

Prison Action News
PO Box 832
Watertown, MA 02472



VOLUME 10.2

AUGUST, 2017



Prison Action News is a newsletter for prisoners worldwide to report on their struggles and acts of resistance from behind bars. All submissions must be **RECEIVED** by **January 1st or July 1st** and be in compliance with the guidelines below. Please note that we retain the right as editors to alter submissions for grammatical and content-related issues. Prison Action News is one part of the multi-faceted Prison Abolition movement. We believe that the writing in Prison Action News is as important as poetry or political essays, but is often less represented.

History:

The idea for Prison Action News came out of the 2007 Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) Network gathering. We wanted to create a venue for prisoners to share updates of their activities, similar to the updates we wrote in the network newsletter. As people on the outside, we can facilitate this dialog of prison resistance, and help our comrades stay informed about the inspiring actions others are taking. We accept submissions from prisoners and prison groups worldwide, and bilingual writing. With your help this newsletter will be a success- if you know of resistance taking place that is not represented here, please send us a submission, and spread the word!

Please send ALL SUBMISSIONS, SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS and ADDRESS CHANGES to:

Prison Action News PO Box 832 Watertown, MA 02472
prisonactionnews@riseup.net

Artwork (above): Santos "Cherrie" Valenzuela, Delano, CA

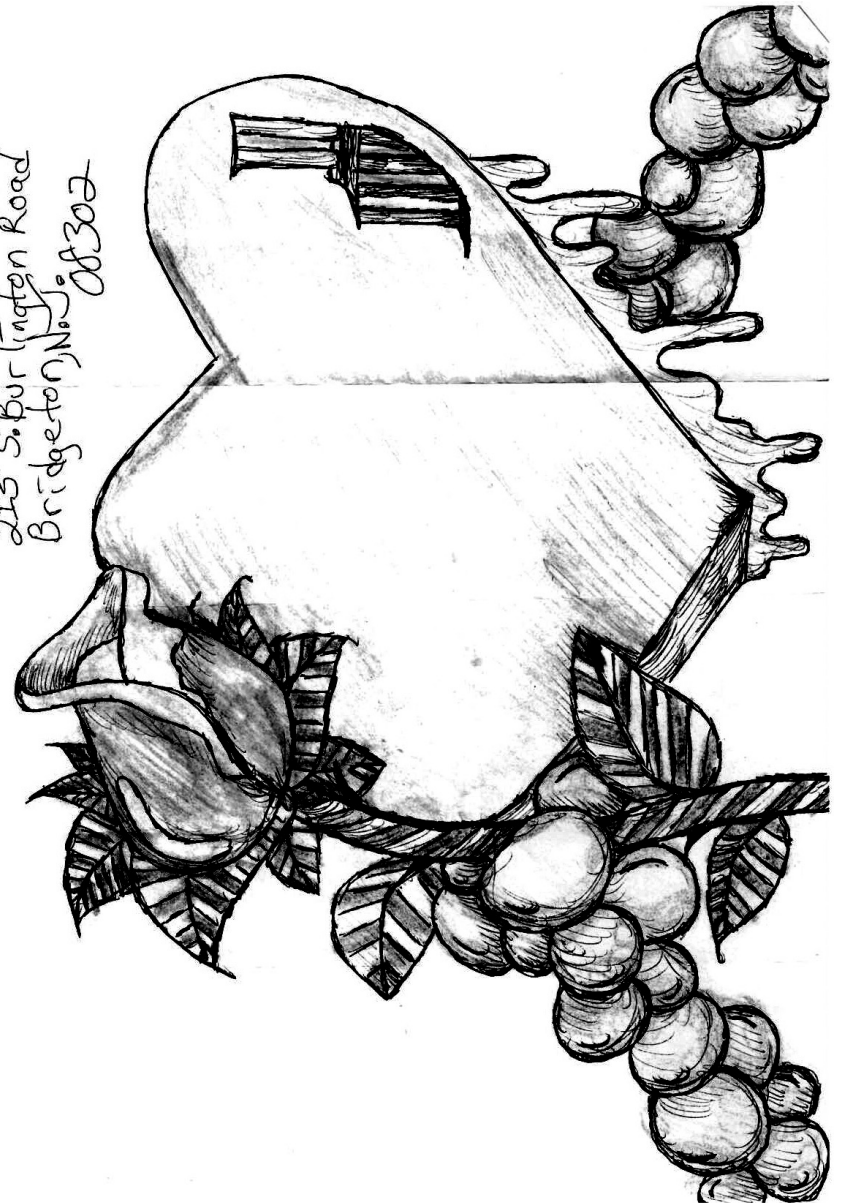
"All is for all! If the man and the woman bear their fair share of work, they have a right to their fair share of all that is produced by all, and that share is enough to secure them well-being. No more of such vague formulas as "The Right to work," or "To each the whole result of his labour." What we proclaim is "The Right to Well-Being: Well-Being for All!"



Peter Kropotkin - The Conquest of Bread (1907)

01/07/14

Darrell Hann #592792
 Southwoods State Prison
 215 S. Burlington Road
 Bridgeton, NJ 08302



August 12, 2017

PAN mourns the loss of our comrade in struggle, Heather Heyer, who was murdered by a neo-Nazi while protesting a white supremacists rally in Charlottesville, VA. PAN stands against white supremacy, fascism, neo-Nazism, and racism of all kinds.



Guidelines

1. A submission **MUST NOT** exceed 500 words, with no exceptions. Submissions over 500 words will be edited down, or if this is not possible to do while keeping a cohesive narrative, not included in publication.
2. We will not accept submissions with racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise oppressive language.
3. An update may be a report on resistance activities of individual prisoners or prison groups (this can include, but is not limited to, radical book groups, hunger strike, general strike, letter writing campaigns, etc.).
4. A report **SHOULD NOT** be a political essay or a report on prison conditions, rather, the response and resistance to these conditions.
5. Requests for support from folks on the outside, or requests for financial support, will not be published. The primary audience and readership of PAN is incarcerated people.
6. PAN accepts entries of artwork and illustrations.
7. One submission per group, per prison, per newsletter. If you submit more than once during the submission period, editors will select which entry to publish, unless you specifically state which one to use.
8. We will not report on gang activity.
9. We accept bilingual entries (when one language is English), as well as Spanish entries! *Aceptamos la escritura en español.*
10. Entries may be submitted for publication by prison groups and organizations, or individuals, and may be submitted for publication with the name and contact information of the writer, or anonymously, to protect their identity. If your name and address appear on your PAN submission, we will publish them, unless you tell us otherwise.

Please note that we are a very small collective made up entirely of volunteers. We are unable to provide any assistance or advocacy beyond the publication of this newsletter. Unfortunately this also means we cannot respond to every letter we receive. We always try to inform writers if their submission does not fall within our guidelines so they can resubmit.

Prison Action News **CAN** accept donations of stamps or envelopes, but can **NOT** accept checks or money orders.

Table of Contents

New Prison Groups and Programs

C-Wise, FL, p. 5
Norfolk Lifers' Group, MA, p. 6

Prison Group Updates

New Afrikan Black Panther Party – Prison Chapter, CA, p. 9
United Panther Movement, Red Fist Alliance, CO, p. 10

Direct Action/ Non-Compliance

Hostage Standoff in Delaware Prison, p. 11
Hunger Strike started 5/22/2017 6AM, TX, p. 13
Northwest Detention Center Hunger Strikers Issue Demands, WA, p. 13
Prison Officials Release Statement on Riot at Oklahoma Correctional Facility, p. 15
Uncovering the Aftermath of Florida's 2016 Fall Prisoner Uprisings, p. 15
Women in California's Largest Immigrant Prison Hold Hunger Strike, p. 18

The Almighty Pen and Paper: Grievances and Legal Work

Timothy Coble, PA, p. 20
Damaris Davy, AZ, p. 21
Federal Prison Shuts Down Commissary Hours for Facilities Workers, OH, p. 23
Gamesmanship/Stratagem Tactics Nevada Continues, p. 26
Darrell Hann, NJ, p. 26
Hope, CA, p. 27
John Doe Petition over the DOC Illegally Taking Prisoners' Money, WI, p. 28
Brian Eugene Lepley, NV, p. 29
Daisy Meadows, NV, p. 30
Lance Reberger, NV, p. 32
Lloyd Landon Sorrow Sr., TX, p. 33
Robert Tabak, MO, p. 34

Duane Tipton, NV, p. 35
Water at State's Largest Prison Raises Concerns, MA, p. 37
Eddie Williams, TN, p. 39

Solidarity: Working Across the Bars

Chicago, IL: Solidarity With CCJ Jail Rebels! p. 40
Uncovering the Aftermath of Florida's 2016 Fall Prisoner Uprisings, p. 41

Commentary and Calls to Action

Black Power, LA, p. 43
Justin Guyton, OH, p. 43
Charles Higgins, MS, p. 44
John Taylor, CO, p. 45

Disclaimer:

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Olney Springs CO - March 2017

Greetings from the State of Corruptado, where the prison industry is 1/5th of the state's economic business (per Forbes) and where imprisonment is the first choice of most, if not all, judges. Judges, by the way, being people appointed into positions of life and death over the sheeple. Not elected, and subject to no real controls or oversight.

In the "Finally a powerful organization admits the obvious department": per the latest CURE newsletter (www.curenational.org), the American Corruptational Association, the people that certify prisons as being acceptable places for keeping humans in cages, has actually admitted, in a meeting in Boston on August 9, 2016, that the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution does not ban slavery. It, in fact, opened up slave status to anyone who is convicted of a "crime." Surprisingly, the ACA is encouraging persons to contact their legislators and demand that they work to repeal the 13th Amendment. Will wonders never cease.

