love with everyone who read it, and I have almost gotten nothing but positive responses on that. I say almost, because I did get some negative feedback on it as well. I was rather bluntly told that my relationship was taking over the newsletter and our message board, and that prisoners weren't interested in hearing about it. I was told that sharing my happiness with you all is creating hope for something that might never happen for you. I am sorry if I create "false" hope for anyone, because it is true, what I found in David and he in me won't happen for everyone in prison. Most people who write prisoners want friendship only. I am also aware that many of you have no one, and for that I am truly sorry. I don't like to know that someone is utterly lonely in prison. I think everyone deserves to have someone who cares about them, and as with most members on LostVault, I do my very best to find someone to write when it is brought to my attention that they have no one.

I believe that to have hope for a better day is better than feeling hopeless. I can't imagine what it must be like to have no hope at all. I think I would crumble and fade away if I didn't have hope, faith and dreams. I also believe that most of our readers are happy for me and David. I read about people who win the lottery and I, of course wish it was me, but since I don't buy a ticket it can never be me. If I buy a ticket I am in the game, and it COULD be me. If I never win I am sure I will feel discouraged, but it won't prevent me from being happy for those that do win. I like to know that good things happen to people, because wonders create hope, doesn't it? We all want to love someone and be loved in return. Mankind wouldn't survive if there wasn't love. The older I get, the more I learn about the world we all reside in and it isn't very encouraging to hear about acts of terror, human lives lost in wars, people starving, innocent people locked up, corrupt governments and what have you. We could fill our newsletter with gloom and doom, but I don't think that would make anyone's day brighter. Instead of writing about all the bad things that happens everywhere, why not write about love? Why not share with you my happiness that I found someone as amazing



as David who happens to be in prison? What is false hope anyway? Hope is hope if you ask me. No one asked me, but like Sewergrrl, I tend to say it anyway. hehe. It is well known on LostVault that she doesn't advocate "prison relationships" but she is happy for me and David. And why shouldn't

she? Does it make anyone happier and less lonely if I don't write about what goes on in my life? This is my space and be warned, I might write about love and gush some more about what David and I have. Even if some have no faith in us, we do. Even if we have the odds stacked against us and that most "prison relationships" don't work out, we believe that ours will survive the obstacles we'll meet. Who knows which relationships will work out anyway with the divorce statistics today?

Well, this will be it for now. Bye for now, but never forever.

Vaulter of the Month

One of LostVault's Finest

Did you find a HARE in your eggs this morning? Since my last name is Irish and my screen name is Bunny, I volunteered to be your Vaulter this month. What better issue to "come out" than this one? What an EGGS-elent idea, she quipped.

My name is Jennifer O'Ryan. I'm 40yo (ack!), a Sag, living in Tampa, FL, currently pet- and child-free but in a relationship. In my previous life I was an account manager but have been unemployed since '99 to take care of an elderly parent. My passions are travel and scuba diving, both of which are on hold, but bunnies have many varied interests.



Believe it or not, I answer to Bunny in real life. I know, I know! An ex named me and it was very easy to assume a wabbit persona on the computer. You know, hopping to and fro, filing pink talons, scratching furry ears, etc. Helps that I CRACK myself up being a PUNNY bunny! Unlocked's Joke Page was a no-brainer for me to assume.

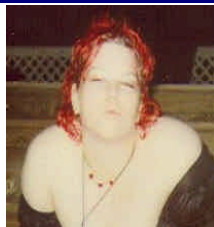
I've always had pen pals, including several soldier pals, but was drawn to prison pals when an older friend asked me to assist her church group with their new prison ministry. Here I was advising these elderly but good-intentioned men and women how to proceed with something about which I knew nothing. Researched my topic first, gave a presentation, and got hooked myself. Found LostVault September of 2003 and now they can't get rid of me! I have many more boring letters to pen! Hahahaha!



