



## IN THIS ISSUE

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Ads .....                                   | 10 |
| Dear Libbie .....                           | 7  |
| Death Row .....                             | 4  |
| From The Editor's Desk .....                | 2  |
| Inmate Art & Poetry .....                   | 8  |
| LostVault - Who We Are And What We Do ..... | 2  |
| Pen Pal of The Month .....                  | 6  |
| Prison News .....                           | 3  |
| Rant and Rave with Matthew and Motty .....  | 6  |
| Spirituality .....                          | 5  |
| Vault Jokes & Junk .....                    | 9  |
| Vaulter of the Month.....                   | 10 |
| View From The Inside, A .....               | 5  |



The staff of *LostVault: Unlocked* would like to wish everyone a wonderful summer!

## Important Announcement Concerning Pen Pal Ads & Photos

by Michelle Bean (Sewergrrl)

Due to the overwhelming response to the free ads we offered, we announced in March that we would cease taking ads via snail mail and introduce a webform where friends and family members of inmates could post a free pen pal ad for their incarcerated loved ones. We met great opposition by some members of LostVault, particularly Melissa Ray (BabyGurl37), who was an Administrator of LostVault as well as the *LostVault: Unlocked* Editor-in-Chief. She wanted to continue to help inmates get these ads and offered to take the remaining ad mail as well as future ad mail to her post office box. After a while of negotiating, I agreed to let her take the remainder of the ad mail from the middle of April to the middle of May (I sent them to her). I then closed my PO box and begin forwarding all the mail from the boxes in Maryland to her PO box in Harriman, TN beginning the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2004.

Approximately 1½ months later (June 4, 2004), Melissa's Mother Dixie publicly attacked me over postage costs that Melissa was attempting to obtain from the members of LostVault. She claimed she needed 2,000 stamps to cover postage on what I KNEW, after taking these ads myself for 7 months, was ludicrous for 1½ months worth of ads (at that time we had approximately 2,000 total ads from ads I posted since the inception of LostVault). Of course I replied to her Mother's attack and Melissa, claiming she knew nothing of the planned attack, became angry with me for not ignoring her Mother's words. Perhaps I was wrong to publicly defend myself to Dixie's words saying "Michelle is not dedicated" and "Michelle is not here to be a help in adding any benefits to the inmate's lives." But I ask you – if someone trashed you and your character after you spent 7 months of your life helping those incarcerated (whom you don't know at all) obtain new friends, wouldn't you be extremely offended, upset and wanting to clear your good name? Obviously I am the bad person for standing up for myself and not cowering in a corner when Melissa sent her Mother after me.

I spoke with Melissa for several hours on the telephone and she promised to return the ads to LostVault. We waited for them for 2 months, and here we are now, without the ads and Melissa ignoring emails and telephone calls regarding their return. With that being said, it is with a heavy heart that I must announce the following news to the inmates who have submitted ads and photos to LostVault and have not received your photos back: you will not be getting your ads posted by anyone at LostVault and you will not be getting your photos returned. It's not that we don't want you to do this for you, it's that we cannot, as we do not have your property. Your property is being held by Melissa Ray in Harriman, TN.

We have attempted every available avenue: asking nicely, offering to pay postage, and legal action through the post office...all of which provided a dead end. We have exhausted our options and have no alternative other than to tell you, the inmates, that we are sorry. I have personally forfeited many hours of sleep trying to think of some way, any way, to get these ads and irreplaceable photographs returned, all to no avail.

I am truly sorry this happened. I take full responsibility for entrusting Melissa with your ads and photos; I should have continued taking them myself until the deadline of May 31<sup>st</sup>. I cannot change the past and will have to deal with my actions on my own. I trusted Melissa and considered her a good friend, thinking she would never hurt inmates - those whom she claimed she cared so much about and had a genuine desire to help. I gave her the ads in an attempt to help you all continue to get your ads and it backfired. I cannot express the regret I feel for my error in judgment and I hope that you can forgive me.

Michelle



# 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](http://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.

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

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:** Morigayn Johnson (Motty)

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

**MONTHLY COLUMNISTS:**

Connie - A View From Inside

Dawna - Prison News

Dee (Lucidity) - Spirituality

Joanna L. Massing (Libbie) - Dear Libbie

Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi) - Death Row

Matthew Allen (KilgoreTrout) - Rant & Rave with Matthew and Motty

Morigayn Johnson (Motty) - Rant & Rave with Matthew and Motty

**LOGO ART:** Steven Alvarado - Livingston, TX

**CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS:**

David Aguirre - Richmond, TX

Chris Binch - Lamesa, TX

Hector Duenez - Livingston, TX

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*LostVault: Unlocked* mailing address:

**LostVault: Unlocked**

**P.O. Box 294**

**Washburn, TN 37888**

Please do not mail anything to this address other than items for the newsletter!

# From The Editor's Desk

## Letters to The Editor



Wow, what a busy month it's been! We have been lacking in something here at *LostVault: Unlocked* that I'd say most of you don't miss this though, but I do... testosterone! Yes we finally have a male staffer and I must say I welcome his views and am delighted to share the Rant & Rave column with Matthew. I think a male point of view will bring something wonderfully refreshing to this estrogen laden place.

Another change is Lisa who is taking over "The View" for our Vault Mommy Connie, who needs to take time off due to her pregnancy. She is having some complications and I ask you all to keep her in your thoughts, prayers & meditations.

I'd like to remind you about our new "contest" (though it's not really that) to send in the reason why you value your pen pal. Next month we will be printing as many as we can fit on a first come first served, so get them in ASAP! Inmates, send them to the LV mailing address. Web users, send them to me via PM on LV or to [newsletter@lostvault.com](mailto:newsletter@lostvault.com) with "pen pal contest" or something of that sort. This is a great way to tell your pals why you treasure them, and will go along well with LostVault's first ever Pen Pal Day! See page 10 for further details and those dreaded rules.