Here in CO the "sources" tell us that DOC is at 99% capacity and that the CO main processing center (the Denver Regional Diagnostic Center) has a prisoner population of almost 500. All who are waiting for an opening in one of the DOC or private (CCA) prisons. CO's adoration of imprisonment as a way of controlling those pesky minorities and poor people is keeping the prisons full.

Per a newsletter from the good folks at Coalition for Prisoners' Rights located in Santa Fe, NM, a movement/organization that has the potential to actually attack the PIC and the system is the Formerly Incarcerated and Convicted People's Movement, based at All of Us or None, 1540 Market St. #490, San Francisco CA 94102 www.allofusornone.org. They are working to organize as a political block, as many as possible of the 65 million people on the street in the US that have been screwed-over by the injustice system.

In September of 2016 the movement folks held a conference in Oakland, CA that was attended by more than 500 people from more than 30 states. These people have seized on an idea, mass organization, that could work, and must scare the fascists of the System. For more info, contact Manuel LaFontaine, Program Coordinator, at the address I listed in the previous paragraph.

Sincerely,

John Taylor #148535
CCCCF
6564 State Hwy 96
Olney Springs, CO 81062

Essays should not exceed five pages front/back in length. All featured writers will be acknowledged for their works and will need to submit how they would like their name to appear in the book. All contributors will receive a copy of the published book. If you are an author in need of a platform to get your book published and distributed globally feel free to contact me. My mission is to help incarcerated men and women express themselves to the world. Never underestimate the power of your words for they have the ability to touch hearts, transform minds, and shape lives beyond your own existence.

Justin Guyton #584484
O.S.P.
878 Coitsville-Hubbard Rd.
Youngstown, OH 44505

Leakesville MS - April 2017

Greetings,
I had just finished reading PAN Vol 9.2 August 2016. I would like to respond to an article called "Second Chance Books." As I am a writer currently utilizing my time as wisely as possible, I am looking for assistance in publishing what I write. When I read the article it sparked an interest in me, yet I could not answer it, for there was no address to mail a letter for inquiries. Anyone with more information on this organization of Second Chance Books, or any other that can assist in publication and distribution, please let me know.

Thank you,

Charles Higgins MDOC #131726
SMCI Area 2 CZ A51
PO Box 1419
Leakesville MS 35451

NEW PRISON GROUPS AND PROGRAMS

C-WISE: Collective Worldwide Incarcerated Struggle of Elders - June 2017

Most incarcerated elders have been imprisoned for decades. Something society as a whole blindly seeks to condone as justice being served, while failing to comprehend the traumatic, immoral and inhumane practice of warehousing people for profit. Making it extremely difficult for incarcerated elders to find compassion and empathy outside their limited number of friends and family, creating even greater hardships as the limited number of friends and family of the incarcerated elders die off or just disappear, leaving the incarcerated elder to fend for his or herself in a hostile and apathetic world to face despair alone.

Now the concept of C-WISE "Collective Worldwide Incarcerated Struggle of Elders," has been conceived and is being offered for adoption in order to bring it to fruition. We the incarcerated elders of this world can form a collective to serve our interests through seeking improvement of our conditions and situations. We need to join together and use our collective voices to stop being the overlooked, forgotten minority we are!

We have the fertile ground of this newsletter PAN to help us seek out the nurturing care needed to bring C-WISE to maturity. Will we join together? I for one hope so...!

I am 67 years old and have been incarcerated most all of my life. I have been on Florida's death row for over 34 years and for all intents and purposes I am an orphan in a hostile dog eat dog world, marked by the survival of the fittest. Join with me to make C-WISE a reality where we as the elders of this world use our wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to receive our due respect.

Come together with me, brainstorm with me, recruit others to join with us- we need outside help- we need free world elders who are empathetic and willing to give their support and services to help C-WISE become successful. It's time we establish a base where we as individuals can raise our collective voices as one and make relief of our struggles a welcome reality. Be wise and let's grow strong together!

Milo Rose #090411
Union Correctional Institution
PO Box 1000 P2128
Raiford, FL 32083

Norfolk Lifers Group - April 2017

The Norfolk Lifers Group is based at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Norfolk. Formed in the late 1960's, it has continuously operated for over 50 years.

The Norfolk Lifers Group is comprised of men serving life or long-term sentences. An elected Board of Directors coordinates the Group's activities which are dedicated to educating our members and outside citizens in the area of criminal justice reform.

Goals

The Norfolk Lifers Group has identified six major areas of concern to be addressed. Recent changes in the DOC's philosophy have dissipated roles by which, in the past, lifers were able to contribute to prison environments and to rehabilitation. In addition, the DOC has diminished resources previously available to lifers, even those eligible for parole and possible release. To counter these losses, the Norfolk Lifers Group strives to work in the following seven areas:

I. Education and Training

1. Developing innovative and effective ways to communicate our message to supporters- inside and outside prison walls.
2. Bringing in guest speakers to address our members on current issues, e.g. reentry programs, technological advances, and legal developments.
3. Providing information to prisoners concerning rehabilitation, programming, legal cases and resources, as well as other aspects of prison life.

II. Parole and Commutation

1. Assisting members to prepare parole and/or commutation packages and to appear before the Parole Board at parole or commutation hearings.
2. Assisting members in understanding the parole and commutation process as well as communicating important developments regarding the Parole Board.
3. Assisting members who seek to challenge parole or commutation decisions.
4. Reporting annually on lifer parole decision in the previous year.

III. Legislation and Litigation

1. Working for the passage of a bill for parole eligibility after 25 years for first degree lifers.
2. Challenging the current absence of commutations for lifers in MA.
3. Instituting efforts to develop and to maintain contacts in the Legislature to encourage passage of fair legislation affecting all prisoners.
4. Working for the passage of legislation for the release of aged, infirm, or terminally ill prisoners who pose no danger to society.
5. Working to restore voting rights for all prisoners.
6. Litigating the refusal of the DOC to respond to public records requests.

COMMENTARY AND CALLS TO ACTION

Black Power - June 2017

My heart beat love-
My flesh bleed hate-
My mind battle with peace-
My eyes perceive war-

My voice cry for freedom-
To my enemies - my cry seem to be a threat-
They say the most powerful element is the tongue-
So, my words burn souls when they inject-
My evolution is to generate a revolution-
To the evil government that considers me terrorist-
To win fight is the solution-
Black Power! To all my revolutionaries,

James Burk- L.S.P./Angola, L

Youngstown OH - June 2017

My name is Justin Guyton and I'm incarcerated at Ohio's supermax prison. Being that incarceration is a state of mind, I'm putting my resources to use by providing a platform for prisoner's voices to be heard. At this present moment we're looking for contributors for the soon to be released book "Prolific Writings from the Pen: Volume 1."

For this volume we're seeking submissions of essays that express your outlook as it pertains to life regarding any topic that you choose. Your objective is to convey a message that makes an individual analyze their way of thinking, awaken them from a state of unconsciousness and challenge them to avoid the pitfalls that may lead to the loss of one's liberties.

issues could not be looked at in isolation from all the other things that plague the system of mass incarceration, including slave labor, profiteering off basic services, bad food, utter brutality, and widespread corruption, which the Southern states are particularly known for.

Being based in Florida, we aimed to focus a large part of our “in-reach” in this state, coordinating with members of the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) of the Gainesville Branch of the IWW labor union.

We initially had very few strong contacts inside Florida’s prison system, but were able to gather a mailing list compiled from several organizations and publications which conduct regular mailings into the facilities.

To our surprise, as well as many other organizers around the country, Florida ended up being one of the first and largest prison populations to participate in the September prisoner-led mobilization. Starting with the massive protest in Holmes C.I. on September 7, which left much of the prison unusable from prisoners severely damaging the dorms, at least nine additional prisons would report “disturbances” related to the September events, ranging from major disturbances to smaller sit-ins and mass work refusals. These were part of the largest coordinated prison strike in American history, with participation in over a dozen states and approximately 24,000 reportedly confirmed to have participated on the inside and several thousand more showing support in demonstrations on the outside all across the country.

Though the numbers of those who participated in Florida prisons alone were likely in the thousands, months passed without any explicit word from the inside, except for the censorship notices we received from the administration in several prisons explaining our letters were not delivered. Efforts were made to appeal this censorship, but seemed to have fallen on deaf ears, as a response has yet to be provided by the DOC to our appeals.

In December, FTP organizers decided to send a follow-up holiday mailing to prisoners around the country, again with a large Florida focus. We added new names, seeking out prisoners in the facilities where activity was reported. Finally, we are starting to begin piecing together some of the story. In particular, our goal has been to figure out the prisoners who are bearing the brunt of the repression for having the courage to stand up to the injustice of mass incarceration and prison slavery in this country, and lend support to them however we can, from simple letters letting them know that they are not forgotten to assistance with possible legal counsel and commissary funds to stay strong and active.

IV. Medical Issues

1. Working to improve programs for elderly and infirm prisoners, including hospice care and assisted daily living units.
2. Educating our membership on the importance of filling out and maintaining Health Care Proxies, Living Wills, and Last Wills and Testaments.

V. Jobs

1. Working to expand job opportunities for lifers and long-term prisoners.
2. Working to increase pay rates for skilled lifers and long-term prisoners who contribute to maintenance and education needs at MCI-Norfolk.
3. Working to reintroduce advocating opportunities for lifers and long-term prisoners at MCI-Norfolk.

VI. Program Opportunities

1. Working to introduce new and more effective programs, including academic, computer, and vocational opportunities for lifer and long-term prisoners.
2. Working to reduce excessive program waiting lists and delays for lifers and long-term prisoners.
3. Working to restore Norfolk Lifers Group art programs.

