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The very first Fathers' Day was on June 19, 1910 in Spokane, Washington. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge showed support of this becoming a national holiday.

However, it wasn't until 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson officially proclaimed Fathers' Day a national holiday, to be celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of June.



Prison Brutality in the United States : How Situations are Handled

by: Melissa Ray (BabyGurl37)

Welcome to the third and final installment of our feature story on prison brutality. In this part, I am seeking to inform every one of how the guards and corrections officers are reprimanded for their brutal and unnecessary behavior. Prison brutality is a very serious issue in our country today and the leaders and officials of our country are very aware of the situation imposed on the various inmates throughout our justice system.

Issues of brutality just came to light in the headlines of our country's news regarding the war in Iraq. This sudden and surprising development should awaken the American people to the abuse and brutality that occurs daily in our prison systems here in the homeland, but will it be enough? Let's take a brief look at what is happening in regard to the abuse that Iraqi prisoners were being subjected and the punishment process associated.

Allegations of sexual misconduct, brutal rapes, beatings, starvation, threats of death and sexual assault - these are the reports coming out of Iraq regarding the prisoners of war held in American custody at Abu Ghraib. These abuses have been documented through pictures, sound clips, and home videos shot by other guards. These very guards were responsible for the well being of these prisoners. The world has seen these images and suddenly Americans are in an outrage at the treatment that Americans have unleashed on its prisoners of war.

The ones responsible for this atrocious abuse are American soldiers. They hail from many walks of life here at home on American soil. Some of them have jobs ranging from being a carpenter, waiter/waitress, or cashier here at home. The scary thing is that some of them are/were employed in DOC positions and responsible for our prisoners here in America. The first of these soldiers has been punished for his role in the Iraq prison abuse; his criminal charges include conspiracy to maltreat subordinates or detainees; dereliction of duty for willfully failing to protect detainees from abuse, cruelty and maltreatment; and maltreatment of detainees. He plead guilty to all three charges, through a special plea bargain set up in a special court-martial rather than face the more severe general court-martial. He agreed to cooperate with prosecutors, testify truthfully, and testify in all upcoming proceedings. He received a year of confinement, discharge for bad conduct, and demotion to the rank of private. His sentence will automatically be appealed. His plea and punishment were all part of a pretrial agreement with the military.

These are the SAME types of abuse going on in prisons across our country. Where is the exposure and concern for the American citizens that have been subjected to such abuses in the prisons spread throughout our country? The abuses being done to our friends, neighbors, and loved ones right here on American soil are just as savage and brutal as what we have been watching on television regarding the prisoners of the Iraq war. The punishments just as light.

Let's look at America now. A California prison *guard* broke the strict "code of silence" to unveil a serious abuse problem in the facility where he was employed. He was held by fellow correctional officers and was attacked at work by these two fellow employees. He pursued disciplinary action against the two and both were fired. Both appealed to the State Personnel Board and they reached a settlement with the department and got their jobs back. They were demoted, but correction officials dropped their most serious finding, which was the fact that they had lied to investigators. This incident also drew felony assault charges for each of the attackers and an additional guard who blocked the victim from escaping. At the preliminary hearing on the assault charges, a judge called the incident

Continued on page 10



LostVault

Who We Are and What We Do

LostVault.com is the biggest and best completely FREE prison pen pal site on the internet. 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 free world people for this service. Our services are free for everyone, all the time, with no exceptions. We exist solely on donations from our members and by receiving donations in the form of postage stamps from inmates; however, we will never ask or expect anything from you in return for our services.

Want a FREE Pen Pal Ad on our Site?

In order to streamline the process of applications for our pen pal services, effective June 1, 2004 inmates must have a loved one submit the application via an online-only form, available on our website.(www.lostvault.com) All information and photos (if applicable) will be the responsibility of the person offering the ad to LostVault.com. LostVault does not assume responsibility for any ad submitted via the internet.

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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From The Editor's Desk

Letters to The Editor



Hello once again and welcome to another edition of *LostVault: Unlocked*. I received several inquiries this month about the teen death penalty decision that will be ruled on by the Supreme Court in June. So I have some comments and thoughts that I would like to share with you.

There are an astonishing 75 juveniles that are on death row in the United States. We are the only country apart from Iran that formally executes youths 17 and under.

The US Supreme Court decided earlier this year to reconsider its 1989 decision permitting capital punishment for 16 and 17-year olds. This is an opportunity for the United States to continue dismantling the archaic structure of the death penalty. In 1988, the court abolished the death penalty for 15-year-olds. Two years ago, it banned the practice of executing the mentally retarded.

Since the first US execution of a juvenile criminal in 1642, 336 youths have been put to death out of 20,000 total executions. So much has changed in this country since then, but we still clings to the notion that putting killers to death will make it a safer place to live.

When the court threw out the death penalty for the mentally retarded, it said that public consensus no longer supported it. The 6-3 majority cited the fact that in 1989 only two death penalty states did not allow it, while in 2002, 18 did not.

By the same token, 5 death penalty states have barred executions of juveniles since 1989, and juries seem increasingly reluctant to impose the ultimate punishment on teens. Last year, just two juveniles received death sentences; 10 years ago, 17 did.

Four of the nine Supreme Court justices have already called juvenile executions a "shameful practice," just one more vote is needed to overturn the practice. It would be most likely to come from Justice Sandra Day O'Conner or Justice Anthony Kennedy; both voted two years ago to end executions of the mentally retarded.

I believe that if the juvenile death penalty falls, that the next fights could be for those 18-20 years of age and those who are borderline mentally retarded. Execution is wrong! Especially the execution of juveniles. These are our children, American children. This country will not give up quickly or easily on the illusion that state sanctioned killing is a just and effective answer to violence in our communities. However, piece by piece, it may be letting go.

Till Next Time,

~BabyGurl

Remember
Father's Day
June 20



Prison News

News From Around the Globe

By Dawna

America's Little Secret - Prison Abuse in the USA

The pictures showing the abuse of Iraqi prisoners shocked the entire world. Amid the cries for punishment for those who were responsible for the abuse, the American government was quick to denounce the torture of prisoners as "un-American." Ironically, abuse of prisoners is not as "un-American" as Mr. Rumsfeld alleged, for abuse often occurs in the American prison system.