We are also trying out horoscopes this month, please write in and let us know what you think about the addition!

Best Wishes Always,  
~Motty~

## NOTICE!



**Please remember that LostVault does not accept ads via snail mail any longer! We have received quite a few ads to our newsletter address and unfortunately we are not staffed to handle ad mail. Please have an outside friend or loved one post your free pen pal ad for you. Thank you!**



# Prison News

## News From Around the Globe

By Dawna

### U.S. Parole and Prison Population Sets Record

According to a Justice Department study, a record 6.9 million Americans were incarcerated or on probation last year, nearly 131,000 more than in 2002. A whopping 3.2% of the adult population in the United States, or 1 in every 32 American adults, is currently incarcerated or on parole. The states of California and Texas account for nearly one million inmates. The report also included other statistics. Washington state, for example, has the highest percentage of people on parole, with 3,767 parolees per every 100,000 Washingtonians. New Hampshire had the lowest percentage of people on parole, with only 426 parolees per 100,000 residents. The Justice Department study also stated that approximately 38% of those paroled last year have returned to prison on new charges.

### Pontiac Prison Spared the Axe — for Now

Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich confirmed last week that Pontiac Prison will not be closed for at least eleven months. Vandalia Correctional Center and a youth detention facility will also remain open for the next year. The governor had called for the closing of the prisons earlier this year, but faced swift opposition from Republicans and those employed by the prisons. Republicans were fearful that the prisons, all of which are located in Republican-controlled areas, would bring trouble in upcoming elections.

The governor is now calling for the creation of an independent commission, which would be responsible for examining which prisons, if any, should be closed in the state of Illinois. The governor believes the state of Illinois has too many prisons, and some of the older prisons should be closed and the inmates transferred to a newer facility. If the independent commission, to be named the Prison Closing Commission, is formed, it would be the commission's job to determine if the governor's plan is best for the state. Pontiac Prison opened in 1871 and is one of the oldest operating prisons in Illinois.

### High Desert Prison on Lockdown, May Remain that Way for Weeks

High Desert Prison, located in Indian Springs, Nevada, has been placed on lockdown and may remain on lockdown for several more weeks, according to officials. A racially-motivated riot started in the prison yard on July 13th. One inmate was fatally injured, with 18 more injuries reported. This is the second lockdown for High Desert Prison this year, with an 8-day lockdown instituted in January following the fatal stabbing of an inmate.

### Federal Appeals Court: Long Hair Prohibited in Prison, Regardless of Religion

A federal appeals court ruled on July 23rd that an Ohio inmate, who is also a Cherokee Indian, may not grow out his hair while in prison, despite his religious beliefs. The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against Cornelius Hoevenaer, age 66, who is serving a life sentence. Hoevenaer claimed that he could not cut his hair because of his religion, and prison regulations regarding length of hair violated his right to freedom of religion. The federal court, however, ruled that such regulations did not violate his right to practice his religion. Hoevenaer's lawyer vows to take the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

### Texas Prison System Preparing for Influx of Inmates

Texas' prison system is scrambling to lease enough beds from county jails and private prisons to meet the needs of its growing inmate population. The state's inmate population is predicted to exceed the state's capacity within a year. There is no immediate plan for constructing more prisons, such as the \$1.5 billion project in the 1990s. The Legislative Budget Board states that the Texas prison system has a capacity to house 153,320 inmates state-wide, but Texas will have 153,820 inmates within a year. By 2008, the Texas prison system will have more than 5000 inmates over its capacity.

Gary Johnson, executive director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, believes this will not be a problem. "We think there are several

thousand beds available in county jails, and we think there may be some private vendors that have some space available," he reported.

The need for more space will probably be a topic for debate in the next legislative session, but it is doubtful it will be a hot button issue. Some state legislators are calling for alternatives to incarceration, such as drug treatment programs and community-supervised probation, and more emphasis on programs that keep inmates from reoffending once they are released.

### Critics Question Private Prisons' Effectiveness

Private prisons were once heralded as great savers of taxpayers' money. Now, some critics are calling this belief into question. After a riot in a private prison last week, located in Crowley County, Colorado, critics of private prisons are asking if private prisons are as safe, and money-efficient, as once believed. Many inmates in private prisons are from out-of-state — the prisoners who started the riot in Crowley County, for example, were not prisoners from Colorado — and guards in private prisons often receive less training hours than those who work in state-run facilities. Critics acknowledge that taxpayers don't have to pay for private prison construction, but many other costs are picked up by the state. State Representative Buffie McFadyen stated, "The state, to my understanding, picks up the cost of those private prison inmates for clothing, transportation, their medical costs, much of their case management, riot control, inmate recovery, and, I just learned this last week, we're also paying for part of the training of the private prison employees." Colorado taxpayers paid for riot control in the Crowley County incident, although the private owners of the prison vow to reimburse the state. Still, critics are uncertain whether private prisons are as beneficial as they are claimed to be.

### Florida to Let Former Felons Vote

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - The Florida Division of Elections has done an about-face and decided it will allow voting by almost 2,500 former felons whose restored voting rights had been threatened with revocation.

The agency initially said state law required that former felons be deleted from the voter rolls because they had registered to vote before they were granted clemency. Florida is one of seven states that do not automatically restore felons' civil rights after they finish their prison sentences.

Secretary of State Glenda Hood backtracked on the issue Wednesday.

"It goes without saying that our guiding principle throughout this process will be to err on the side of the voter," Hood said in a statement.

The decision drew praise from civil rights groups, who argued that qualified voters could have been kicked off the rolls because of administrative errors and bureaucratic bungling.

The American Civil Liberties Union (news - web sites) and the Florida Justice Institute had threatened to sue unless the state switched course, saying forcing voters to register again served no legitimate purpose and potentially violated the law.