VII. Family Relationships

1. Working to reintroduce Family and Friends events designed to maintain and strengthen community bonds.
2. Working to introduce additional family relationship programs for lifers and long-term prisoners.

What we have done recently

1. Produced reports on parole decisions for lifers from 2003 through 2014.
2. Submitted proposals for training lifers to care for elderly and infirm prisoners, for utilizing skilled lifers in work projects which would improve the structures and environment inside MCI-Norfolk.
3. Submitted an analysis of the needs of lifers and long-term prisoners at MCI-Norfolk, given that over two-thirds of the prisoners housed here are serving life or sentences of 15 years or more.
4. Hosted speakers on topics from mandatory minimums to prisoners’ legal rights.
5. Produced reports on the costs of mass incarceration recidivism, suicides, and changes in the Parole Board.

The Lifers’ Group Inc. (LGI) seeks information from other states pertaining to:

- Prison Hospice Care and Assisted Daily Living Units;
- Canteen Price Lists, and Technology in Prisons/Jails, i.e., Tablets, Word Processors, MP3 Players and Limited Internet Access;
- Prison College Programs and any data related to education being a factor in lowering recidivism rates;
- Commutations/Compassionate Release/Elderly release;

And,

-We are looking to make contacts (in other progressive minded countries) with prisoner groups/advocates, prison newsletters, etc.

Once compiled, this information will be posted online and shared. See other LGI reports at www.realcostofprisons.org/writing (out of state inmate-to-inmate mail is okay. If you are seeking a response and cannot receive mail from an inmate, please provide an alternative address.)

please contact:

Daniel L. Holland W69561,
Lifers' Group Inc.,
MCI- Norfolk, 2 Clark Street,
P.O. Box 43,
Norfolk MA 02056-0043

- Thank you

Uncovering the Aftermath of Florida's 2016 Fall Prisoner Uprisings - February 2017

<https://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com/2017/01/24/uncovering-the-aftermath-of-floridas-2016-fall-prisoner-uprisings/>

[NOTE: Much of the content in this post was included in the first edition of Plantation Rising, a zine by FTP dedicated to FL prisoner struggles.

In the summer of 2016, the Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons (FTP) coordinated a national mailing in solidarity with the prisoner strikes called for on the anniversary of the Attica rebellion of 1971.

We didn't explicitly encourage participation by prisoners, but we sought to let people on the inside know that we were organizing on the outside and planned to gather in front of massive federal prison complex located in Coleman—a remote, rural location surrounded by gas pipelines and rock mines—located between Tampa and Orlando.

While our focus has been on drawing connections between environmentally hazardous conditions and human rights abuses in prisons, we also realized that these



FTP's holiday letter mailing party

SOLIDARITY: WORKING ACROSS THE BARS

Chicago, IL: Solidarity With CCJ Jail Rebels! - April 2017

<https://itsgoingdown.org/chicago-il-solidarity-ccj-jail-rebels/>

On Saturday, April 15th, inmates at the living hell known as Cook County Jail (Chicago) set fire to new uniforms intended to mark off “problematic detainees who engage in sexual misconduct.” According to mainstream media, prisoners “used a microwave to ignite a wick to light the uniforms on fire,” which “sent four corrections officers to the hospital.”

Inspired by this destructive act of open revolt, a couple of us took to the streets Tuesday night and wheat-pasted dozens of posters on corporate businesses, bus stops, and benches around the neighborhood surrounding the jail. We did this to communicate our love for those held captive in the belly of the carceral beast, our deep hatred for all prisons, jails, and the pieces of human shit who guard them, and as a small gesture of complicity with everyone attacking them from inside and out. We hope the message will somehow reach those inside. The posters read: JAILS ARE FOR BURNING. TO PRISONERS EVERYWHERE: STAY UNCONTROLLABLE! EVERY CAGE MUST GO!

If the discourse of “prison abolitionism” is to be more than an empty moral posture, it demands a practice of demolitionism. Let’s make sure this fire is only the first of many to come.



PRISON GROUPS UPDATES

Remember Black August and the People’s Martyrs – New Afrikan Black Panther Party – Prison Chapter - June 2017

May the peace of unity and panther love be with you all!
My Sisters and Brothers and all New Afrikan Panther Party Comrades, we are coming up on our 13th anniversary of Black August, and it is at this time we remember our murdered comrade Hasan Shakur, our Minister of Human Rights who was taken from us on August 31, 2006, by our enemies that run the State of Texas. However, we will move on in Hasan Shakur’s name with Panther Love to create People’s Power and Revolution!

“To all who have dreamed – to all who have struggled – to all who have succeeded – to all who have failed – to all who have loved and won – to all who have loved and lost – to all who have dared to be different – to those who are not afraid to speak their mind – to the voiceless – to all the Kamaus, Shakas and Rudds – to all those that believed and achieved – to all that have been forced into silence – to all that are not afraid of adversity – to all the newborns awaiting breath.” As it is stated in the Hasan Shakur Enrollment Handbook, NABPP/PC – This is dedicated to you! – Hasan Shakur

Fasting will start on August 7th all day. And then after the 7th, you are only to eat two times a day until August 21st, when you are not to eat at all. The next day, eat only one meal. After the 22nd, you go back to eating two meals a day until the 31st, when you eat nothing again. The three fast days are to honor our Black Panther comrades, George Jackson, Jonathon Jackson and Hasan Shakur – May they rest in Peace!

During the month of Black August, the elders, political prisoners and veterans of the struggle should make a special effort to teach the younger comrades and youth about Panther Love and our rich history of struggle against slavery and oppression. Besides fasting, comrades should work out and do physical exercise to shape up your bodies and study to sharpen their minds as well as spend some time in meditation to put mind body and spirit in sync.

Prepare yourselves for the struggles to come. Reread the Party documents, the 10-Point Program, the Rules of Discipline and so on. Reread the teaching about Black August in Right On! #4 (If you can locate a copy)

As the NABPP/PC Minister of Justice, I take observance of Black August very seriously. Many people have been killed or placed into prison in our struggle. Let us not be slack in honoring them. Let us rise together to break our chains of injustice and slavery!

We will not have any peace until there is justice!

I thank you all for the contributions you have made to the struggle. Restoring our Black Panther Party is a great task that will take time and a lot of hard work and sacrifice. We have made a good start.

I am here to serve you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Peace and Unity with one Love always.

Bobby M. Dixon
C-41652
CHCF C2A #150
PO Box 32080
Stockton CA 95213

The United Panther Movement- Red Fist Alliance - March 2017

The United Panther Movement- Red Fist Alliance supports the redistribution of pain through the ongoing national prisoner strike, for the economic collapse of the for-profit domestic United States Prison Industrial Complex. Because of my mental and physical health conditions I take medication. There was an effort to sabotage this by prison staff, by having one of their inmate stooges plant a contraband drug in my cell. This shows the lengths the enemy will go to in opposing, even legal opposition. We have established a paralegal wing in support of this struggle. Luke Chrisco #162736 is our paralegal. For more information contact: Robert Thrower #47717, San Carlos Correctional Facility, PO Box 3, Pueblo, CO 81003. Up with the rebels/armies of the 12 Monkeys. To find out more, visit our blog at <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/1491>

Nashville TN - February 2017

Dear PAN
I'm presently serving a life sentence within the Tennessee Department of Corrections and at the present I have been housed at Louis DeBerry Special Needs Facility at Nashville, Tennessee

I have been confined since 1987 and these are the worst conditions I have ever faced. In September 2016 I was transferred to the facility for political reasons. I need double knee surgery. On September 9, 2016 Dr. Ronald Baker, the Surgeon at Nashville General Hospital, performed knee surgery upon my right knee to correct tendon and quadricep damages. The Louis M. Deberry Special Needs Facility ("DSHF") is supposed to house prisoners that are recovering from surgery. DSHF is the worst in the USA. DSHF medical staff and doctors are concerned with saving the dollar bill, until they forget about the needs of all prisoners. 70% of the prisoners that receive surgery end up with major infections. The doctors and nurses refuse to prescribe the medication the surgeon orders and the way the nurses and doctors handle the wounds, they pass infection from one prisoner to the next. My legs have suffered infections two times. The surgery took place on September 9, 2016 and as of this letter it still has not healed. In fact, on February 7, 2017 the surgeon had to re-open my knee and quadricep muscle to cut away the infected tissue. DSHF has a serious problem. After I started to research the matter I learned that four prisoners have died in the last six months because of infection and the facility has multi-lawsuits pending in the Tennessee Federal Court system at Nashville for medical malpractice.

In December 2016 Aramark Food Corporation took over the State contract for the responsibility of providing prisoner meals. Aramark refuses to honor the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Person Act 42-USC 2000 by providing halal meals to Muslim prisoners. I personally initiated inmate grievance #310768/14118 challenging the denial back in December 2016, and after a grievance hearing at the facility, I had to appeal to Tennessee Department of Corrections grievance coordinator for the state.

Aramark representative and DSHF food supervisor claim there is nothing in the contract that states Aramark must provide halal religious meals to Muslim inmates in the Tennessee Department of Corrections.

I'm reaching out for aide by any and all organizations and/or whom it may concern, as to pursuing legal action against Aramark Food Corporation for denial of religious halal meals and concerning the medical malpractice at this facility.

With peace and love to all those that involved with civil rights of self and others

Eddie Williams Jr. a.k.a. Abdul Fattaah #121015
DSHF Skill 2 Northhall Room 207
7575 Cockrill Bend Blvd
Nashville TN 37209

Most infuriating to the inmates, the prison allegedly provided jugs of bottled water to the dogs that live in the prison and are trained by inmates to become service providers for the disabled.