While some tried to place the blame for the abuse of Iraqi prisoners due to the lack of training the soldiers guarding the prisoners received, it is interesting to note that at least two of these soldiers, Staff Sgt. Ivan L. "Chip" Frederick II and Cpl. Charles Graner, worked as prison guards in American prisons. One of these men, Mr. Graner, had allegations of abuse attached to his name, but nothing came of these accusations.

The pictures of Iraqis being abused could have just as easily been taken in any number of American prisons. In Virginia, some inmates are forced to wear black hoods, theoretically to keep them from spitting on guards. In Maricopa County, Arizona, prisoners are made to wear pink underwear to humiliate them. In 1996, a tape showed Texas prisoners being beaten with batons, and some were bitten by German Shepherds. A year later, at Corcoran State Prison in California, eight prison guards were accused of staging fights among prisoners for their own amusement. There have been several recent cases of inmates either starving to death or freezing to death in prison. Just a few months ago, a tape was shown on national television where teenagers in the care of the California Youth Authority being beaten with closed fists after they stopped resisting.

As is so often the case, no charges were brought against the guards beating the CYA inmates, despite what the videotape showed. Lance Corcoran, vice president of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association, even publicly stated that the only victims he saw on that videotape were the prison guards, not the inmates being beaten long after they had stopped struggling. Both the local prosecutors and the California Attorney General declared that there was not enough evidence for prosecution. If a videotape is not enough for prosecution, then how can any justice be meted out when there is no video or photographic evidence to see?

Even after the tape was shown on CNN and other national news programs, there was no public outcry. Even after reports and allegations of abuse are made known to the American public, there is no calls for prison reform at home. Few seem to know, or even care, what goes on in the jails and prisons of America. So when those Iraqi prison abuse photos came to light, perhaps we shouldn't have been so surprised, after all.

Educational and Vocational Programs Cut

The American prison system has run up millions of dollars in debts in many states, causing lawmakers to take a step back and examine what can be cut from the budget. All too often, educational and vocational programs are being cut. In California alone, \$34,000,000 will be cut from the educational budget, which will result in at least 300 vocational programs being cut statewide, from welding programs to baking programs, and just about everything in-between. In Georgia, over one hundred counselors, whose job duties often included classroom instruction, have been laid-off due to a rising prison budget. The story is similar in many states as economic woes, reduced federal grants, and rising costs of services force lawmakers to cut programs in order to attempt to balance the state budget.

Studies show, however, that cutting educational and vocational programs are ultimately more expensive in the long-run. Its not easy being on parole, and it's much more difficult when education and job skills are not obtained. Job skills learned while in prison can drastically improve an inmates chances of obtaining a decent-paying job once released. Several lawmakers in California,

and other states as well, are concerned that if educational and vocational programs are continually cut, taxpayers and parolees will all pay for the cuts in the end.

One of Every 75 U.S. Men in Prison

America's prison population grew by 2.9 percent last year, to almost 2.1 million inmates, with one of every 75 men living in prison or jail.

The inmate population continued its rise despite a fall in the crime rate and many states' efforts to reduce some sentences, especially for low-level drug offenders.

The report issued today by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics attributes much of the increase to get-tough policies enacted during the 1980s and '90s, such as mandatory drug sentences, "three-strikes-and-you're-out" laws for repeat offenders, and "truth-in-sentencing laws" that restrict early releases.

Whether that's good or bad depends on whom is asked.

"The prison system just grows like a weed in the yard," said Vincent Schiraldi, executive director of the Justice Policy Institute, which pushes for a more lenient system.

Without reforms, he said, prison populations will continue to grow "almost as if they are on autopilot, regardless of their high costs and disappointing crime-control impact."

But Attorney General John Ashcroft said the report shows the success of efforts to take hard-core criminals off the streets.

"It is no accident that violent crime is at a 30-year low while prison population is up," Ashcroft said. "Violent and recidivist criminals are getting tough sentences while law-abiding Americans are enjoying unprecedented safety."

There were 715 inmates for every 100,000 U.S. residents at midyear in 2003, up from 703 a year earlier, the report found.

The nation's incarceration rate tops the world, according to The Sentencing Project, another group that promotes alternatives to prison. That compares with a rate of 169 per 100,000 residents in Mexico, 116 in Canada and 143 for England and Wales.

Russia's prison population, which once rivaled the United States', has dropped to 584 per 100,000 because of prisoner amnesties in recent years, the group said.

The U.S. inmate population in 2003 grew at its fastest pace in four years. The number of inmates increased 1.8 percent in state prisons, 7.1 percent in federal prisons and 3.9 percent in local jails.

In 2003, 68 percent of prison and jail inmates were members of racial or ethnic minorities, the government said. An estimated 12 percent of all black men in their 20s were in jails or prisons, as were 3.7 percent of Hispanic men and 1.6 percent of white men in that age group, according to the report.

The report also said:

—The number of women in state and federal prisons grew by 5 percent, compared to a 2.7 percent increase for men. Still, men greatly outnumber women: 1.36 million to 100,102.

—Local jails held 691,301 inmates.

—The inmate population in 10 states increased at least 5 percent. Some of the smallest state prison systems saw the largest increase: Vermont's grew by 12.2 percent, Minnesota was up 9.4 percent and Maine 9.1 percent.

—Only nine states logged a decrease in prison population, led by Rhode Island with a 3.4 percent drop; Arkansas, 2.2 percent; and Montana, 2.1 percent.



Death Row

Capital Punishment Talk

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

I have had a friend on Death Row for almost two years, and I have finally visited with him. Due to the circumstances of his case I have to keep his name confidential.

This is my first trip to the US. I am from Norway and have lived there all my life. Norway is a small country with only 4.5 million citizens - needless to say everything here seems so big.