Motty's Porch

Ramblings from the South

by *Morrigan Johnson (Motty)*



My take on funerals is now a lot less "movie" and more down to Earth. While they are sad, they are also filled with joy. A sense of loss, and a sense of being found and getting back in touch. It reminds you that life is only so long, but that you must enjoy it while you can. Most of all, down here in the South, going to a funeral means bring a lunch pail to fill up to take home. It's gonna be a long time till you get Aint Bertha's Peach Cobbler again, so you better take it home to the ice box.

What does this have to do with inmates and pen pals? Well... on the surface not a lot. Under the layers, it all comes to that core of "you've only got one life" (assuming you don't believe in reincarnation). While we are here on this Earth, we must be the best we can be and that sometimes means that we must forgive when others will not. That we must support when others break, and that we must show love when others hate. We can't always keep things fresh in the ice box, but we can extend happiness a little longer.

The "Motty's Porch" column is about life. Please submit things to use as inspiration, or even things to make me ponder. My opinion is gladly shared as long as the subject is "PG-13." I want your input!! See the bottom of Page 2 for mailing address, please note on correspondence you are writing to Motty.

Down here in the South, we have lots of family "gatherens" some for little things, like birthdays or plowing. Others are the bigger and less often. Specifically I mean funerals. For some reason, funerals draw in family that may have been ousted 20 years ago, but are there to pay their respects... or just check to make sure Uncle Jack is dead.

Now it may seem like I'm making fun of an event that is normally considered solemn... but that is truly not the case. If you've ever been to a Southern funeral, you've also heard the "I'm only here today because of Aint (yes Aint) Billie Jo's sweet potato casserole" or "My my Norma Jean, I've not seen you since you were a tiny little thang and that must have been at Delbert's funeral!"

I've had the overall displeasure of attending some funerals lately and I never believed those things I was being told about them. WHAT A SPREAD! The food was lining from one end of the room to the other and there was so much you'd have thought it was Christmas! I also found out that if you want to see people you've not seen in years, it's like a high school reunion. Everyone is meeting and greeting, drinking and crying, laughing and eating.

Featured Pen Pals

Inmates Desiring Mail

Jack Jordan, Oxford, WI

Jack a 33-year-old man searching for a classy woman that can be truly great friend. Someone that will be honest and open so they can develop a wonderful friendship and maybe more.

Dean Hall, Martinsville, VA

Dean is a 31-year-old who is a wonderful, gentle soul and is very creative. He loves to express himself through his writing and poetry. He also likes the outdoors; camping, fishing and 4 wheeling. Dean is the kind of man that you can talk with and express yourself. If you want a strong shoulder to lean on, Dean is the man to write!

Damien Brewer Avenal, CA

Damien is a 28-year-old man in search of friendship and possibly more in the future. He is brown skinned, with short hair and brown eyes. He likes working, movies, playing video games, writing raps, working out and reading.

Alvin Whitt, Wiggins, MS

Alvin is a 39-year-old who would like someone to talk to. He has 2 children whom he loves dearly. He is an honest person who doesn't lie and wouldn't try to be someone he isn't just to impress them. Are you willing to be a prisoner's friend? If so, give Alvin a try!

If you would like to write *Jack, Dean, Damien* or *Alvin*, please visit the pen pal section of our website at www.lostvault.com/penpals or send an email to penpals@lostvault.com for more information.

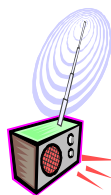
Continued from page 4 - "An Eye for an Eye..."

ultimately led him to a very early demise. Being in prison has taught him many valuable lessons and put his life into perspective where he strives to better himself every day. He constantly worries about what will happen to those he loves if his execution is carried out - it shames him that he has caused so much hurt people in the past and now with his imminent fate. Does that sound like the voice of someone unable to be rehabilitated?

My friend owes me no apologies and should feel no shame toward me for what may happen to him - he has brought nothing except happiness and enrichment to my life. I chose this path I'm on with him and will walk with him to the end of it...and meet him on the other side.

Thank you to Ms. Tara H. for the Bible lessons and verbiage for this non-religious woman. ■

Want my view on something specific? I'm always looking for suggestions for new articles and would love your input. Send me a letter at the address on the bottom of Page 2 - make sure you specify you are writing to Sewergrrl.