“Dogs are provided bottled water, but the human inmates are not,” the report stated. “This creates . . . a strong distrust of the [prison] administrators’ stance on any and all water/health related issues.”

[...]

Behind the forbidding walls and razor wire, Timothy Muise, one of several inmates who had written to the Globe about the issue, said the water has gotten worse since he came to the prison in 2007.

[...]

Muise, 53, said he felt free to speak about the problem, in part because he’s scheduled to complete his sentence next month. Others risked being punished by guards for talking to a reporter, he said. “We have never been given clean water while I have been housed here,” he wrote in a letter to the reporter. “You can feel your insides churn when you drink the water.”

He also accused prison administrators of “lying” about not providing the dogs bottled water, which he said he confirmed with the dogs’ handlers. He said they stopped the practice when the Globe began asking questions.

In the prison’s visiting room, Muise said the water in his cell sometimes comes out black and is nearly always brown. He lets it run for a minute before using it to brush his teeth, wash his face, or drink, hoping to flush out some of the sediment.

“It’s disgusting,” he said. “No one here thinks it’s safe.”

In a letter to the Globe, another inmate, Wayland Coleman, the elected co-chairman of the Norfolk Inmate Council, said the water has looked like “black tea” since last November and “smells horribly.”

Coleman, 39, who’s serving a life sentence for murder, worries about the long-term impact of the water. He said prison officials in February placed him in solitary confinement for a month after he mailed the council’s report to the Globe, and later stripped him of his position on the council.

[...]

Hostage Standoff in Delaware Prison Ends with One Corrections Officer Dead - February 2017

by Mark Berman and Katie Mettler

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/02/02/in-mates-demanding-education-protesting-trump-take-hostages-at-delaware-prison/?utm_term=.7eb78fe7738b

A day-long hostage standoff inside Delaware’s largest state prison for men ended early Thursday after state police stormed the building, finding a veteran corrections officer dead and rescuing another official who was being held hostage.

Authorities said they were not able to immediately release a motive for the attack, nor were they able to say how many inmates were involved, adding that every inmate in the building at the time is considered a suspect as the investigation gets underway.

The standoff began Wednesday about 10:30 a.m., when inmates at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna, about 40 miles south of Wilmington, took four corrections department workers — and, possibly, some fellow prisoners — hostage inside one of the facility’s buildings. They were wielding “sharp instruments,” officials said Thursday. Officials did not elaborate on these weapons.

Early Thursday, the siege ended after police breached the building and rescued a female staff member who was not injured. They also found Sgt. Steven R. Floyd, a 16-year veteran of the Delaware Department of Correction, but he was unresponsive. Floyd, 47, was declared dead a short time later [...]

Prisons across the state were locked down because of the standoff. Dozens of inmates left the building in Smyrna as the situation progressed, along with two of the four corrections officials who were being held, according to state officials. Three maintenance workers hiding in the basement were able to make their way to the roof, where they were rescued, authorities said.

Hostage-takers had apparently delivered a message to a local newspaper saying that their rebellion was a response to President Trump’s policies and concerns about what his administration would mean for the future of the prison.

“Everything that he did. All the things that he’s doing now,” they said during the second of two manifesto-like phone calls to the News Journal newspaper in Wilmington. “We know that the institution is going to change for the worse.”

Inmates were demanding education “first and foremost,” a “rehabilitation program that works for everybody,” and a comprehensive look at the prison’s budget and spending, according to audio of the calls posted online by the News Journal.

These demands given to the newspaper were similar to what inmates were telling police during negotiations conducted through a radio taken from a hostage, Delaware’s Homeland Security secretary, Robert Coupe, said at the Thursday morning briefing.

The Vaughn prison is the largest adult male correctional facility in the state, housing about 2,500 minimum-, medium- and maximum-security inmates, according to the Department of Correction website.

It is the landing place for people who have not yet been convicted of a crime and those who have been sentenced to death. Executions are carried out there, according to the website, although the death penalty in Delaware has been struck down by the state's Supreme Court.

Inmate complaints about treatment within the prison, substandard medical care and poor record-keeping have increased in the past year, Stephen Hampton, a lawyer from Dover who has represented prisoners in civil rights cases, told the Associated Press.

Rules prohibiting the commingling of pretrial inmates and those who have already been sentenced mean that detainees awaiting their day in court are locked up for much of the day, Hampton told the AP. These people do not have access to gyms or libraries and, Hampton said, there "gets to be a tremendous pressure on these inmates."

Sometimes they'll take a plea deal just to circumvent the restrictions, Hampton told the AP. A former Vaughn inmate also called the News Journal amid the chaos of the hostage situation Wednesday and told the newspaper that the takeover probably was the result of unresolved tensions finally bubbling over. The News Journal did not identify him but reported that he lived in Building C, the same area of the prison where the hostages were taken.

The former inmate told the News Journal that inside the prison, conditions are poor, inmates have limited access to education programs and issues with overcrowding mean that even those who exhibit good behavior aren't able to be transferred to medium-security buildings.

"They just got to the point where they're fed up," he told the local newspaper. "If DOC is worried about the officers and not their demands, if nothing changes, I guarantee there will be another hostage situation in a different building."

By the end of the day Wednesday, the hostage situation was gaining widespread attention, especially on social media, where people used the hashtag #VaughnRebellion to talk about the siege.

Water at State's Largest Prison Raises Concerns - June 2017

By David Abel, Boston Globe Staff

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/06/17/water-state-largest-prison-raises-concerns/xDEkyL3GFwsqag7qvywl3K/story.html>

NORFOLK — In 2011, after years of inmate complaints about the tea-colored water and long-term problems with aging tanks and wells, the state's largest prison suffered an unprecedented failure to its water supply. Toilets wouldn't flush. Showers wouldn't run. Behind the 19-foot concrete walls of MCI-Norfolk, the taps ran dry.

The massive water failure, blamed on excessive sediment coursing through old pipes, led the state Department of Environmental Protection to fine the nearly century-old prison thousands of dollars and order the Department of Correction to install an expensive new water-treatment system.

Six years later, the state has still not built the new system, and inmates, their advocates, and environmental scientists worry that the drinking water is unsafe.

A Globe review of state records found that 43 percent of all water samples collected at MCI-Norfolk since 2011 showed elevated levels of manganese, a prime component of the sediment from the wells. The naturally occurring mineral, found in many foods, can be dangerous when ingested at heightened levels for prolonged periods, potentially leading to tremors, slowed speech, and other neurological disorders that resemble Parkinson's disease.

With nearly half of MCI-Norfolk's roughly 1,500 inmates serving life sentences — more lifers than in any other state prison — many worry about their extended exposure to the water, and some blame it for their health problems.

Prisoners have also complained that adequate water supplies are lacking, even now, and that they endure strict limits on how much they can use.

In December, the Norfolk Inmate Council, which represents prisoners, reported that nearly two-thirds of inmates responding to a survey said they had suffered rashes and other skin problems. Nearly half complained of intestinal issues, and others had respiratory and vision problems, the council said.

While its report didn't provide any evidence linking the water quality to the inmate's health complaints, the council called the persistent water problems "troubling."

In the report, inmates said the water is regularly brown, and that filters in the communal sinks of housing units are routinely clogged with sediment. Because water samples are collected from the source rather than the tap, the tests could be missing lead and other sediment from corroded pipes, inmates said.

The report also found that few inmates could afford to buy bottled water. The prison sells 16-ounce bottles for 65 cents, about one-third of an inmate's average daily wage, earned for work in the prison.

and c/o Gourveia told me I was stupid and retarded and to stop acting that way. Gourveia is c/o Mager's partner. Then on March 30 2016 he went around to different cells telling inmates it was my fault he was taking hooks from people because I hung a sheet to use the bathroom. This c/o retaliated against me and put my life in danger by telling inmates it was my fault because he took hooks from people.

C/o Mager gave me a write-up NOC for Disobedience and Failure to follow Rules and Regulations. For filing a PREA on the c/o and a grievance for the PREA and retaliation. A senior c/o gave me a verbal reprimand I had to do 10 hours of extra duty, where I had to work for the retaliation. I am still in the grievance process. The prison and PREA investigator said it's ok for c/o's to strip search inmates anytime they feel there is contraband on an inmate.

The sexual harassment from High Desert is now in the court and the court case is 3:17-cv-00032-RCJ-UPC. I still need help if anyone can give me pointers on how to litigate as I'm stupid when it comes to law. I filed this on January 18, 2017 and the title is Tipton v. Guice et al, in the US District Court in Reno Nevada.

I would like to give a shout out to Mark Guth in Nevada. I would like to thank you for helping out Daisy and LGBTQ family. I also would like to shout out to Daisy to keep up work. We will all win someday gay or trans or lesbians. Shout out to let my friends know that Amber is also having problems here at Lovelock and she is going back to Ely. We love you Amber and I'll try to help you out some. I'm going to try and get to where Amber is to help her fight. Thanks!

Tippy

Duane Tipton #69967
Lovelock Corr. Cntr
1200 Prison Rd.
Lovelock NV 89419

Hunger Strike Started 5/22/2017 6AM - May 2017

I am a week into an active Hunter Strike. I am on Hunger Strike to protest and bring awareness to the corrupt practice law officials are exercisin' when it comes to dealin' with prisoner personal property that they are aiming to retaliate against. I have had half of my personal property confiscated unlawfully for retaliation purposes. Law officials tend to retaliate against prisoners that utilize their right to file a complaint.

I would like to know is there any way possible I could get your hand in getting this matter public. Your help would be gladly appreciated.