The day after I arrived I had a visit scheduled with my friend on death row. I had butterflies in my stomach entering the building...white walls, corridors, lots of people everywhere and guards. My friend's brother was there with me, and I could see how tense and guarded he was. We had to go through the metal detector and show our IDs to the guards requesting them. From there on I was on my own. One part of me wanted to rush and get to where I would first meet my friend, and another part of me wanted to run back out where the sun was shining. The need and want to finally see and talk to my friend face to face won and I went upstairs to the visiting area and a guard told me to wait for him in booth number 9.

I have never been in a prison before and I was looking around. At some point I looked towards the glass again and there he was. He grabbed the phone and I did the same. We both sat down and his first words were, "I knew I would catch you off guard there." He laughed because I jumped at least five inches off the floor when I turned to the glass and saw him standing there. I started to laugh too and then the environment disappeared and it was just him — and me. Finally. He put his hand up to the glass and on my side of the glass I put my hand up. Only a few inches of glass separated us. I wish I could give him a hug. He was so close and yet so terribly far away. I remember telling him that I wish I could give him a hug. He just looked at me and said nothing. He is used to being treated like an animal and put in a cage at all times. There was so much I wanted to say, but the time just flew and before I knew it he had to leave. He touched the glass good-bye and he was gone.

I left the visiting area and there was no one in the hall outside. I leaned against the wall and tried to catch my breath. I had tears in my eyes and all I could think was that he doesn't belong in there. Someone had told me that when looking into his eyes I would know for sure if he is innocent of the crime for which he is convicted. That someone was right. I looked into his eyes I know for sure that he doesn't belong on Death Row (no one does!). Visiting my friend has deeply touched me in a way I can't describe. It has brought us closer and I know we will be friends for as long as we both live. I felt close to my friend before visiting, but I know now that nothing can be compared to a face to face meeting.

Bye for now, but never forever...

~Lene

In Memorium - May They Rest in Peace

05/18/04 - Kelsey Patterson (TX)
05/26/04 - John Blackwelder (FL)



News From Death Row

Supreme Court Justice Stevens Says U.S. "Better Off " Without Capital Punishment

During a "fireside chat" with fellow Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer and hundreds of lawyers and judges who practice in federal courts in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin, Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens stated, "I think this country would be much better off if we did not have capital punishment." Stevens noted that he believes the death penalty is constitutional, adding, "But I really think it's a very unfortunate part of our judicial system and I would feel much, much better if more states would really consider whether they think the benefits outweigh the very serious potential injustice, because in these cases the emotions are very, very high on both sides and to have stakes as high as you do in these cases, there is a special potential for error. We cannot ignore the fact that in recent years a disturbing number of inmates on death row have been exonerated." The "fireside chat" was part of the 7th Circuit Bar Association dinner in Chicago. Justice Stevens and Justices Ruth Bader Ginsberg and Sandra Day O'Connor have all voiced concerns about the death penalty in recent years, but this is perhaps one the most pronounced statements against capital punishment made by a Supreme Court justice since the late Harry Blackmun, who wrote in 1994, "From this day forward, I no longer shall tinker with the machinery of death."

Oklahoma Governor Grants Clemency to Mexican Foreign National

Just days before the scheduled execution of Osvaldo Torres, a Mexican foreign national on Oklahoma's death row, Governor Brad Henry granted a request for clemency in part because of a recent International Court of Justice decision ordering the United States to review the cases of 51 Mexican foreign nationals on death row because they were denied their right to seek consular assistance following their arrest. Henry's announcement came just hours after the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals decided to stay Torres' execution and order a new hearing in his case. Last week, the Oklahoma Board of Pardon and Parole recommended clemency for Torres. Although Henry has denied three similar recommendations from the Board since taking office, his decision to commute Torres' sentence to life in prison without parole marks the first time that the Governor has granted clemency to an individual on death row. In his statement, Henry said the International Court of Justice ruling is binding on US courts, and that the US State Department had contacted his office to urge that he give careful consideration to the fact that the US signed the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which ensures access to consular assistance for foreign nationals who are arrested. "The treaty is also important to protecting the rights of American citizens abroad," Henry noted. In an opinion concurring with the Court of Criminal Appeals majority decision to hear Torres' claims that he was denied his access to consular assistance and that he was represented by ineffective counsel during trial, Judge Charles Chapel wrote, "I have concluded that there is a possibility a significant miscarriage of justice occurred, as shown by Torres' claims, specifically that the violation of his Vienna Convention rights contributed to trial counsel's ineffectiveness, that the jury did not hear significant evidence, and the results of the trial is unreliable." (The Oklahoman, May 14, 2004) In addition to those on death row in Oklahoma, Mexican foreign nationals that could be affected by the ICJ's ruling are on death rows in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, and Texas. None of these remaining foreign nationals are currently scheduled for execution.



A View From The Inside

An Inmate's Perspective

By Connie

Do Easy Time in North Carolina Prison System

This is a Letter I received from Donald Willis in NC. It seems child molestation not only effects us parents on the outside but also effects those on the inside. I wonder why our criminal justice systems have gone so wrong and their morals dropped so low.

I hope you enjoy the following article. Thank you Donald for your submission!

~Connie

The North Carolina Department of Corrections is flooded with child molesters and sex offenders who are treated better than anyone else. They are assigned to the best jobs with the highest pay that accumulates gain time releasing them from prison sooner. The staff often uses them as confidential informants because they say they can be trusted as long as there are no children involved. Molesters are considered for honor grade and work release at faster rate than normal inmates. They are released from prison at their minimum release dates because they assist the staff throughout their sentences. The State doesn't take into consideration the planning and premeditation a molester uses to get alone with their victims (our children). I have been in prison for many years and have never heard a molester admit his guilt or show any kind of remorse for his crimes. Inmates with other crimes are constantly acknowledging their mistakes and taking the right steps to avoid in them happening again. I have seen many molesters with three and four convictions sent to honor grade camps preparing them for release again. Does the North Carolina three-strike law only pertain to people who steal or drive under the influence? What does a parent do to protect their children from these animals? The courts are giving these predators minimal sentences and the North Carolina Department of Corrections is giving these violent criminals the easiest, fastest way back to the streets and back at our children. In most states child molesters are segregated from general population for their safety. While in the North Carolina prisons they are welcomed with open arms and early release dates!