"I think it was a needless impediment to the right to vote in Florida," said Howard Simon, executive director of the ACLU of Florida.

Simon cautioned that the state's list of 47,000 possible felons registered to vote must still be scrutinized for mistaken identities and other irregularities before elections supervisors remove anyone from the rolls.

County elections supervisors also had balked at the state's mandate requiring those pardoned felons to reregister.

Many considered it a paper-pushing technicality at a time when local election officials must investigate thousands of names, determine who is eligible to vote, and then notify by mail any suspected felons whose civil rights have not been restored.

"That's good news for the voters, and certainly it makes a lot of our tasks easier to follow," said Miami-Dade County Elections Supervisor Constance Kaplan. "We want to make sure people aren't disenfranchised."





## Death Row

### Capital Punishment Talk

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

### News From Death Row

#### Death Row Numbers Continue to Decline

The latest edition of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund's quarterly publication "Death Row USA" is now available on DPIC's Web site. The April 2004 report reveals a continuing decline in the number of individuals on death row in the United States. The current population of 3,487 is 17 less than the 3,504 individuals reported in January 2004 and 210 fewer than the 3,697 reported in October 2002. "Death Row USA" provides a comprehensive look at the nation's death row population, including a complete listing of those serving death sentences in each state. The report also details execution data, race statistics, and information on women and juvenile offenders. In addition, this resource provides a useful overview of important court cases from around the country that could shape the future of capital punishment (NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund "Death Row USA," April 2004).

#### Tennessee Study Finds Death Penalty Costly, Ineffective

A new report released by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury recommended changes to the state's costly death penalty and called into question its effectiveness in preventing crime. The Office of Research noted that it lacked sufficient data to accurately account for the total cost of capital trials, stating that "because cost and time records were not maintained, the Office of Research was unable to determine the total, comprehensive cost of the death penalty in Tennessee." Although noting that, "no reliable data exists concerning the cost of prosecution or defense of first-degree murder cases in Tennessee," the report concluded that capital murder trials are longer and more expensive at every step compared to other murder trials. In fact, the available data indicated that in capital trials, taxpayers pay half again as much as murder cases in which prosecutors seek prison terms rather than the death penalty. Findings in the report include the following:

- Death penalty trials cost an average of 48% more than the average cost of trials in which prosecutors seek life imprisonment.
- Tennessee District Attorneys General are not consistent in their pursuit of the death penalty.
- Surveys and interviews of district attorneys indicate that some prosecutors "use the death penalty as a 'bargaining chip' to secure plea bargains for lesser sentences."
- Previous research provides no clear indication whether the death penalty acts as a method of crime prevention.
- The Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals reversed 29 percent of capital cases on direct appeal.
- Although any traumatic trial may cause stress and pain for jurors, the victims' family, and the defendant's family, the pressure may be at its peak during death penalty trials.

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#### Study Finds High Risk of Error in Eyewitness Identification

A study conducted by the U.S. Navy and Yale University found that **eyewitness testimony is often largely inaccurate, even when victims get a long look at violent criminals, and police and juries may be giving this evidence too much credibility.** After a unique study of 509 Navy and Marine officers undergoing high-level and low-level stress during elite hostage survival training at Fort Bragg, N.C., researchers discovered that few of the participating top officers could accurately identify their "interrogators" and "guards" during a line-up conducted 24 hours after the grueling sessions. When asked to select their captors from a line-up, **only 30% of the high-stress group made correct identifications** and only 62% of the low-stress group made accurate identifications. When sequential photos were used, the accuracy rate of the high-stress group rose to 49% and the low-stress rate improved to 76%. Researchers found that nearly 7 out of 10 high-stress participants made mistaken identifications, and **there was no relationship between the participant's confidence level and the accuracy of their memory.** In fact, officers who were absolutely positive that they had selected the right person were no more likely to be correct than officers who expressed some doubt. "Memory in healthy people is not inherently terribly accurate. There's a substantial amount of error. Maybe we should demand more evidence," said Charles A. Morgan III, a Yale psychiatrist and lead author of the study. One explanation for these identification errors may be the high levels of hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline that result from stress and may degrade spatial memory. (New Hampshire Register, Science Section, June 21, 2004).

#### National, International Leaders Urge Supreme Court to Ban Execution of Juvenile Offenders

Former U.S. **President Jimmy Carter**, former Soviet Union **President Mikhail Gorbachev**, **medical experts**, and **48 nations** are among those who filed friend-of-the-court briefs on Monday (July 19) urging the U.S. Supreme Court to end the juvenile death penalty. The Court is scheduled to hear arguments this fall in *Roper v. Simmons*, a case that will determine the constitutionality of executing juvenile offenders. The U.S. is one of only a handful of nations around the world that continues to permit the execution of juvenile offenders, and one of only five nations (Congo, China, Iran, Pakistan, and the U.S.) to carry out such executions during the past four years, according to the brief filed by Nobel Peace Prize winners, including Carter and Gorbachev. The Court also received briefs from the 25-nation European Union, Mexico, Canada, and other nations that argued that executions of juvenile offenders "violates widely accepted human rights norms and the minimum standards of human rights set forth by the United Nations." Similar briefs were filed by former **U.S. diplomats**, the **American Medical Association**, the **American Psychiatric Association**, and the **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops** (Associated Press, July 19, 2004).

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

07/01/04 - Robert Karl Hicks (GA)  
 07/14/04 - Stephen Vrabel (OH)  
 07/19/04 - Eddie Albert Crawford (GA)  
 07/20/04 - Scott Mink (OH)  
 07/22/04 - Mark Bailey (VA)



## A View From The Inside

### An Inmate's Perspective

#### A Letter from Illinois

I am an inmate at the Supermax Institution in Illinois. I am confined here at least 23 hours a day inside concrete walls. Inmates here are deemed "the worst of the worst", undeserving of coming in contact with other human beings. The restrictions placed on us are not just physical. Our communication with the free society is also hindered. Most literature we may like to read is censored with no conformity in rules. What we are told is acceptable one day may not be the next, and be met with a retaliatory response.