If you'd like to call the unit feel free to #806-381-7080 Warden Kevin Foley.

Keith Denson #1190601
Clements Unit
9601 Spur 591
Amarillo, TX 79107

Northwest Detention Center Hunger Strikers Issue Demands - June 2017

Tacoma, WA; and Beyond - On June 15, 2017, the #Tacoma12 went on hunger strike at the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC). There are currently 35 detainees inside the NWDC on hunger strike, joined in solidarity by now 5 activists outside the NWDC, to shine a light on human rights abuses.

The women issued a list of demands:

We are detainees seeking refuge through a hunger strike

Our demands: Accessible bond, political asylum, and improved conditions in the detention center.

Tacoma, WA: We are a group of women in the Northwest Detention Center located in Pod D1. We announce that today, June 22 2017, we begin a hunger strike.

Our demands are the following:

- 1.Parole.
- 2.Accessible bond.
- 3.Guaranteed political asylum: there are cases of people who have been granted asylum by a judge and are still not free.
- 4.New underwear.
- 5.More recreation time in the rec yard.
- 6.More time for religious services.
- 7.Don't throw out the belongings of the detainees.
- 8.Documents in our mother tongue.
- 9.Purified potable water available 24 hours a day.
- 10.Improvements to our nutrition (including fruit on the menu).
- 11.Stop transfers of detainees from one facility to the other.
- 12.Provide a variety of exercise equipment in the units.
- 13.Improvements in the medical realm-trained medics, medical attention and assistance.
- 14.Courts on time, without delay or postponement.
- 15.Honesty from ICE- concrete and precise answers.
- 16.Improvements in lowering commissary prices.

Complaints:

Medical negligence.

Diet based on rice and beans.

Denial of cases.

Denial of bond.

Clothing is in poor condition.

Transferring detainees from one facility to another, including from one state to another.

Very expensive commissary.

Evasiveness on the part of ICE- they do not respond to our doubts or complaints.

When one is given the option of Voluntary Repatriation, they have to wait at least 10 years before they can return to the United States.

NWDC Resistance activists will maintain their encampment outside the Northwest Detention Center through the end of the week. For live updates on hunger strikes across borders, visit <https://www.facebook.com/NWDCResistance/>

NWDC Resistance is a volunteer community group that emerged to fight deportations in 2014 at the now-infamous Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA. NWDC Resistance is part of the #Not1More campaign and supported people detained who organized hunger strikes asking for a halt to all deportations and better treatment and conditions.

#Tacoma12 #Adelanto9 #Not1More #NoEstánSólos

In this edition:

-800 NEW resources, new listings under every topic

-300 NEW reentry organization listings

-Bonus mental health section (containing current state-by-state information and resources)

-Bonus prison trends section (including just-released solitary confinement information and resources)

Plus: more reference guides, more penpal services, more...everything.

Also ask all the organizations that help prisoners to buy a copy of the Prison Lives Almanac so they can tell other prisoners about the resources that we need. Contact them at:

Prison Lives

PO Box 842

Exeter, CA 93221

www.prisonlives.com info@prisonlives.com

“Laws alone can not secure freedom of expression, in order that every man present his without penalty there must be a spirit of tolerance in the entire population.”

-Albert Einstein

NEVER AGAIN!!!

Robert S. Tabak 506777

Southeast Correctional Cnt. 4C-111

300 East Pedro Simmons Dr

Charleston, MO 63834

Lovelock NV - June 2017

Hello again, this is Tippy. I have an update on my situation. I was transferred to Lovelock Corr. Cntr. in Lovelock NV on November 2016.

The bad thing is I'm still getting sexually harassed by c/o's here and retaliation too. On February 18th, 2017 I was harassed by a c/o Mager where he took me to the staff office in their bathroom and stripped me out naked in front of the tier and made me stand there for 10 minutes while he yelled at me telling me I'm to listen to him because he was in green and I was in blue, and there is nothing I can do about it. He strip-searched me because I passed a pencil to the inmate plumber and his partner said I had a shank on me to strip me, when I didn't.

Then on March 25 I didn't know there was no trash liner in the trash can

taking advantage of them (Bill Cosby) but county and jails can prescribe these same medications or more potent and send you to court?

I'm writing to ask if there are any other complaints like this around that y'all know of.

Thanks!

Loyd Landon Sorrow Sr. #1134905
McConnell Unit - 18T - 94
3001 S. Emily Dr.
Beeville TX 78102

Charleston MO - March 2017

85% of the prisoners in this country have an intergenerational history of abuse and/or domestic violence, 35% of that is Educational Abuse. So we need education, counseling, rehabilitation programs, and prison reform so that prisoners and prisoners' families can become responsible productive members of society instead of a burden to the taxpayers.

Please send Bill Keller, Editor, a letter of 500-2000 words to tell him how you feel about this, and all of our problems and issues. Ask him for information about his organization also. Contact him at:

The Marshall Project
250 W 57th St Suite 2514
New York, NY 10107
212-803-5200
info@themarshallproject.com

Another place you should send a copy of that letter to is:

David Fathi- Director
American Civil Liberties Union Foundation
National Prison Project
915 15th St., NW
Washington DC 20005-2112
202-393-4930
www.ACLU.org

A must-have prisoner resource guide is the 2017 Prison Lives Almanac. It costs only \$25! They have over 500 pages containing over 5,000 current organized listings for prisoners.

Prison Officials Release Statement on Riot at Oklahoma Correctional Facility - July 2017

By Dallas Franklin

<http://kfor.com/2017/07/10/prison-officials-release-statement-on-riot-at-oklahoma-correctional-facility/>

HINTON, Okla. – Prison officials say approximately 400 inmates were involved in a riot at an Oklahoma correctional facility. Late Sunday night, city officials reported a possible riot at the Great Plains Correctional Facility in Hinton.

“There is a situation at the prison but the perimeter has NOT been breached. We have multiple agencies surrounding the prison to ensure the town’s safety. We will keep you updated as we know more. We are in communication with the warden to make sure that any needs are met.”

The prison facility, which is operated by a private corporation, houses approximately 1,900 federal offenders.

Prison officials said approximately 400 inmates started rioting in two separate locations at the prison. At some point during the riot, city officials told media members three correctional officers and several inmates were injured. However, none of the injuries were serious.

[...]

Around 4:30 a.m., officials confirmed the riot was over. The inmates have since been locked up in their cells.

[...]

It is unclear at this time why the riot started.

Uncovering the Aftermath of Florida’s 2016 Fall Prisoner Uprisings - February, 2017

[NOTE: Much of the content in this post was included in the first edition of *Plantation Rising*, a zine by FTP dedicated to FL prisoner struggles.

What follows are excerpts from FL prisoners regarding September 9, 2016. While these are only a few stories from a few facilities, they provide an exceptional overview of the conditions many face and the inspiration many felt in the showing the collective power of refusing to cooperate with an unjust system. These stories were compiled by the Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons (FTP).

Update from Sept 9 at Taylor C.I.

Written 12/27/16 by Michael C. Skinner, FDOC prisoner

I'm currently being held at Franklin C.I. because of the September 9th sit down. I was at Taylor Main Unit and have been there since 2009. We got wind of all of it pretty late but were able to pull together at least half of the compound. Peacefully we conducted ourselves and everyone who participated did not attend any services, call outs, canteens, chow, or recreation – if it had something to do with the state, we didn't go. So, the Assistant Warden Surles and Colonel Mitchell walked to every dorm and told us that as long as we were peaceful they had no problem with what we were doing! Good, or so we thought, a couple hiccups but nothing major or violent. So, the cops that night in the dorm started mistreating everyone with verbal abuse and it progressed through the weekend, with myself included on my way to a visit.

On Tuesday night, following Sept. 9th, the colonel had 30 extra officers stay and work late to do a round-up of everyone involved. Seven officers came to my house and took me to the laundry room, cuffed me, and put 26 of us in confinement under investigation for illegal gang activity. I'm not nor have I ever been in a gang! I saw blacks, whites, Spanish – all kinds – but we all had one thing in common: we were all a part of September 9th. We were viewed as the orchestrators of it on the compound. On the 16th day in confinement they walked us all up front in shackles and cuffs, split us up in 6 different groups, put us each on different vans and took us directly to our new camps. And now I'm at Franklin. And that's my September 9th story.

Some of us believe in what y'all are doing, so don't give up!

Michael Skinner #H16211
Franklin Correctional Institution
1760 Highway 67 North
Carrabelle, FL 32322

Update from Sept 9 at Gulf C.I. Annex
Written 1/5/2017 by Justin M. Curtis, prisoner

[...]

[T]he letter detailing the purpose of 9/9/16 came to me on 9/8/16. It was forwarded from another institution I had been transferred from. I immediately took action, by passing the letter around, going around and speaking to other inmates who had influence and we agreed that on 9/9/16 we would all participate in a "peaceful sit-down protest." At the time I was assigned to work in food service. I was on the 2 a.m. wake up crew, and we were the ones who would have to start the action. When the COs came to get us up for work (we had already been up all night anxious and excited), we refused to go.

The administration was already well aware of what was going to happen and already had plans implemented to bring inmates from the work camp to run the kitchen. So we were placed on lockdown status. We watched out of our windows as they called each dorm for chow. Not many people went, except for one dorm where all the inmates went. That is when things got a bit more tense. As I said, we had no time to plan or prepare, so a lot of people weren't on the same page. Some dudes were arguing "What are we standing up for?" and there were times of tension within

with "gender dysphoria," a recognized medical condition, see *Quine v. Beard*, U.S.D.C. (N.D. Cal.) case No. 3:14-CV-02726-JST. This was reported in PLN April 2017.