Sincerely,

Donald Willis - Central Prison, NC

Vaulter of the Month

One of LostVault's Finest

Vaulter of the month for June is a long time member of LostVault, Jessica. Jessica was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, where she still resides with her beautiful two year old daughter, Izabela. Jessica's birthday is on January 13, 1983.

Jessica once had a boyfriend who was incarcerated. Her search to find others with loved ones in prison brought her to LostVault. Even though their relationship didn't work out, Jessica remained at LostVault because of all of the friendships she has made with the other members.

Jessica has a lively and quick personality. She always brings a unique perspective to any conversation which makes her loved by many of us in the LostVault family.



Spirituality

Inspirational Words

By Dee (Lucidity)



Doing "The Work"

Here at LostVault we refer to what we do as "The Work." This term was originated here on our message boards by Chele, also known as QQ. Some people are wondering just what is "The Work?" Well, it's writing to an inmate, typing ads, posting ads, sending out birthday and Christmas cards. It's sending cards to sick children, and inmates who have lost a loved one. It's helping out one of "Our Family" when her house was burned to the ground and her family was left with nothing. It's supporting one of our members who is sick or worried about medical tests. It's researching information for other members. It's missing someone when they haven't posted for days, and calling them to see if everything is OK. It's volunteering time, and sometimes money. It's being like a family, our second family...sticking together. It's what the LostVault is all about - a group of dedicated people joining together for a cause we feel deeply about - prisons and those confined behind the walls. It's working together to bring mail to some otherwise lonely inmates who receive none. This is what our "work" is all about.

Everyone has a choice in life if they want to do "The Work." It can be helping a neighbor with their children. Bringing a plate of food over to someone who is sick. Letting someone use your phone and newspaper to find a job, lending an ear or a shoulder to a friend. Welcoming a new person into a group, or the neighborhood. Although this kind of "work" doesn't pay off in money, the rewards are much more!

Basic Buddhism

What the Dalai Lama and his followers believe about God, Buddha, and other teachings.

By James A. Beverley | posted 6/8/01

- The current universe has evolved through natural law.
- Truth has been given through countless ages by various Buddhas or enlightened beings.
- Gautama Buddha, who lived 2,500 years ago, is the teacher for our era.
- While salvation depends on individual effort, the Buddhist is to take refuge in the Buddha, his teaching (dharma) and the Buddhist community (sangha).
- The Buddha taught Four Noble Truths: (1) suffering is real; (2) suffering is caused by selfish desire; (3) suffering will cease when selfish desire is eliminated; and (4) selfish desire will cease through following the Noble Eightfold Path.
- The Noble Eightfold Path that leads to nirvana involves (1) Right View, (2) Right Resolve, (3) Right Speech, (4) Right Action, (5) Right Livelihood, (6) Right Effort, (7) Right Mindfulness, and (8) Right Concentration.
- All living things are subject to the law of karma, the principle of cause and effect, which controls the cycle of reincarnation.
- The Buddhist is to abstain from killing, stealing, forbidden sex, lying, and the use of illicit drugs and liquor.
- There is no God or Supreme Creator.
- Buddhism is not irrational, pessimistic, or nihilistic.

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QQ & Motty Says

Voices with Flavor

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

QQ/Motty On: Teaching Children tolerance of differences

QQ Sayzzzz...

People are different in all ways, race, creed, color, sexual preferences, ideals, and morals, and whether or not we agree or have the same mindset, all people deserve to have the rights to their ideas, and be respected for who they are and what they believe regardless of what our own beliefs entail.

My son Trae (11 years old) said to me, "prejudice is an unfair opinion based on ignorance of another idea or belief or some other difference." Yanno I don't talk that way, havin bi-racial children, I have learned people will look stare and make comments. We are bigger than that, we choose to ignore and move along havin children that are **subject** to a bullyin. I let them know, all folks are human, and u cant judge one, based on any one thing!! Human kindness comes in all shapes colors and denominations, no one asks to be who they are, but who are we to judge one that is different?

A while back one of my kids said, "I hate so-and-so." I said why? They said, "he is ugly!!" I said sit down, I blasted them with questions, who is the smartest, who is the prettiest, who is the most popular, who is they best friend and why, who is dumb, who is poor, who is this and that? I was **shook** my kids, had a fast answer for every one, then I said, "if everyone in your class mama was askin them the same, what would u be in their answers?" My kids looked like they was stuck!!!!!! They wasn't so fast on that answer. Matter of fact, I never got one. I told my kids, u are so fast to judge, but so slow when its u that is judged!! Think about that, and the next time u want to judge, look at u, before u do. Prejudice is bred and learned, no one is born with it. I have been blessed, thru the **work** I do, to meet many people I may have never met, and sure, I aint even gonna lie, I was like write a cowboy? A Muslim? An Aryan man? A guilty person? An innocent man? A woman who killed her children? I thought long and hard, and said why not? They may not be one I have met before, or any time in the future, but to say I cant is to say I'm holding back, I'm prejudice and prejudgin' based on differences. How can I teach my kids one thing and do another??

I may not agree with all of the people I have met in my work, but respect is the common ground. I have learned much I never would have known, had I not chose to write some people, and they wouldn't have known me and my life (known about my life that should have been knockin someone else down, due to a difference is a way of gratification, for a bully). A real person will see that if u keep an open mind to all, and no u dont have to agree with it, but respect them for what and who they are. U may just learn some new stuff. Change the way u think, and then we can teach this next generation how we all are basic **human** first. The rest is choice, and just like u have yours, I have mine, and if we dot get it together, 4 the children of **our** future, this world will never have a chance at harmony!!

This post is...as always, dedicated to my babies, the future, and opening your eyes to see and count your blessins! I'm out...

Motty Says...