The inhumaneness of this environment is horrendous. Every day I see men around me deteriorating and the many pleas for help have fallen on deaf ears. There should be a public inquiry, if not outrage to correct this evil that we have to endure at this prison facility. I see suffering literally every second that I am awake.

It is very distressing to:

- hear a man with cancer in agonizing pain, over improper medication, no medication, and/or lack of medical care while the cancer eats away at his vital organs. I'm helpless to even comfort him.
- hear a man plead for help every day because every time he uses the bathroom he is bleeding. It would take two years before he is taken to the hospital to have surgery.
- hear a man make an animal-like noise, just as he has collapses in the shower from insulin shock. I'm screaming at the top of my lungs just to help him... But help is slow to come with the man close to death...
- see men with heart problems, asthma, suffering minor strokes because they were given improper medication and/or have been misdiagnosed.
- see men breaking down mentally and displaying signs of mental illness such as cutting on themselves and playing in their own urine and feces.

This happens time and time again.

Back in 1991 I was falsely accused of a murder that I did not commit or have anything to do with. I was convicted and given a 70 year sentence. Since then, my main objective is to prove my innocence and gain my freedom. But this quest for freedom and justice has been an uphill battle. I intend to stay on course no matter what or however long it may take because I AM INNOCENT! As I reflect back on growing up on the south side of Chicago some of my fondest and cherished memories are of my "Maden" Grandma. She would take me and my siblings to church and also sent us to Catholic school for a few years. She always instilled in us "the power of God". Yes, I strayed from that course (Rom 3:23) in my youth, but I have re-found that course with a new mind and spirit (1 Cor.13:11). Since being here, my task has gotten even more difficult to do. That is why I am taking this time to convey some of my inner most thoughts. My hope is that you will choose to get involved because we desperately need your help and support, especially from the church. There needs to be some connection with the outside world, so that when we do come home we will be focused on not just rebuilding our lives, but on gaining a better understanding of men and women who are already doing their part in the community by joining forces with them and initiating constructive ideas, providing positive examples, and receiving support, with all of us in the community joined together for the same cause. Every time you read a report on prisons, it always tells about high recidivism rates. This is no surprise, especially to me. Especially if every prison is run like this. We are experiencing severe sensory deprivation. Sight, sound, smell, touch and taste are

**Continued on page 7**

## Spirituality

### Inspirational Words

By Dee (Lucidity)



#### What is Islam?

The name of the religion is Islam, which comes from an Arabic root word meaning "peace" and "submission." Islam teaches that one can only find peace in one's life by submitting to Almighty God (Allah) in heart, soul and deed. The same Arabic root word gives us "Salaam alaykum," ("Peace be with you"), the universal Muslim greeting.

#### Who is a Muslim?

A person who believes in and consciously follows Islam is called a Muslim, also from the same root word. So, the religion is called Islam, and a person who follows it is a Muslim.

#### How Many and Where?

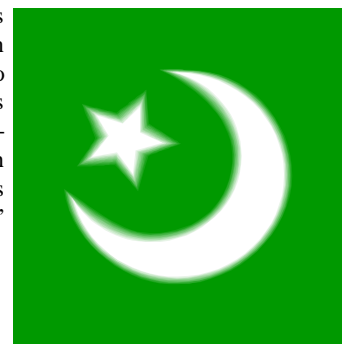
Islam is a major world religion, with over 1 billion followers worldwide (1/5 of the world population). It is considered one of the Abrahamic, monotheistic faiths, along with Judaism and Christianity. Although usually associated with the Arabs of the Middle East, less than 10% of Muslims are in fact Arab. Muslims are found all over the world, of every nation, color and race. Muslim majorities are found throughout the Middle East, North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific Islands. Large numbers are also found in Western Europe, the former Soviet Union, and North America.

#### Who is Allah?

Allah is the proper name for Almighty God, and is often translated merely as "God." Allah has other names that are used to describe His characteristics: the Creator, the Sustainer, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Judge, the Governor, the Eternal, etc. Allah is without beginning, without end, and He alone sees and knows all things. Allah is transcendent, yet close to mankind. **"...He knows what enters within the earth and what comes forth out of it, what comes down from heaven and what mounts up to it. And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees well all that you do"** (Qur'an 57:4). Since Allah alone is the Creator, it is He alone that deserves our devout love and worship. Anything other than Him is simply His creation. **"That is Allah, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things; then worship Him, and He has power to dispose of all affairs. No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision; He is the Sublime, Well-Aware"** (Qur'an 6:102-103). Islam holds to a strict monotheism - Allah has no partners and is not divided into a trinity. **"Say: He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten, and there is none like unto Him"** (Qur'an 112:1-4). Any worship and prayers directed at saints, prophets, other human beings or nature is considered idolatry.

Walking through the woods with his little grandson, a Native American grandfather said, "There are two wolves fighting in my heart. One is filled with anger, bitterness and resentment; the other is filled with love, trust and compassion." His grandson asked, "Which will win?" "The one I feed," he answered.

~Author Unknown



# Rant & Rave with Matthew and Motty

## Voices with Flavor

**By Morigayn Johnson (Motty) and Matthew (KilgoreTrout)**

Hello everyone, I'd like you all to meet Matthew (aka KilgoreTrout), my new co-columnist!

Hello all, I am affectionately called KilgoreTrout by those who love me, and miserable son-of-a-bitch by everyone else. I am tech savvy, opinion enriched, and generally right about everything. Nice to meet you. —Ahhh! Ain't he so sweet like vinegar pie?