This specifically goes out to Tippy. In your §1983 if you do not know the present warden's name you put the former warden Dwayne Neven and put "present warden John Doe," NDOC director James Dzurenda. You can find out all NDOC personnel names with kites to caseworkers, administration or grievance procedure, letters to NDOC office, PO Box 7011, Carson City NV 89702 OR you could actually put John Does until you get to discovery stages as John Does 1-8 for example, *Young v. Quinlan*, 960 F2d351 (3rd Cir 1992). If I did not know the present warden/director name at the time of filing §1983 I would put the former name(s) because in law under Fed.R. Appellate P 43 (c) the public official's successor is automatically substituted as the party (defendant).

If I had someone who could go online for me on the outside I could find just about anything. Remember whoever writes me for help as I promise to answer all in any question or subject in civil or criminal law, state or federal, you must write me through your family or friends. I have most law books and probably hundreds of cases and if I need anything I go to the law library. We must fight for the injustices of the systems!

I stand in solidarity with all of you!

Lance Reberger 39494
Ely State Prison
PO Box 1989
Ely, NV 89301

Beeville TX - May 2017

Hi my name is Loyd Landon Sorrow Sr. #1134905, and I am fighting against drug induced judicial prosecutions here in Texas, especially at Harris County TX- Houston.

Thousands of pre-trial detainees with mental illness are given powerful anti-psychotic, antidepressants on top of many narcotic and narcotic-like medications, and then shuffled through the judicial system without hearings or the County Sherrif's Dept notifying the courts as it provided by Texas Law (see Tex. Code Crim. Procedure Art. 16.22 and 46B).

There was not even a felony mental health care court until 2012, which I feel my lawsuit had something to do with, which was denied by Supreme Court of Texas, just recently, for lack of subject matter jurisdiction.

I refiled this lawsuit on 5/11/17 in Harris County, and am awaiting a case number. I revised my claim. Sure need help.

How is it possible that people go to prison for slipping pills to people and

Ely NV - June 2017

To all prisoners,

This is an important update. No prisoners can or are allowed to write me directly from a prison, may be a jail or restitution center, but definitely no prison as it, the mail, has a prison stamp and never gets by the mailroom. This prison I am in is max security and per procedure, I just looked up again to confirm what it says: I am not allowed to receive letters from incarcerated persons. If you write me from prison your letter will become unauthorized. Any jail or facility that doesn't put facility name on the letter nor your ID (#) sign and maybe I will receive it. Otherwise please everyone write me through family or friends (yours). I have no one as I have been down for 26 ½ years and will get my conviction overturned in 2-4 years as I am still fighting for the injustice of the criminal justice system.

On a better note, since my first letter to you in PAN February 2017 Vol 10.1 I got one of my cases in the 9th Cir. reversed and remanded. I also beat summary judgment in one other case now in discovery stages in US District Court from a §1983. This case is one of four still pending as I filed two more cases. When you want to fight for the injustice of what the pigs do to you every piece of information, every word someone speaks, every kite written and answered, every document unseen that you know exists, even another prisoner's declaration will be critical. You should even write a journal (as I do) on every occurrence, event, or observation, with dates and times to show a pattern of what pigs do to you and others. This is a part of law and how a lot of civil cases are won and how I won, reversed, and remanded in the 9th Cir.

There is one thing everyone must know as I forgot to mention in my first letter to PAN. While it is true everyone must exhaust their grievance procedure which is required by the PLRA, the PLRA does not determine the way in which you must exhaust it. It is your own prison, jail, restitution center, facility's grievance procedure that determines exhaustion under Jones v. Bock, 127 S. ct. 910 (2007). For example, if a pig threatens you with harm if you turn in your grievance to the next level and you cannot make your deadline due to that threat, your grievance is considered exhausted. But be careful because you may need to prove it in court. In my case the AG is challenging the grievance under the PLRA but I followed the grievance procedure to a T. The AG cannot beat me. This is why I mentioned in the first letter you must copy it down or get a copy word for word and learn it, know it, and cite it. The reason for a copy is because if the officials revise the grievance procedure you should still have a copy of the old procedure and new revised procedure which is exactly what took place here in Nevada. One more thing, the revised grievance procedure here in NV is not retroactive to the old- meaning does not apply and my grievance applies to the old procedure way more beneficial to me. Plus you should also know that prisons may have two grievance procedures, an "A.R." and an "O.P." Get them both written down.

This specifically goes out to all the transgender [inmates]: Daisy Meadows, Skyylar Alexxys Munk, Amber and others - in August 2015 California DOC and Rehabilitation paid, due to a §1983, from state funds, for sex reassignment surgery to transgender woman Shiloh Quine, 57, per a settlement agreement, as she was diagnosed

our dorm between us. But there was also a sense of unity that I'd never seen. At a certain point the administration felt it necessary to step down on us.

They came in, surrounded the compound with armed police officers, came to our dorm and had us all face down on our bunks, screaming at us through a bull-horn to "Get down!," they had guns over us and totally took the whole thing out of hand. Overreaction puts it very lightly...

After leaving our dorm, the Rapid Response Team (RRT) in full riot gear headed to the "two man cell dorms," where they rushed in without warning, firing tear gas grenades and rubber bullets at unsuspecting inmates. There were several people punished with bogus Disciplinary Reports (DRs) which all said the same exact thing, and several inmates were transferred to other facilities.

I received a DR for "Inciting a Riot" and have been on lockdown since 9/10/16. I am now on Close Management (CM II) status, where I will be on lockdown for at least 7-8 more months at Suwannee C.I.

I have no regrets at all besides that there wasn't any time to prepare and have things work out different and perhaps even effect a positive change within this corrupt, oppressive system. But it was a learning experience and I am glad I participated and took action regardless of the consequences...

[...]

Justin M. Curtis #K62605,
Suwannee Correctional Institution,
5964 U.S. Hwy 90,
Live Oak, FL 32060

Updates from Sept 9 at Franklin C.I.

Written 2/21/2017 by Christopher Reber, a prisoner currently at R.M.C. West Unit

I was at Franklin during the September protests and it wasn't a complete stoppage but many did participate – much more than I had predicted – and the prison's administration responded with a partial lock-down of the prison and disciplinary action against those participating. The average disciplinary action taken was a loss of 30 days (or more) gain time and a loss of canteen access for at least 30 days. While it was good to see prisoners come together on an important issue, it was amazing to see people outside of prison standing up for us. Thank you for your letter and your support. Having support and a voice through people on the other side of the wire is a prisoner's most valuable asset.

Christopher Reber #K80543
RMC West Unit
P.O. Box 628
Lake Butler, FL 32054

Women in California's Largest Immigrant Prison Hold Hunger Strike - June 2017

By Victoria Law, Waging Nonviolence

<https://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/women-immigrant-prison-hunger-strike/>

On June 14, 33 women who have been detained and incarcerated by ICE in California's Adelanto Detention Facility launched a hunger strike. They were protesting the poor conditions at the facility as well as the policies that were keeping them away from their children and loved ones.

The Adelanto Detention Facility, with a capacity of 1,940, is the largest private immigration detention facility in the United States. Run by the GEO Group, ICE pays \$111 per person per day for the first 975 detainees, thus guaranteeing GEO a minimum of \$40 million each year. If more than 975 people are detained inside Adelanto, the daily rate drops to less than \$50 per day.

Immigrant rights organizations, such as Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC), and Detention Watch Network, have sharply criticized Adelanto for widespread and systemic abuses towards immigrants in custody.

Since March 2017, three people have died at Adelanto. Others have reported medical neglect and, on at least one occasion, being punished for seeking medical care. Norma Gutierrez, one of the women on hunger strike, has suffered multiple strokes during her incarceration at Adelanto. Instead of receiving proper medical care, she was placed in solitary confinement. Such medical neglect is not new; Human Rights Watch and CIVIC found that Adelanto has had ongoing failures in providing medical care to detainees, including extended delays in responding to medical requests, overmedication of people with mental disabilities, the use of shackles during psychiatric appointments, a lack of continuity of care for those with chronic conditions, delayed or denied care for people whose removal seems to be imminent, and denial of care or misdiagnoses for people with serious conditions or diseases.

Among the women's demands were better medical care, respectful treatment by prison staff, an end to ICE's unreasonably high bonds, and reunification with their children and families. According to Christina Mansfield, co-founder and co-executive director of CIVIC, many of the women had been detained for over six months by that point. "We want them to speak to us like we are humans, not animals. We don't want to be disrespected and cursed at," Sara Salcido, one of the women on hunger strike, told Mansfield.

This is not the first hunger strike in Adelanto this month. Two days earlier, nine men launched a hunger strike protesting these same conditions. They had arrived with a refugee caravan from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala claiming asylum at the US border. Instead, they were detained and sent to Adelanto.

On Monday, June 12, they refused to return to their assigned beds for count, a practice in prisons, jails and immigrant detention centers in which all movement stops while each and every person is counted. But that morning, the nine men locked

and forced to house in the hole with a male cellmate who raped me. I was then transferred to HDSP where I was told that they would be able to address my housing needs, request to be housed alone or with other trans women. In three weeks I was given 5 different male cellies. I have a fear of men and have been a victim of approximately 50 rapes in 4 years. I am trying to fight to address housing issues and have filed a preliminary injunction. But housing issues are very serious issues here at HDSP.

Recently they did make policy changes to provide one with female staff for pat downs, searches, and strip searches. But continue to house me with male inmates.