My work with children brings to my ears constant things like "bean pole, four eyes, fatty, and short stack" (mind you these are the NICER of the things I hear coming from them). At times, it seems I was taught something that isn't being taught to our children much anymore. Tolerance and respect of differences. My mother is not perfect, but I know she tried to

always instill good values in me. She always reminded me that no matter what physical or mental difference someone may have, we are all one thing...human.

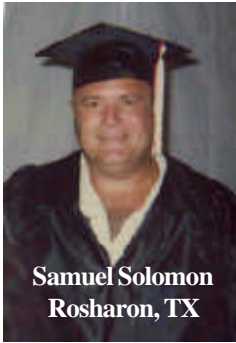
Negative connotations are everywhere. While I believe in "think before you speak" I don't believe in being extremely politically correct. Such as "mankind" into "humankind" (still has "man" in it)! Does it mean I'm a hypocrite because I don't use PC terminology? Maybe, but I think it makes me a realist. I see nothing wrong with using some words that aren't PC anymore (i.e., woman, female). Big deal, they have "man" in them! We wouldn't be here without each other, so why not be a team?

My mother lives by the theory "garbage in, garbage out." In it's simplest form, it means "what you teach, is what is learned." So simple the words, but so very true. Think about it. What you show your (and others) children is what they learn to know and to pass on. Teach them hate and they will carry it on. Teach them to research what they don't understand and to tolerate the things they may not agree with, and they will carry that on. I only wish it was listed in a pamphlet that was handed out to parents. Maybe then we wouldn't need laws to stop people from discriminating, and maybe hate crimes could be erased. I'd say that will only happen in my own world but then, I do have a right to dream.

*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, PO 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 wish to remain totally anonymous, please specify in your correspondence.*

Pen Pals of The Month

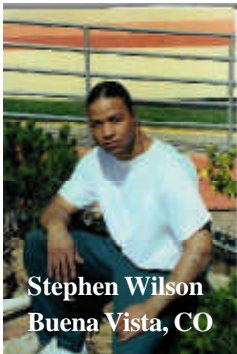
Inmates Desiring Mail



Samuel Solomon
Rosharon, TX

Samuel is looking for a woman he can spoil. She should be sassy, self-confident, outspoken, and capable of being his friend. He wants a best friend, and someone he can confide in, depend on, and know that she has his best interests at heart.

If you would like to write either Samuel or Stephen, 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.



Stephen Wilson
Buena Vista, CO

Stephen likes to have fun and has a great sense of humor. He enjoys meeting new people. His hobbies include radio broadcasting, reading, and studying the Word. He is striving to create a better life for himself.



Dear Libbie

Advice for the Lovelorn

By Joanna L. Massing (Libbie)



Jealousy...when that word is said a feeling of apprehension is usually felt because more often than not, nothing good stems its use. There have been times I've seen this vindictive, green-eyed monster, a cousin to envy, rear its ugly head. Jealousy is a feeling that we have all felt at one point or another. It has taken hold of our emotions, made our insides boil over, given us temporary insanity as we lost control of our actions, until the fog clears and we see clearly again. It's a natural human emotion that is wrought with misunderstanding. Some say jealousy in all aspects is bad, I believe a small bit of jealousy in your lives keeps the fire burning, you yearning and striving for more.

Someone dear to me said if I wasn't jealous, then they wouldn't really care for me. I saw the truth in that and understood what he meant but the difference was that he didn't allow jealousy to dictate his actions. It's the ability to control this emotion and harness the negative aspects of it that makes the difference between becoming a destructive force or a positive influence.

In the aspect of pen pals, most of us go into this with an urge to lend a hand out in friendship but in some cases it steps over a line and that's where jealousy becomes a desire for ownership. I believe it is trust that separates this thin line. Trust in a friendship or relationship has to be built and worked on daily and I believe to build trust you have to communicate your every thoughts, feelings, fears, wants and desires as well as listen to the other party's thoughts, wants, desires and fears. Unfortunately trust doesn't come quickly but jealousy may.

This subject leads into our month's questions. Remember what you give out is what you will eventually take back in so be careful what you let control your emotions.

Dear Libbie,

Can you help me? I've been writing to my love for about 1½ years and recently he has been adding pen pals. I know there is nothing romantic there but it just seems to bother me. I see him often and he tells me that he loves me, but I just can't shake the feeling that these new pen pals are going to take him away from me...selfish? Yup! I don't want to feel like I do, but I just can't help it. I don't want him to dump his new friends because I know how important mail is to him, I just don't know how to stop feeling the way I do. Can you help?

~Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

I understand your predicament. You understand how important it is for your love to have mail and pen pals but yet you also are afraid they might take your place yet you know they won't – confusing, huh? I would say you are even jealous perhaps? Hey I've been there I would be lying if I said it wouldn't make me jealous if my man wrote to others but this is where he and I have an understanding. I think the next time you visit your love the both of you should sit down and communicate your feelings in a non-confrontational manner. Tell him exactly how you are feeling, hear what he has to say about this and both of you come up with something that you both can live with. Don't ignore it because this type of problem has a way of just gnawing away at your insides until you explode in a destructive manner.

Just remember how our incarcerated loved ones live. They do not have the daily stimulus that we have and have very limited activities to keep themselves occupied. Their only way of having friends is usually through pen

pals and if you and your love are in a relationship then you should be content in the knowledge that none of his pals can take your place. I definitely think you should broach this subject up with your love. Good luck!

Hi Libbie,

I'm having one of my pals send this in to you. I'm currently incarcerated and I have quite a few years left to do. Without the pen pals I made I don't think I could have made it this far and have remained sane. I recently met a wonderful girl that I have fallen in love with but she has asked me to stop writing to my female pals. I would do anything for her and am willing to do that but my friend here that I am sending this through to you doesn't think it is right. I love my girl and don't want to lose her yet I don't want to lose the friends I have made as well. But if it came down to it I would have to choose my girl. Do you think this is wrong?