**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

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email: kdolradio@hotmail.com

or by calling: 936.328.8874 during the show.

Station Information: <http://www.fm96kdol.com>

Listen live on the web:

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Inmate Art & Writing



The Black Bird

Exhausted by today's oppression
 I close my eyes
 And hope for tomorrow
 It is here
 In this deep, dark, soundless sleep
 That I find my peace
 I find myself once again
 Filled with hope, and wishes
 It is in this time of peace
 That I see through the eyes of...
 "The black bird"
 Who soars through the bright, blue skies
 Who flies, and feels the cool air of
 Freedom beneath its wings
 Who greets the clouds daily,
 Traveling to and from
 Watching the cruel world below
 Who sees no ending in the sky above
 Flying higher, leaving the worries
 Of the world behind
 It is here, in this deep, dark, soundless sleep
 That I dream
 For I have felt freedom,
 Seeing through the eyes of...
 "The Black Bird"

Tymel (Melly-Mel) Adams
 H.D.S.P Susanville, California

*All art
 contributed
 by Bryan C.
 in Alabama*



**Innocence of the heart
 When it's young and pure
 Creates a void so hollow
 When it grows to be mature
 That desolate space deep within
 Is onyx black and cold
 But it's the price we pay
 As we fade away
 Everyday that we grow old**

**Brian Funderburk
 Pelham, GA**



Vault Jokes & Junk

...The Fun Side of Life

by Jenn O'Ryan (Bunny)

Easter Trivia



♦ The egg and the rabbit, two of Easter's most common symbols, also have ancient associations with spring. Eggs symbolize birth and fertility in many cultures. Ancient Egyptians and the Persians colored eggs to give as gifts during their spring festival. The legends of ancient Egypt connect the hare, which comes out at night to feed, with the moon. Rabbits have remained fertility symbols in other, later cultures.

♦ In ancient Europe, eggs of different colors were taken from the nests of various birds and used to make talismans. The eggs were often ritually eaten. The search through the woods for eggs gradually evolved into the Easter egg hunt, while painted eggs eventually replaced wild birds' eggs. Easter baskets were probably originally intended to resemble birds' nests.



♦ The most elaborate Easter egg traditions appear to have emerged in Eastern Europe. In Poland and Ukraine, eggs were often painted silver and gold. Pysanky (to design or write) eggs were created by carefully applying wax in patterns to an egg. The egg was then dyed, wax would be reapplied in spots to preserve that color, and the egg was boiled again in other shades. The result was a multi-color striped or patterned egg.



♦ The largest Easter egg ever made was constructed in Vegreville, Alberta, Canada. It weighed 5,000 pounds, and was 25.7 feet long.

♦ The most famous decorated Easter eggs were those made by the well-known goldsmith, Peter Carl Faberge. In 1883 the Russian Czar, Alexander, commissioned Faberge to make a special Easter gift for his wife, the Empress Marie. In later years fifty-seven eggs were made in all.

♦ Laying eggs takes 24-26 hours according to research from the University of Illinois-Urbana. Even the best brood hens cannot lay more than one egg a day.

♦ Easter cards arrived in Victorian England, when a stationer added a greeting to a drawing of a rabbit. The cards proved popular.

♦ The Germans probably began making chocolate bunnies and eggs. Immigrants took the custom to Pennsylvania. As Easter celebrations became more common after the Civil War, the custom of chocolate eggs took hold.

♦ 60 million chocolate bunnies are sold each Easter.



♦ The Easter lily (or Bermuda lily) was first brought to the United States in 1919 by a World War I soldier named Louis Houghton, who brought the bulbs to Oregon and gave them to friends and family.

♦ Despite a sales window of only two weeks, Easter lilies are the fourth largest crop in wholesale value in the U.S. potted plant market after poinsettias, mums, and azaleas, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

♦ In China there is a celebration called Ching Ming which takes place at the same time as the Western tradition of Easter. Chinese families visit the graves of their ancestors and take along meals and sweets.