There are several problems and issues that need to be addressed. For the transgender prisoners- girls be strong and do things the right way. Changes are being made. It's slow progress but it's progress nonetheless. I have also attempted the self castrations. I know how it feels to have them but it will only complicate your treatments. So please don't do that, have patience Ms. Skyylar Alexxys Munk. I suggest and recommend that you contact me. I believe I can help you and I don't mind. I was born in Missouri and all us girls need to stick together and stand proud.

I want to thank Mark Guth for your contribution as well as Lance Reberger. Your advice is greatly appreciated and did not go unnoticed. Tippy I saw your article. I'm easy to find. Everybody knows me. Come talk to me and I will help you if I can. I'm currently in 12.

I am making progress in my case and will continue to fight not only for my rights as a prisoner and transgender woman but for the rights of others as well. Case #3:14-CU-00611 MMD-WGC.

Nevada inmates need to start filing for their rights. There are several issues that everybody can file on such as access to the phones, emergency buttons in the cells not working, medical treatment, deliberate indifference, the food, etc. If enough noise is made they will make changes, but nothing will change if we don't start fighting and challenge the way we're being treated. Everybody has a voice. I am a lifer and I don't like my situation so I'm going to do whatever I can to bring change.

Boys and girls alike let's rise up and unite to fight against their corrupt prison system and show the world their corruption. Change will come.

To my trans sisters, be strong, stand proud, we will prevail and if you ever need support, advice, etc. don't hesitate to contact me.

With love, respect, and solidarity,

Ms. R. Trost a.k.a. Daisy Meadows
#1027585

High Desert State Prison
PO Box 650
Indian Springs, NV 89070

Inmate was not permitted to hear the answers via telephonic hearing. The telephone had capacity/capability to turn on teleconference speaker. Sgt Dugan abused his discretion under cover of law. See: Administrative Regulation (A.R.) #707. Page 12 of 32 7C (see end of Ground four).

Ground Four: I was kidnapped out of my NDOC class S.T.O.P., a psycho-sexual class as instructed by Dr. Wilson as directed by Nevada Parole Board of Commissioners (N.P.B.C.) on April 13, 2016. Computation of statutory good time days per N.R.S. 209 4465 and Restoration of stat. good times days per A.R. 564 as inmate was programming and doing quite well. Inmate contends the capricious sentence of 18 months in disciplinary segregation; 180 days of loss of statutory good time days per Nev. Rev. Stat. 209.4465 returned and A.R. 564 Restoration of Statutory good time days.

Administrative Regulation (A.R.) #707

Page 12 of 32 of Code of Penal Discipline

7c "The disciplinary hearing officer may take the testimony of any witness (employee or inmate) over the telephone if said telephone has the capability for all present at the hearing to hear the questions and answers."

Brian Eugene Lepley

#58197

Ely State Prison

PO Box 1989

Ely, NV 89301

Indian Springs NV - February 2017

Dearest friends at Prison Action News,
My gratitude and appreciation goes out to you for your continued help and support and for publishing my story and other stories of my situation. I now have a private attorney that took my case and I now have help with fighting against this corrupt prison system that has so much hate and disgust towards the transgender community.

I will continue to fight and advocate for my rights and the rights of others. The NDOC has continuously tried to silence me but have failed. In my last article I mentioned a cellie I had: "Amber," another trans woman. Well on Dec 14th I was transferred to SDCC and she was given a new cellie. We were both raped on that day, her cellie attacked her, raped and beat her, and hospitalized her at E.S.P., causing brain damage. The NDOC moved me to SDCC to cross me out. I was supposed to go to WSCC to the day program to a single cell. I was also raped on December 14, 2016 when I arrived in the bathroom. I was housed with a political white boy who rolled me up, threatened to kill me because I was transgender. I was put in the hole

arms; in response, guards pepper sprayed them and put them in isolation. Advocates said that guards also physically beat the men, a claim that ICE officials disputed in an email statement, saying that the guards "applied the necessary degree of force to extract the resisting detainees from the residence unit and transfer them to a restricted housing area." Shortly after, six of those men began refusing food.

The men issued nine demands: a fair bond for all detainees, political asylum, new uniforms -- especially new underwear -- instead of clothes previously worn by other people, more time for religious services, paperwork provided in their own languages, 24-hour access to clean water, better food, and an end to throwing away their belongings. They also demanded that they be released on their own recognizance rather than remain detained for their inability to pay bond.

The women were aware of the men's actions, Mansfield said. Hoping to avoid similar forms of retaliation, they asked that their names be made public.

That Wednesday morning, as 33 women refused to eat breakfast, Mansfield received another call from inside. According to the women calling her, guards had threatened the women with pepper spray, solitary confinement and confiscation of their belongings if they continued to refuse food.

However, that afternoon, 20 of the women, all of whom had been unsuccessfully seeking health care, were taken to see medical staff. Jail staff also agreed to treat the women with respect, including respecting their religious freedom. However, ICE officials told the women that they have no control over the bonds. In reality, however, the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees ICE, has the authority to grant conditional parole and release a person on their own recognizance rather than set bond.

By dinner that evening, the women had ended the hunger strike.

In the limited communication Mansfield has received since, none of the women have reported retaliation. But that doesn't mean that Adelanto staff and GEO administrators are not on the alert and ready to quash any future signs of activism or solidarity.

On June 20, one week after the women's hunger strike and two weeks after the men's, CIVIC and over 60 faith leaders and attorneys boarded a bus to head to Adelanto, 85 miles outside of Los Angeles, to visit the people detained inside. Upon disembarking, the group held a five-minute interfaith prayer outside the facility. In response, GEO staff not only denied the visitors entrance, but also placed the entire facility on lockdown and kicked out the attorneys and family members who were already inside waiting to visit.

Though ICE's federal standards mandate that detention facilities provide 24-hour access for attorneys to visit their clients, Christina Fialho, an attorney as well as CIVIC's other co-founder and co-executive director, was denied visits with 14 of her clients despite having received prior approval from ICE. Other attorneys were denied entry as well, including those who had not come or were not affiliated with the bus from Los Angeles.

"When we see abuse in detention, it is our moral obligation to speak up and stand in solidarity with our friends in detention," Fialho stated. "By denying us access after a peaceful and short prayer, ICE has tried to make us choose between our First Amendment rights and visiting our friends and clients in immigration detention. This is not a choice our government can legally ask us to make."

THE ALMIGHTY PEN AND PAPER: GRIEVANCES AND LEGAL WORK

Somerset PA - May 2017

I am an incarcerated inmate in a Pennsylvania Department of Corrections prison named SCI Somerset located in Somerset Pennsylvania. An incident happened on January 9th 2017 at 1600 hour count (4 p.m.). The regular 2-10 p.m. Sergeant (Sergeant Baserman) and Officer Reesman were walking past my cell to conduct inmate count. After they passed I needed to use the bathroom, so I turned my back towards my cellmate (so I wouldn't get a writeup) and faced the door. The Officer and Sergeant came back around to go up the stairs, which is by my cell. Sergeant Baserman, who was the second to go up the steps, stopped on the 3rd step and looked directly over at me. As soon as I noticed I yelled "Do you mind? I'm using the restroom" the Sergeant continued to watch me until I was finished using the restroom. Later the same evening I sat down and wrote out what happened and asked to file a PREA report (Prison Rape Elimination Act) against Sergeant Baserman. I placed this in a plain white envelope and addressed it to the PREA Lieutenant, DL Abbott. Three days later I went to be interviewed by Lieutenant Abbott. He stated he was going to pull the camera footage. In the meantime I would be interviewed by the Psych Department to see if mentally I was okay, then interviewed by the Pennsylvania State Police. Within a week I saw both the Psych department and the Pennsylvania State Police. The Pennsylvania State Police said during my interview they couldn't find any video footage but would go back and look again. I heard nothing after that interview. About a week later I went on writ for court to SCI Benner Township. I was gone for almost a month. The day after I came back I was called up and served with misconduct. I was written up because they say they couldn't find camera footage and said I made up a story. A week later, I went in front of the hearing examiner S. Wiggins. Despite never having another misconduct report on me or even a block card (a negative housing report) and being a model inmate, this hearing examiner still found me "guilty" and sanctioned me to 30 days cell restriction, which is total confinement away from general population. My family then emailed the facility PREA coordinator Mr. Allen Joseph (also a deputy here) asking for his help in regards to this misconduct. A few days later he called me over to an office, along with my unit counselor, and states he had gotten an email from my family and didn't care if we chose to expose the conditions of the prison as my family had stated. He stated also that I deserve the punishment I received. After this meeting I returned to my cell. Let the record reflect, that I was still on the same housing unit with this Sergeant and there has been nothing but retaliation since that with the Sergeant. My family also contacted Central Office for PREA, who also stated this Prison is in the wrong. For the record, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections inmate handbook which is given to every inmate when arriving to their home prison, page

Ely NV - February 2017

Dear PAN,

I am back at Ely State Prison and no longer at High Desert. It was nothing seriously wrong: a simple mistake of not using an inmate kite but notebook paper to inform my minister of my absence at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. The note was written in Spanish. The volunteer facilitator inadvertently left the High Desert facility and went to teach the bible to interested ones at Indian Springs Southern Desert Correctional Center (SDCC). The inutility of the Correctional Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) to translate is above the pay grade so it was much easier to racially profile the letter and assume it was some sort of "honeybun hit" on an inmate. They asserted they have yet to identify an inmate dubbed Anciano Elder. "Anciano" is Spanish for elder.

It just was coincidentally the English speaking Jehovah's Witness volunteer free staff facilitator who placed it in his bible without thinking.

The note excusing my attendance in chapel that day was due to the fact that Dr. Wilson of the psychosexual class dubbed S.T.O.P. was changed to Wednesdays, the same as my worship of Jehovah. I chose wrong. For even upon completion of this class there's no assurance parole would be granted.