~Big Bear, WI

Dear Big Bear,

I have to say first off that I personally think it is wrong for your girl to ask this of you. She might feel jealous or insecure but she should also understand and see what you are getting out of your platonic friendships. I don't think you should have to choose between your girl and your friends. As you say you have a few more years left, I would think she would be happy for you to have your friends help occupy your time as well as keep you sane. I think you really need to think a bit more before you let your friends go. My thoughts is that when you are in a relationship you would want the best for each other and eventually you will be released...does this mean even then you will not be able to have platonic female friends...? Think wisely friend! Good Luck!

Spirituality Continued from page 5

Religious Holidays for June 2004

6/1 to 6/30 (Pagan): June dedicated to Old Roman Goddess Juno - partner of Jove (God of Happiness), protector of marriage and family, and punisher of abusive and adulterous spouses.

6/6: Trinity Sunday—Christian celebration of the one universal Deity as Holy Heavenly Father, Holy Spirit Mother, and Holy Christ Child.

6/7 to 6/15: Vestalia—Old Roman festival honoring Goddess Vesta (Greek Hestia). Women made food offerings at the sacred hearths of home and temple.

6/8: Death day of Prophet Muhammad (632), mystical Father of Islam. [Born 570: exact date unknown]

6/10: Corpus Christi—Christian day for veneration of Christ Immanuel in the Host - divine immanence in the grain.

6/13: Christian feast of St. Anthony (d. 1231), guardian of the poor and the powerless, and guide of social justice activists.

6/17 eve: Old European feast of the Triple Goddess (Goddess of the Moon and the Seasons), marking the transformation of the Virgin into the Mother.

6/17 to 6/20: Iroquois Green Bean Ceremony—in thanksgiving for the bean harvest; celebrated with tobacco offerings, singing, drumming, dancing, and feasting.

6/20 (8:57 p.m. EDT): Summer Solstice—Marks the beginning of Summer and the longest day and shortest night of the year; celebration of the light with dancing around a bonfire.

6/20 eve to 6/21 eve: Feast of Old Greek Goddess Athena - as protector and defender.

6/20 to 6/21: Inti Rayni—Inca festival honoring Sun God Inti. 6/20 to 6/21: Feast of the Great Spirit/Great Mystery that encompasses Mother Earth and Father Sky - honoring Deity as Orenda (Iroquois), Asgaya Galun Lati (Cherokee), Wakan Tanka (Lakota) & Awonawilona (Zuni).

6/20 to 6/23: Lakota Sun Dance—Festival of prayer, fasting, dancing, and healing in honor of Sun God Wi; offerings are also made to Maka/Mother Earth and Haokah/Father Sky. Lakotas believe all Deities are aspects of Creator Takuskanskan.

6/21: Yoruba/Santeria feast of Orisha Babalu Aye, guardian of the disabled.

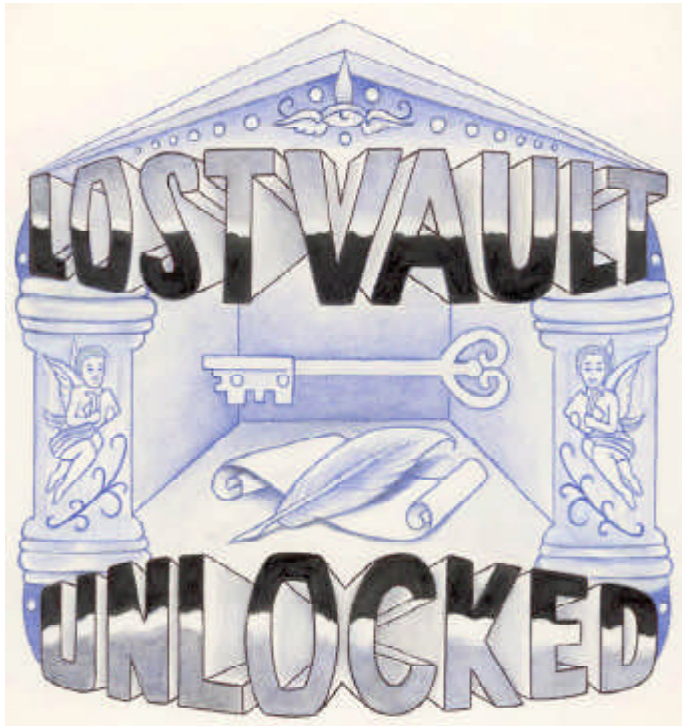
6/25: Day the Supreme Court recognized that government-sponsored prayer in public schools imposes religion on students and violates the US Constitution (1962). [Engel v. Vitale, 370 US 421 (1962)]

6/29: Yoruba/Santeria feast of Orisha Elegguá, intercessor and ruler of destinies. Yorubas/Santeros celebrate with divination and food offerings. □