Easter Jokes

Breaking News: Energizer Bunny Arrested! Charged With Battery!

A man is driving along a highway and sees a rabbit jump out across the middle of the road. He swerves to avoid hitting it, but unfortunately the rabbit jumps right in front of the car. The driver, a sensitive man as well as an animal lover, pulls over and gets out to see what has become of the rabbit. Much to his dismay, the rabbit is dead. The driver feels so awful that he begins to cry.

A beautiful blonde woman driving down the highway sees a man crying on the side of a road and pulls over. She steps out of the car and asks the man what's wrong. "I feel terrible," he explains, "I accidentally hit this rabbit and killed it."

The blonde says, "Don't worry." She runs to her car and pulls out a spray can. She walks over to the limp, dead rabbit, bends down, and sprays the contents onto the rabbit. The rabbit jumps up, waves its paw at the two of them and hops off down the road. Ten feet away the rabbit stops, turns around and waves again, hops down the road another 10 feet, turns and waves, hops another ten feet, turns and waves, and repeats this again and again and again, until he hops out of sight.

The man is astonished. He runs over to the woman and demands, "What is in that can?" The woman turns the can around so that the man can read the label. It says... "Hair Spray - Restores life to dead hair, adds permanent wave."

Top Seven Easter Bunny Pet Peeves

1. Constantly having to bail your brother, the Trix rabbit, out of the drunk tank
2. You always spend the day after Easter plucking the buckshot out of your tail
3. It's tough to get dates when you smell "eggy"
4. Make one little mistake, and they turn your feet into keychains
5. Having to work the other 364 days as a fry-cook at Denny's
6. News flash to all you wacky dads out there: you're not the first to come up with "Show me the bunny"
7. Two words: rat traps

Famous Rabbits Trivia Quiz

1. In Aesop's fable "The Tortoise and the Hare," why does the hare lose the race?
 - a. He is too busy bragging
 - b. He stops the race to take a nap
 - c. The tortoise is surprisingly fast
2. In the movie Who Framed Roger Rabbit?, where does Roger Rabbit live?
 - a. Cloverleaf
 - b. Valhalla
 - c. Toontown
3. What does the Energizer Bunny wear on his feet?
 - a. Sneakers
 - b. Flip-flops
 - c. Nothing
4. How did Peter Rabbit get into trouble?
 - a. He teased his sisters
 - b. He snuck into Farmer McGregor's garden
 - c. He spoiled his appetite with blackberries and milk
5. How is Benjamin Bunny related to Peter Rabbit?
 - a. They're brothers
 - b. They're cousins
 - c. Benjamin is Peter's uncle
6. What is the Velveteen Rabbit's fondest wish?
 - a. To belong
 - b. To be loved
 - c. To become real
7. What is unusual about the rabbit for whom the 1950 film Harvey is named?
 - a. He is destined to be king of the beasts
 - b. He is really a prince transformed by a spell
 - c. He's more than six feet tall, invisible, and can stop time
8. In the book Pat the Bunny, who pats the bunny?
 - a. Dick and Jane
 - b. Paul and Judy
 - c. Tommy and Joan
9. What kind of accent is Bugs Bunny supposed to have?
 - a. Brooklyn
 - b. Mexican
 - c. Texan
10. In Alice in Wonderland, what intriguing item does the White Rabbit possess?
 - a. A pocket-watch
 - b. A tiny golden key
 - c. A barrowful of cakes