This month we are going to talk a little on **THIEVES**.

**Matthew's Rant:** Thieves of the world, listen up! It is so simple. From a thief, to a thief - we know the rules. Do it where it doesn't hurt. Easy. Well, I wish it was that easy, but there is always a thief that breaks that simple commandment and steals from those who have nothing. See, it is unpopular, but I know those who steal software, music - some steal bread when they're hungry, a ride when they are far off - I won't bat an eye. But there is nothing worse than a thief who steals from the poor, regardless of the reasons. Did you know it was common practice for Nazi soldiers to steal pictures from the Jewish prisoners? Helped break them down, separate them from their families. What would you do to someone who did that to your friends? Just a thought.

**Motty's Rave:** A thief is "one who steals especially, stealthily or secretly" as defined by Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Now I'd like to share my own definition, "One who takes or keeps something that is not theirs, in full view or otherwise. A thief tends to only care about

themselves and their own well being with total disregard to friends, family or society."

You are given a book to read, when done you ask if there was someone else to pass it on to or if they want it back correct? Same for a shirt, or a loan of money, it always goes back to the original "loaner." \*sigh\* There is little I can rant on about this subject. At least little I can get in under my word limit. \*smile\* So, I leave you with an Aesop's fable and a few little quotes I'd like to share for you to think over yourself.

"The thief and the house dog"

A thief came in the night to break into a house. He brought meat in order to pacify the dog, so it wouldn't bark to wake his master. As the thief threw the meat the dog said, "If you think to stop my mouth, you will be greatly mistaken. This sudden kindness at your hands will only make me more watchful, lest under these unexpected favors to myself, you have some private ends to accomplish for your own benefit & for my masters injury."

"A thief believes everybody steals." ~Edgard Watson Howe

"The number one rule of thieves is there is nothing too small to steal." ~Jimmy Breslin

**The "Rant & Rave with Matthew and Motty" column is about life. Please submit things to use as inspiration, or even things to make Matthew & Motty ponder. Their opinions are gladly shared as long as the subject is "PG-13." Matthew & Motty want your input!! Page 2 for mailing address, please note on correspondence you are writing to Matthew and Motty! Thank you!**

## August Horoscopes

### A Future Glimpse

**ARIES** (Mar. 21 - April 20) - You should put your efforts into creative projects. Be innovative. You may need to make a few alterations to your living arrangements. This will not be the best day to try to push your ideas or concerns.

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21 - May 21) - Don't count your chickens before they hatch. Drastic changes regarding your personal attitude are evident. Social get-together will bring you in contact with intelligent new friends. Try to be there for someone if they need assistance.

**GEMINI** (May 22 - June 21) - Don't let emotional upset force you into the poorhouse. You can expect changes at your work place. Keep tabs on your spending. Don't let others know about your private affairs.

**CANCER** (June 22 - July 22) - Close deals that have been up in the air and move on to new ones that appear to be profitable. Invest wisely. Your personal life could have you tied up in knots. Your best results will come through business trips. Take positive action.

**LEO** (July 23 - Aug 22) - You may find that your mate is well aware of the circumstances. Your interest in religion and philosophy may lead you to specific destinations. You need to spend less time daydreaming and more time accomplishing. Try not to overspend on friends or family.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23 - Sept. 23) - Don't be afraid to speak in defense of others. Don't ruffle the feathers of those you care about most. Payoff all your debts before you go out and celebrate. Your energetic personality will make you the center of attention at social gatherings.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23) - You need to take some time out to decide what you want to do. Your unique contribution to the organization will enhance your reputation. You will be prone to carelessness that could result in accidents. Problems with skin, bones, or teeth may mess up your schedule.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) - Use your inventiveness to find solutions. Don't let your jealous imagination play games with you. You will enjoy lavish forms of entertainment and should consider making arrangements early. You may find that your mate is well aware of the circumstances.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21) - You can evade the issue as usual by being affectionate, fun loving, and far too active for your lover to catch on. You should be able to make major career gains if you plan your intentions carefully. Being unappreciated by your

boss could make it hard to do your work effectively. You are best to ask questions if you aren't certain about issues that are confronting you.

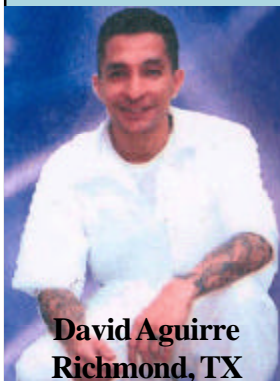
**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22 - Jan. 20) - Your sensitivity toward those you love will capture their hearts. You should check out prestigious clubs or groups that have a cause you believe in. You may be emotionally unstable if you let someone you care about get away with verbal abuse. Your obviously unique way of doing things has caught the eye of someone in a higher position.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19) - You may be more emotional than usual. Visit friends who have not been well. Ask a close friend for advice. Your disciplined attention to jobs will enhance your position.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20 - Mar. 20) - You really can't do anything to change matters this month. Spend a quiet day with the one you love. They will not be in the right frame of mind to put up with tactless comments. You will be in the mood for entertainment.

## Pen Pal of The Month

### An Inmate Desiring Mail



**David Aguirre**  
Richmond, TX

David is a 37-year-old Army Veteran who likes tattoos and has quite a few to prove it! He enjoys the outdoors, woodworking, and is also an artist\*. David is seeking friends to write of any age, or maybe even that special someone.

\* You may see a sample of Mr. Aguirre's art on page 8!