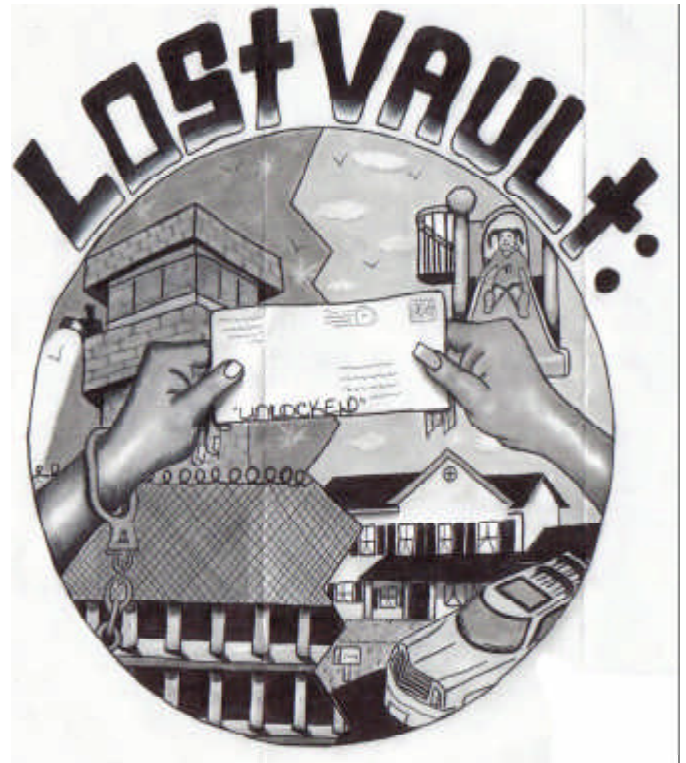
Inmate Art & Poetry

A Look Within



2nd Place

James Diaz - Rosharon, TX



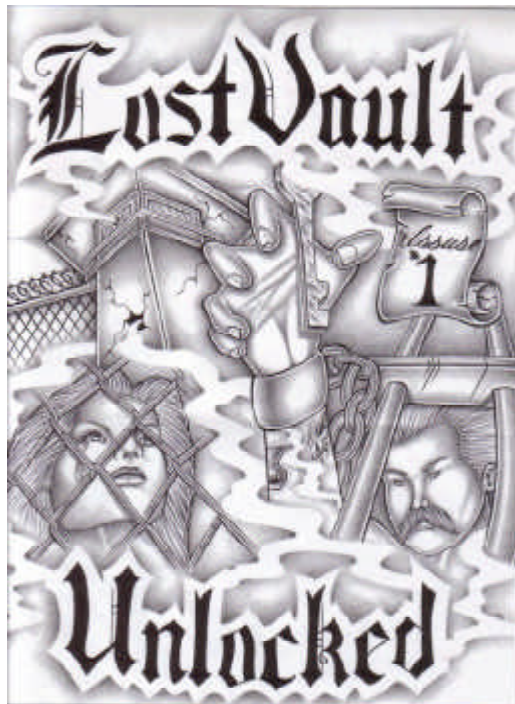
3rd Place

Thomas Plump - Carlisle, IN

Thank you to everyone who entered the logo contest. As you can see, we had several great entries and the competition was extremely close. Many of us had difficulty voting for just one. All of these guys did an excellent job. Pictured here are our finalists.

Congratulations to the winner,

**Steven Alvarado
Livingston, TX**



Rojelio Guerra - Huntsville, TX



Brett Bogle - Raiford, FL



Jessie's Jokes & Junk

...The Fun Side of Life

Jessica C. Snyder (Jessica)

~Joke of The Month~

The Seven Dwarfs go to the Vatican, and because they are "the seven dwarfs" they get ushered into see the Pope. Dopey leads the pack. "Dopey my son," says the Pope, "what can I do for you?" Dopey asks, "Excuse me, Your Excellency, but are there any dwarf nuns in Rome?" The Pope wrinkles his brow at the odd question, thinks for a moment and answers, "No Dopey, there are no dwarf nuns in Rome." In the background a few of the dwarfs begin giggling. Dopey turns around and gives them a glare, silencing them. Dopey turns back to face the Pope. "Your Worship, are there any dwarf nuns in all of Europe?" The Pope, puzzled again, thinks for a moment and then answers, "No Dopey, there are no dwarf nuns in all of Europe." This times all the other dwarfs burst into laughter. Once again, Dopey turns around and silences them all with an angry glare. Dopey turns back to the Pope and says, "Mr. Pope, are there ANY dwarf nuns in the whole world?" The Pope answers, "I'm sorry, my son, there are no dwarf nuns anywhere in the world." The other dwarfs collapse into a heap, rolling, and laughing, pounding on the floor, tears rolling down their cheeks as they begin chanting: "Dopey screwed a penguin!" "Dopey screwed a penguin!"

~Logic Problem~

Joseph and his 3 brothers are big fans of the Detroit Lions football team, so they were thrilled to win tickets to watch the Lions play for the NFL championship in the 1998 Superbowl. The boys wore their favorite jerseys, each a different color, to the game and sat together in 4 seats in a row. Each boy visited the concession stand during a different quarter of the game and bought a different snack from that of his brothers. Use the clues and table below to determine the order in which the boys sat, the colors of their shirts, the quarter in which each boy bought his snack, and what snack each boy bought.

1. The 4 boys are Noah, the red-shirted one, the one who got a snack during the first quarter, and the one who bought a hot dog.
2. The fan who bought a snack during the 2nd quarter sat between the fans who bought popcorn and nachos.
3. Daniel sat next to both the fan who bought a hot dog and the one who visited the concession stand in the first quarter.
4. The green-shirted fan sat to the left of Stephen, who did not sit next to the popcorn muncher.
5. The blue-shirted fan sat next to both the red-shirted and yellow-shirted fans.
6. One boy got pizza in the 4th quarter.

**Answers Next Month*

~Fun Facts!~

Strange Laws:

- In Texas, it's against the law for anyone to have a pair of pliers in his or her possession.
- In Miami, it is forbidden to imitate an animal.
- In Georgia, it is against the law to slap a man on the back or front.
- It is against the law in Connecticut for a man to write love letters to a girl whose mother or father has forbidden the relationship.
- In Massachusetts, It is illegal to duel with water pistols.
- In Washington, all lollipops are banned.

Every day 20 banks are robbed.
The average take is \$2,500

One car out of every 230 made
was stolen last year

A cockroach can live several
weeks with its head cut off. It dies
from starvation

Over 2500 left
handed people a
year are killed
from using
products made for
right handed
people

~Britishisms~

Oscar Wilde said, "The English really have everything in common with the Americans except, of course, language." Too true.

Following are 24 American words. See if you can supply their British equivalents.