Answers on Page 10



Flower Power



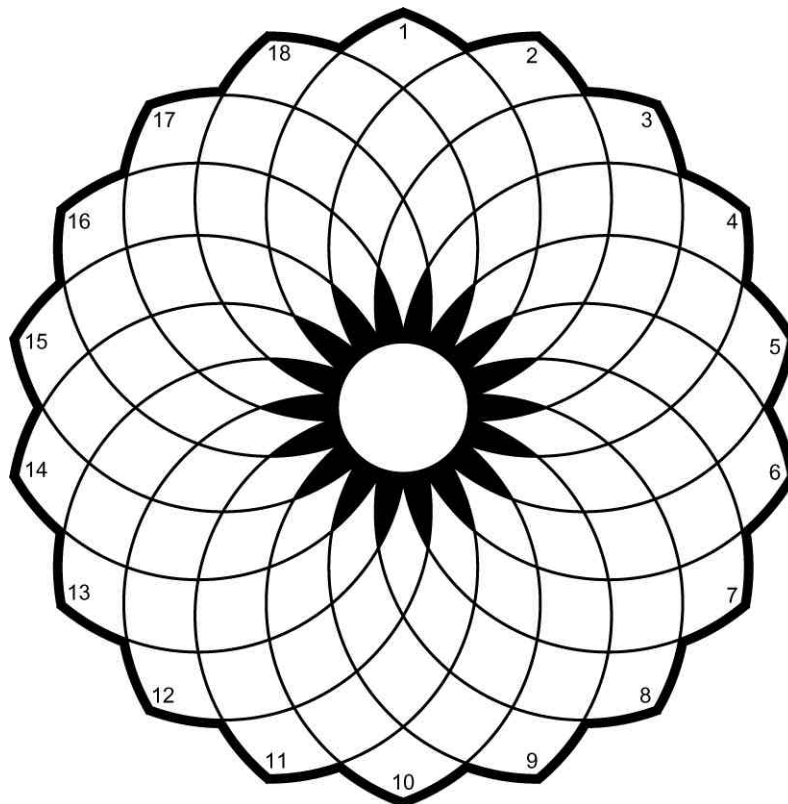
How to Solve Flower Power



The answers to the clues in each of these petaled puzzles will go in a curve from the number on the outside to the center of the flower. Each number in a flower will have two 5-letter answers. One goes in a clockwise direction and the second in a counterclockwise direction. Work in both directions to fill the flower.

CLOCKWISE

1. Monetary worth
2. Ski-area feature
3. Make amends
4. Loose
5. Large antelope
6. Factory
7. Spectrum producer
8. Tease
9. Trademark
10. Complain
11. Bring about
12. Unravel
13. — at the seams
14. Danger
15. Maple or powdered
16. New father's handout
17. Lure
18. Metal fastener



COUNTERCLOCKWISE

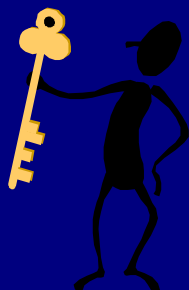
- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Parish priest | 6. Airport arrival | 11. Captivate | 16. Swear |
| 2. Relish | 7. Put | 12. Holy person | 17. Numeral |
| 3. Bowling center | 8. Crooner Sinatra | 13. Tied | 18. Fit for a king |
| 4. Dark, sweet ale | 9. Window shade | 14. Heartthrob | |
| 5. Run off to wed | 10. Watch location | 15. Dish up | |

Answers Next Issue



Answers to Famous Rabbits Trivia Quiz
1. b 2. c 3. b 4. b
5. b 6. c 7. c 8. b
9. a 10. a

Answer to Last Issue's Puzzle



EASY

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	2	5	6	3	1	4	8	7	9
B	4	8	1	9	6	7	2	5	3
C	9	7	3	5	8	2	4	6	1
D	5	1	2	8	7	9	6	3	4
E	3	4	8	6	2	1	7	9	5
F	7	6	9	4	3	5	1	2	8
G	1	2	5	7	4	3	9	8	6
H	8	3	7	1	9	6	5	4	2
I	6	9	4	2	5	8	3	1	7

MEDIUM

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	2	7	3	8	1	9	4	6	5
B	9	8	6	4	7	5	1	2	3
C	4	5	1	6	3	2	7	9	8
D	5	6	7	9	8	1	3	4	2
E	1	2	4	7	5	3	6	8	9
F	8	3	9	2	6	4	5	1	7
G	6	9	8	5	4	7	2	3	1
H	7	1	2	3	9	6	8	5	4
I	3	4	5	1	2	8	9	7	6