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





## Dear Libbie

### Advice for the Lovelorn

By Joanna L. Massing (Libbie)



Being in a relationship with an inmate is hard enough at times but when there are children involved whether it be yours or your hunny's it can become a complicated and heart wrenching matter. Many young men and women have been incarcerated at a young age and they have children on the outside being cared for by the other parent and/or family members. They have gone to prison when their child was just barely a year old and the only way they can watch them grow up is during the infrequent and short visits. I have heard the heartbreak from my friends, my pals, and of course my man. They try so hard to show you that it doesn't affect them not to be in their children's lives with the casually tossed statement, "Oh they are better off without a deadbeat dad like me..." but in reality it hurts them deeply. They are not "deadbeat" dads and moms, circumstances and the irrationality of youth has robbed them of their children as it has likewise robbed the children of their parent. I know if they could be there now to guide their children along the right path, to show them they love them and didn't desert them, they would all do it in a heartbeat and they would give up everything to do so.

We sometimes forget on our daily ride through life, the little things our incarcerated loved ones miss out on with their children. The smiles they will never see as they blow out his or her birthday candles, or as they open holiday gifts, play with their puppy, the tears their children shed from life's sorrow or just an accidental fall off a playground swing. One minute they are in the visiting room teetering around on their first steps and the next minute dad is mortified because he realizes his daughter has started shaving her legs. "Where did the time go?" passes through their mind. "I have missed so much" they have thought as they stare at their daughter or son almost a stranger to them yet loved by them more than anything in the world. I know through their pseudo, casual laugh and banter that this is far from casual to them. Their children are growing up and they cannot be a real part of it.

I remember the joy of someone very dear to me when I sent his daughter a simple Christmas gift in his name. The joy and pride he felt when he told me how excited and happy his daughter was to receive it. I knew it was not about the materialism of the gift it was about a father's ability to bring a smile to his child's face when he has felt he hasn't been able to do anything but stand way off on the sidelines of her life. It is hard being in love with a man in prison and it is especially harder to see that person hurt and not be able to do much about it. I think before we sentence these men and women to lengthy amounts of time in prison we should remember that we are also sentencing their children as well.

#### This leads into this month's question:

Dear Libbie,

*I know you write mostly about being in love with someone on the inside but I have read your column and I would like to hear what your ideas on this would be since I have nobody and my family has all pretty much gone on with their lives. I've been incarcerated since 1999 and my daughter was about two years old then. My ex-girlfriend in the beginning sent me photos and letters about her but in the past three years she's stopped writing. She said it is better if they went on with their lives that our daughter is better off not knowing where her real daddy is. Our daughter sees my ex's husband as daddy now. To tell you the truth for a*

*while I felt like she was right so I stopped writing my little girl. But I don't want her to grow up and one day when she is an adult find out who her real daddy is and think I abandoned her. All the letters so far that I have sent have been returned to me so I don't know where she is anymore but I still want her to know I loved my little girl and if I could do it over again I would have definitely chose differently. How can I tell her that NO her daddy didn't abandon her, EVER...*

~Chad E., TX

Dear Chad,

Thank you for your letter I want you to know it brought tears to my eyes to read it. I could feel how much you indeed love your daughter. I wish I could tell you something concrete to do so that your daughter will know you loved her but I think as she grows older she will understand your circumstances and will know you do love her and didn't abandon her by choice. It took a lot for you to acquiesce to your ex's wishes and I understand your choice. Although I don't agree with what she did I understand why she did it. Maybe you can continue to write your daughter, in like a journal, and one day it will find its way into the hands of your daughter. Even though the mail can't get through to her right now, there is hope for the future that one day she might come looking for you and you will have a collection of your letters and thoughts for her. Don't give up hope it is funny how things sometimes just fall into the right place at the right time. Take care :)

~Libbie

#### Continued from page 5

being severely suppressed. When one is being stripped of all these basic human needs, society must know justly or unjustly that under these inhuman conditions when one is placed back in society it is equivalent to placing a time bomb back into the community. We are not provided with any social, educational or religious programs to guide our behavior or nurture our thoughts. I have read in Matt.9:12-13, "For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." God is in the business of changing lives and I ask what better place to start than here, where it is said we are the worst of the worst!

Now let me turn for a moment to a more intimate level so to speak. I've tried my best since my incarceration to maintain family ties. It seems to me that time and distance have made this nearly impossible to do as I have not seen or talked to anyone in my family in over five years. Birthday and holidays come and go without a murmur. This is the case for most men in here who, like myself, are from Chicago and have lost contact and haven't seen or heard from their family in many years. Just this thought alone eats away at my heart each and every day. Although I am in contact with my older sister through letters she is very limited in helping me fight this injustice because she is consumed with other responsibilities in her life. Over the years, my knowledge has broadened in understanding how the family structure works, how important it is in one's life and how incarceration of a family member can deeply affect it. That is a reality that I really struggle with especially being almost powerless to do anything. If any clergy members would like to get involved (Matt.25:31-46) by writing letters, staying in contact with families to make sure they are well, visiting to help inmates grow spiritually, making calls here or other necessary places when needed, etc. it would be most appreciated.

In closing, know whatever you are able to do I'll consider it a treasure. So do whatever God puts on your heart. Prayers, encouragement and suggestions are sincerely welcome! Until then, I'll begin each day with optimism at the thought of hearing from you. Take care and God bless always.