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Apartment | 2. Elevator | 3. Pantyhose |
| 4. Back-up lights | 5. Faucet | 6. Private school |
| 7. Band-aid | 8. Flashlight | 9. Raisin |
| 10. Bathrobe | 11. Hamburger meat | 12. Sidewalk |
| 13. Bill | 14. Lima bean | 15. Spool |
| 16. Checkers | 17. Molasses | 18. Thumbtack |
| 19. Closet | 20. Nightstick | 21. Tic-tac-toe |
| 22. Cream of Wheat | 23. Odometer | 24. Vest |

Answers at bottom of page

Answers to last month riddles:

1. There are 11 letters in "THE ALPHABET"
2. Hawaii. All of it is surrounded by water. Most people, amazingly enough, get this one wrong. They either say Maine, Florida, Alaska, or California.
3. ALL the children are boys, so 1/2 half are boys and so is the other half.
4. The farmer's load was heavier. His hired help only carried two sacks, while the farmer carries one sack, but his sack is a sack of grain. The hired help only carried 2 sacks — both empty.
5. Five. If you said ten, don't feel bad as most people do. "Each team" is the key here.
6. The man did exactly as he said he would and wrote "your exact weight" on the paper.
7. You would be in 2nd. You thought first place, huh? Well, you passed the guy in second place, not first.
8. EDAM cheese (made backwards is edam)
9. Only one... after that, it's not empty!

Britishisms

1. Flat 2. Lift 3. Tights 4. Reversing lights 5. Tap 6. Public school 7. Elastoplast 8. Torch 9. Sultana 10. Dressing gown 11. Mince 12. Pavement or footpath 13. Bank note 14. Broad bean 15. Cotton reel 16. Draughts 17. Black treacle 18. Drawing pin 19. Cupboard 20. Truncheon 21. Nougats and crosses 22. Semolina 23. Mileometer 24. Waistcoat



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

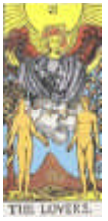
Ad prices range from \$5 to \$30 (we will accept postage stamps from inmates); all proceeds benefit LostVault.com and help keep us free. Your ad may not contain sexually explicit wording and ads soliciting products, services, or legal advice are not permitted from inmates.

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



My Love, Antonio...
I Remember when we met,
Seems only like yesterday,
But our love for each other,
Grows stronger everyday.

I love everything about you,
You'll always have my heart,
You and I are soul mates,
for that we'll never part.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BOO!!
Forever Yours,
~AntoniozBabyGurl




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
Listen live on the web:
www.kpft.org -or- www.kpftx.org

This space could be yours!
\$5* for up to 50 words

**graphics extra*

Prison Brutality Continued from page 1

"horseplay" that turned into a serious waste of taxpayer money. All charges were dropped on the attackers.

This "code of silence" is the standard protection that correctional officers use in the face of accusations of alleged brutality against inmates. It is as serious as the Mafia's "omerta," which demands absolute loyalty to the group. Everyone fully expects that their associates will reveal nothing to investigators who work vigorously to get to the bottom of the allegations of abuse and brutality in our prison systems. Anyone who violates this code can expect ostracism and vengeance. Another correctional officer out of California was brought up on charges for not holding grievance inmate grievance hearings. Documents state that he worried that holding the hearings would bring about the revelations of guard misconduct. The guard was suspended for 30 days. The personnel board, however, revoked the suspension because the department failed to bring a timely case. The Youth Authority in the state of California gave a correctional officer a six-month pay cut for allegedly beating a ward. The personnel board dismissed the penalty because the case wasn't filed within the one-year statute of limitations. The number of reversals and eased penalties should be a red flag to the state agencies that monitor the reports of the brutality coming out of these prisons. Often times these agencies carry out poor investigations into the abuse and trivialize the discipline, or there is no discipline at all for the actions of brutality handed down by the corrections officers.

Nine prison guards were suspended following the death of a Florida death row prisoner. A few days later, two other guards were also suspended for not cooperating with authorities in the investigation. The Florida Department of Corrections released a statement saying that the prisoner died "under suspicious circumstances." All of the guards were placed on administrative leave with pay. Attorneys for the suspended guards said the team acted "by the book." Four of the guards were later arrested and charged with second-degree murder in the stomping death of that Florida inmate. One guard out of the initial nine who were suspended for the beating death, was given total immunity from prosecution for his testimony. In late 2000, jurors acquit one of the officers charged with murder. In February of 2001, the other three officers were acquitted of the murder charges brought against them and therefore ended up with no justice for the victim. Thus, the never-ending cycle of abuse will continue to escalate and we will hear of more and more deaths of inmates. In May of 2002, the state attorney dropped all charges against the remaining defendants, citing that the two previous acquittals and problems with keeping the trial in Bradford County, where numerous prisons are located.

In 1980, another inmate died in a Florida prison from a blow to the head. A fellow inmate sent a note to the chairman of the House Committee on Corrections, Parole and Probation informing the lawmaker that he killed the inmate with a blessing from the prison guards. The inmate stated that the guards used him as a henchman to keep the inmates in line. An investigation by prison officials ended with the indictment of the inmate in the slaying, but a jury acquitted him. The investigation also uncovered beatings and sexual assaults and led to firings and suspensions of guards; the guards who were fired and suspended were later given their jobs back.

Prison guard abuse issues draw little public attention because most state laws prohibit public access to law enforcement personnel records and most state prisons are in remote areas. Additionally, prison advocates say the public usually doesn't care intensely about the treatment of inmates. There is a pressing need for major reform of prisons all across America regarding the state employee disciplinary system. The corrections system as a whole is highly dysfunctional, protecting, incompetent, lazy, and allows for unruly employees even when their misconduct is well documented. A complete overhaul of the correctional system's hiring and disciplinary procedures is needed without outside interference and cover-ups. It is in the prison systems that the most egregious crimes and incidents of employee misbehavior go unpunished. In many instances, we are left to wonder on which side of the prison bars the workers who are spared by the personnel board belong.

I am not sure where the line is drawn, but there is a line. The Department of Corrections is a self-running institution and it seems that they are reluctant to judge the actions of each other when there is any benefit of doubt to their colleagues. It is time to take internal affairs and move it out of the hands of the institutions themselves and delegate it to an agency that does not have ties to the Department of Corrections, where they are currently in charge of the investigations and the punishments of their own coworkers. Until that is done, any investigation into prison brutality will end up with minimal evidence and witnesses, and therefore the investigations will be in vain. Thus, the never-ending cycle of abuse will continue to escalate and we will hear of more and more inmate deaths within our American prison systems. □