~T.D. ■



## Inmate Art & Poetry

### A Look Within



Hector Duenez - Livingston, TX

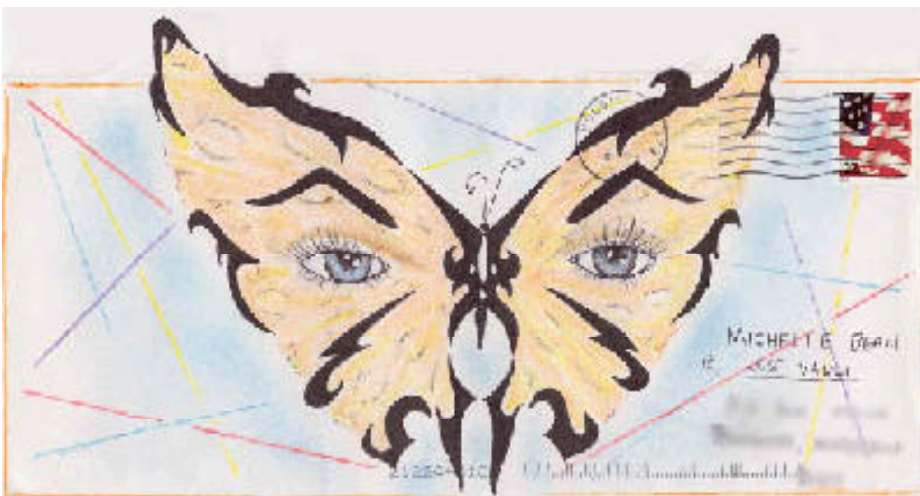


James Diaz - Rosharon, TX

*We at LostVault would like to extend a special thank you to James - this is the newest graphic used for our LostVault T-shirts. Thank you James!*



Chris Binch - Lamesa, TX



David Aguirre - Richmond, TX





# Vault Jokes & Junk

## ...The Fun Side of Life

### ~Joke of The Month~

#### Lawyer And Blonde

A lawyer and a blonde are sitting next to each other on a long flight from LA to NY. The lawyer leans over to her and asks if she would like to play a fun game. The blonde just wants to take a nap, so she politely declines and rolls over to the window to catch a few winks. The lawyer persists and explains that the game is really easy and a lot of fun. He explains "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me \$5, and vice-versa." Again, she politely declines and tries to get some sleep. The lawyer, now somewhat agitated, says, "Okay, if you don't know the answer you pay me \$5, and if I don't know the answer that you'll ask me, I will pay you \$500!" Figuring that since she is a blonde that he will easily win the match. This catches the blonde's attention and, figuring that there will be no end to this torment unless she plays, agrees to the game. The lawyer asks the first question. "What's the distance from the earth to the moon?" The blonde doesn't say a word, reaches in to her purse, pulls out a five dollar bill and hands it to the lawyer. Now, it's the blonde's turn. She asks the lawyer: "What goes up a hill with three legs, and comes down with four?" The lawyer looks at her with a puzzled look. He takes out his laptop computer and searches all his references. He taps into the Airphone with his modem and searches the Net and the Library of Congress. Frustrated, he sends E-mails to all his coworkers and friends he knows. All to no avail. After over an hour, he wakes the blonde and hands her \$500. The blonde politely takes the \$500 and turns away to get back to sleep. The lawyer, who is more than a little miffed, wakes the blonde and asks, "Well, so what IS the answer!?" Without a word, the blonde reaches into her purse, hands the lawyer \$5, and goes back to sleep.

#### Designated drunkard

Rednecks don't let friends drive home drunk, they get drunk and ride with them.

#### What's the difference between a dead lawyer ...

Q: What's the difference between a dead lawyer in the middle of the road and a dead rattlesnake in the middle of the road?  
A: There is skid marks before the snake

#### Blonde Jokes!

Q: How can you tell a blond has been working at a computer?  
A: There is white out all over the screen.

Q: How do blondes' braincells die?

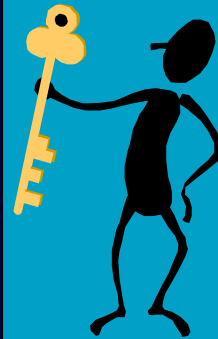
A: Alone.



#### Answer to Last Month's Puzzle

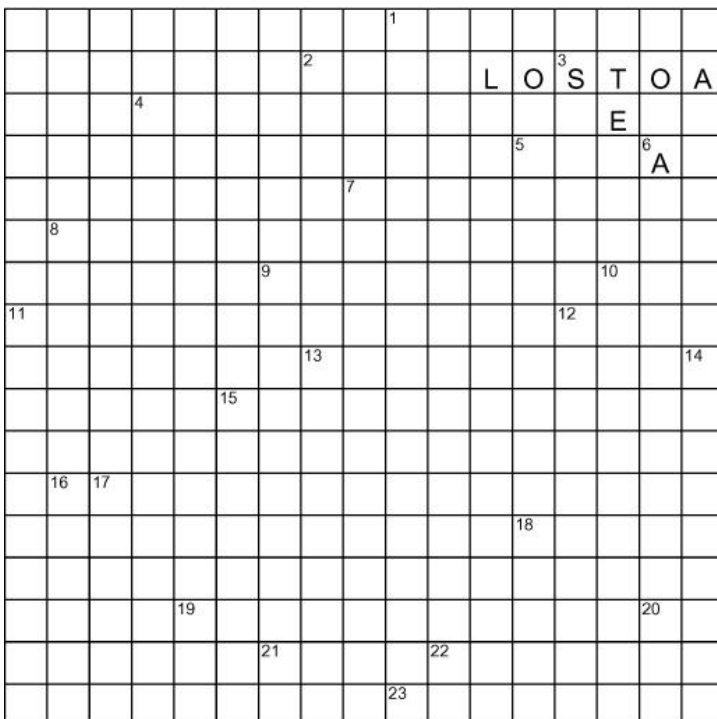
#### JIGSAW SQUARES

Henry Ford had a habit of going to offices of other executives when problems arose, rather than having them come to his office. He did it to save time. "I've found," he said, "that I can leave another fellow's office more quickly than I could get him to leave mine."



# PLACES, PLEASE

Fill the diagram with all the words in the word list. The words from each group start on their matching number, and they will read in all directions—forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally. Words from different groups sometimes overlap; therefore, some letters will be used more than once. We have started the puzzle for you. When the puzzle is completed, all the squares will be filled.



- |             |              |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. PARASITE | 8. RACER     | 14. PAGEANT | 19. SARAN    |
| PENICILLIN  | REBEL        | PEDIGREE    | SCIENCE      |
| PERIODICAL  | ROSY         | PEPPERMINT  | SIMMER       |
| PHOTOGRAPH  |              | PETTICOAT   | SIR          |
| POIGNANT    | 9. NACRE     | PRESIDENT   | SOD          |
|             | NEWT         |             | SULTAN       |
|             | NOTCH        | 15. LATE    |              |
| 2. WEIGH    |              | LEARN       | 20. RED      |
| WHEEL       | 10. DEEM     |             | REED         |
| WORSHIP     | DIRGE        | 16. SEESAW  | RESCUE       |
| WRITTEN     | DRIBBLE      | SLOP        |              |
|             | DUPE         | SPLEEN      | 21. THOU     |
| 3. SEA ✓    | 11. ULTERIOR | STRENGTH    | TIC          |
| SOL ✓       | UNABLE       | SUMAC       |              |
| STOA ✓      | UPHOLD       |             | 22. IRE      |
|             | UPSTART      | 17. TERRY   | ISTLE        |
|             |              | TUG         | ITS          |
| 4. ACE      |              |             |              |
| ADO         | 5. AGOG      | 12. EMIR    | 23. DECADENT |
|             | ALGA         | EPODE       | DINOSAUR     |
|             | ARSIS        |             | DOMINEER     |
|             |              | 18. ABATE   | DRAWBRIDGE   |
|             |              | ACADEMIC    | DURATION     |
|             |              | AMEN        |              |
|             |              | ANGST       |              |
|             |              | AORTA       |              |
|             |              | ASSE        |              |
|             | 6. ACUTE     |             |              |
|             | ANON         | 13. TANTRUM |              |
|             |              | TELEGRAM    |              |
|             |              | TOLERANT    |              |
|             |              | TOMORROW    |              |
|             |              | TRAGEDY     |              |
|             |              | TREETOP     |              |
|             |              | TROMBONE    |              |
|             | 7. BIB       |             |              |
|             | BONE         |             |              |
|             | BYE          |             |              |

Solution next month



## LostVault Ads

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

**LostVault: Unlocked**

**P.O. Box 294**

**Washburn, TN 37888**

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




August 2nd

**Happy Birthday Daniel!**

You're in my thoughts.

Sending hugs your way,

~Carol



**Erick - Good luck on the 2nd!**  
I will still be here waiting for you. From the moment I laid eyes on you - I knew you were the one - I love you - hold your head high! Have you found the moose? Road Trip!!  
All of Me to All of You,  
~Jackie



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

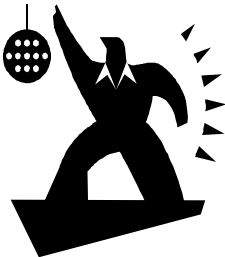
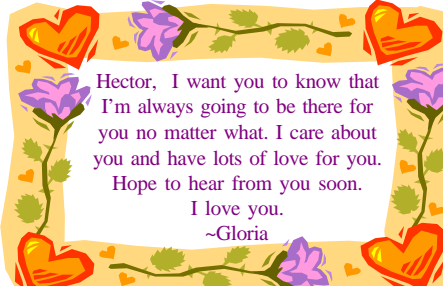
**Happy Birthday to my best friend.**  
You have taught me so much about Life and Truth and how to reach into my soul and give the gift of words. You have enriched my life incredibly.

Hold my hand, let's walk...

May your days be filled with joy and your nights with wild thunderstorms.

I love you,

~Mrs. "Roll of Quarters"  
San Diego

Hector, I want you to know that I'm always going to be there for you no matter what. I care about you and have lots of love for you. Hope to hear from you soon.  
I love you.  
~Gloria

John,  
Thank you for coming into my life. You and your mom have been such a blessing!

~Motty~

## Tell Us Why You Value Your Pal

By Morigayn Johnson

In honor of the first ever LostVault Pen Pal Day on September 5, we invite you all to tell us how and why you value your pen pal! We are going to take as many entries as we can and publish them in the September (and possibly October) issue of *LostVault: Unlocked*, and anything that we cannot fit into the newsletter will be posted online at [www.lostvault.com](http://www.lostvault.com). Come on and tell your pals why you think so highly of them!

### Here are the rules...

- ★ You have 50 words or less, entries over this will not be considered for the newsletter simply because of space restrictions.
- ★ All entries must be postmarked by August 20 and mailed to the address on page two.
- ★ Entries sent via the web should be sent in no later than August 25th to the following email address: [newsletter@lostvault.com](mailto:newsletter@lostvault.com) or PMed to MotM on LostVault. Please use the subject "NL entries."

Remember orange is our ribbon color! Try and use something orange on Pen Pal day and don't forget to send your pals an extra special not that day! :)

### Here is a little boost to get you thinking.

*Why do I value my pals?*

**Each is unique and special. I will never have enough words to say how each has changed my life in their own ways. My heart and life are so full, and I am a better person from knowing each of you. Thank you.**

## Vaulter of the Month

### One of LostVault's Finest

Introducing Gloria (known to us as Jabroni77003), she is 21 years old and from Texas. In her spare time she likes to go out to clubs, movies, concerts and other things, she hates just sitting at home. She loves tattoos, piercings and the wrestler "The Rock" as she says "He's my husband and just doesn't know it yet!"

Gloria has been writing to inmates for almost 2 years, she graduated from the High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice and has spent much time discussing prison conditions. Still, she didn't really think much about it until one of her friends was put in prison in Texas, so she started writing and has become more involved since then. She is anti death penalty and hopes that one day she can do something about the prison system other than just writing. \*smile\* Gloria...keep the letters mailed out. They do make a difference!