Sergeant Mr. Joseph Dugan changed the mere title of the major infraction from MJ-51 "Compromising Staff" to MJ-31 "Unauthorized use of mail" without lessening the time in disciplinary segregation.

I received 180 days loss of statutory good time days [another court endeavor to recover]; 18 months (began 2 Feb 17) in disciplinary segregation; 60 days loss at canteen. Any disc seg. over 1 year must be done at Ely. HDSP is not a long term disc seg facility. So the caseworker Ms. Barrett has recommended my transfer to Ely (22 Feb 17) as she informed me in writing.

Under the law I brought writ of habeas corpus commutation of statutory good time days and restoration of stat. days per Admin Req 564.

Ground one. First amendment religious challenge USCA 1. To communicate with my minister religious free staff volunteer facilitator for Jehovah's Witnesses via a note handwritten on notebook paper as DOC Forms 3012 [inmate request forms] were unavailable and inaccessible. The note handwritten communication was racially profiled by SDCC C.E.R.T. officers when discovering it upon the religious free staff who inadvertently placed it in his bible.

Ground two: Fourteenth U.S. Const. Amend Free Exercise Clause. The unavailability and inaccessibility of inmate request forms (inmate kites or DOC 3012). Protective Segregation inmates were moved to Units 9, 10, 11, and 12. Upon arriving, Senior Mr. Garcia in Unit 12b notified all inmates by yelling do NOT ask control for anything! This inmate was removed from Level one class in which he was enrolled S.T.O.P. to level three.

Ground three: The right to call witnesses per Wolff vs. McDonnell was not permitted to present questions to the permitted/allowed witness HDSP Chaplain Mr. Calderon. Questions were those only asked by Sgt. Mr. Joseph Dugan (HDSP).

John Doe Petition over the DOC Illegally Taking Prisoners' Money - June 2017

Nate A. Lindell, the prisoner who wrote the John Doe Petition (J.D.P.) for Peg Swan, which was discussed in a 16 Feb article by Bill Lueders in the Isthmus and in a 20 Feb. 2017 article by Gina Bartow in the Milw. Jnl. Sent'l filed his own J.D.P. in Dane Co. Circuit Court, Case No. 2016-JD-15. Judge Lanford dismissed his J.D.P. on 19 Dec. 2016 and Lindell filed a reconsideration motion. Several months passed without that motion being decided or his inquiries being answered. Lindell filed a petition for supervisory writ with the state Appeals Court, which was assigned the file #2017-AP-1039-W, Lindell v. Dane County Circuit Court.

A Supervisory Writ asks the Appeals Court to make a lower court do what the law requires it to do. In this case, Lindell is asking the Appeals Court to direct Judge Lanford to refer the J.D.P. to Dane County's District Attorney (DA) which Judge Lanford refused to do because she claimed the J.D.P. didn't show that a crime had been committed.

In the J.D.P., Lindell stated that the DOC had no authority to take prisoners' money for debts they already paid or which weren't based on a judgement from a court, but that's what DOC officials are doing.

Counsel for Judge Lanford, an A.A.G., will respond to the petition for supervisory writ, then the Appeals Court will decide the matter. The court's decision may declare whether or not the DOC's increased, intensified collection of debts it claims prisoners owe is legal - if it's legal, then no crimes could have been committed and the dismissal of Lindell's J.D.P. will be deemed appropriate.

What the court decides will determine the validity of the many other suits being filed on this issue.

Written by Nate A. Lindell

7 section 8 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) DC-ADM008 number 2, the last sentence reads "you will not be retaliated against for reporting an incident of sexual harassment or for providing witness testimony." This prison has clearly violated this and continues to violate this and many other PA DOC policies. They interpret policies the way they want and enforce them how they want. Even Superintendent Wingard does nothing to help the situations in here and instead helps make it worse by sticking up for his staff whether they are right or wrong. Please take a stand with me and expose these prisons on their intolerable wrongdoings and let the know they can't get away with this. Join with me and let's take a stand!!

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Coble
SCI Somerset
1600 Walters Mill Rd
Somerset, PA 15510

p.s. If you've gone through a similar matter or situation and would like to share, please drop me a line.

Perryville AZ - March 2017

To whom it may concern:

Re: negligence on behalf of Lumley staff and Administration. Violation of my 8th Amendment/prison rights. My life was endangered, as well as my safety, health, and well-being.

I am currently incarcerated and reside at ASPC- Perryville, Unit: Lumley. On 12-24-16, I was moved into C-41-01. The cell was red-lined because the upstairs showers were leaking into C-41-01; forming water bubbles on the ceiling and walls through the foundation.

I was exposed to indoor mold, bacteria, bio-hazardous wastewater, fungus, airborne substances, and air pollution. I attempted to resolve this issue by writing over 15 inmate letters to D.W. Ortiz, Capt. Ford #4933, S.S.U.T. Hegler #9020, C.O. Daley (Movement Officer); not to mention 2 Sgt's and 15 other correctional officers were notified, concerning "suspected" indoor mold growing inside cell C-41-01. No one ever responded to me in the allotted time frame, per policy.

This egregious situation has been difficult, stressful, and overwhelming because no one seemed to care, nor take any kind of action, or attempted to resolve this tumultuous, grave issue. I informed each person listed above of my pre-existing health issues of chronic asthma. My condition worsened when I moved into C-41-01. I suffered from excessive asthma attacks, coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath, sinus irritations, allergies, the feeling of fire in my lungs when inhaling, recurring cold-like symptoms, migraine headaches, and extreme fatigue.

After months of residing in C-41-01, I put on HNR requesting to be seen by Medical immediately. On 3-11-17, I was seen by a nurse and was told, "Ms. Davy, you have all the classic symptoms of a respiratory infection." This is enough evidence to prove adverse health effects from possible mold exposure.

On 3-9-17, Capt. Ford #4933 visually inspected my cell during a routine 704, and I explained to him that mold was growing inside. He observed fuzzy growth, leaking water, water bubbles, and a stagnant odor. He informed me, "That's algae, not mold. Algae will not hurt you!" I questioned him by asking, "What is your solution, sir?" He responded by saying, "The only thing we can do is repaint and buy new shower curtains."

[...]

DOC is responsible for exposing me to a serious disease that can affect me now and for years to come due to prolonged exposure of indoor mold. DOC did not take the necessary steps to prevent or eliminate these sources. Being exposed to health hazards is a violation of my 8th Amendment rights and I was subjected to the risk of an illness, that could have possibly killed not only me but my bunkie as well. This is "cruel and unusual punishment." [...]

Lumley staff and Administration as well as maintenance were all aware of what type of substances were leaking into my cell. I requested that DOC pay a qualified environmental lab to take samples of the mold and I stipulated that the consultants must have established criteria for interpreting the test results. [...] I was told the DOC will not do that.

[...]

On 3-13-17, Witt told Sgt. Sanders to have maintenance remove the peg board with the unknown substances (mold), turn off the upstairs shower in wing 4, and remove myself and Inmate Elem #186162. Furthermore, again, redline cell C-41-01 so no one else lives there.

[...]

I would like an environmental assessment done for the presence of mold or other airborne substances. I would also like the samples I extracted examined and identified (DNA) for common indoor mold species. [...] I want DOC to be held accountable to fix all leaks, remove standing water, biohazardous materials, dampness, excessive moisture, and window condensation. Also, they must prevent and eliminate mold. [...] DOC must also remove humans from damp places to decrease symptoms and re-exposure.

It is imperative and would make a substantial contribution to the health and safety of inmates and staff to clean Perryville. Administration has not yet turned off the water in wing 4, nor have they fixed C-41-01. It is the same condition as it was when Elem and I moved out on 3-13-17, still endangering other inmates that live in the surrounding cells. To resolve this issue the Maricopa County Public Health Inspectors need to mandate that the living conditions here at Perryville be made fit for humans to safely reside in. DOC must be made to bring their buildings up to code, be sanctioned, and held accountable for their neglect of our living conditions.

Sincerely,

Damaris Davy

Hope - April 2017

My name is Maurice Washington. I am a 45 year old African American. I'm from Watts CA. I came to prison 22 years ago with a second grade education, no knowledge of self. I was committed to a gang, out of Watts, CA: Nickerson Garden Bounty Hunters. Coming from this subculture environment gang banging since I was nine years of age, it's fair to say that I was programmed, conditioned to display the ignorant behavior. While in prison I preyed on my peoples, Crips, which lead to altercations and some knife fights. An older brother from a prison organization called B.G.F. confronted me in ad seg. He told me that the crip that I fought with is not my enemy and that we're representing a city that the government owns and that we're descendants of our ancestors, Africans. It sounded good. But to fully understand its meaning, I couldn't because of my poor comprehension level. That night I couldn't sleep. The conversation was heavy on my mind. The following day, he gave me a book by Cornell West, *Race Matters*. This book became my bible. I went on to stop gangbanging. I learned law and wrote 4 books. 1 published, entitled *My Life, My Awakening*, can be viewed on Jademediabooks.com or Amazon or Barnes & Noble. This book got the attention of a black movie director that signed me to a life story contract- a movie. It was determined that I was given an unlawful sentence. I'm incarcerated for a second degree robbery and was sentenced under CA's unjust 3 strikes law.

I have 12 years of false imprisonment. My case is in federal court. I'm waiting to go home after 2 years. I had 31 years to life.

With no education to 4 books and a movie deal...Hope: Don't give up! People educate yourselves and take yourself seriously and realize that our survival depends on our unification!

I lost almost my entire family in 22 years. Last year my mom and the year before that my father. Psychologically I wanted to give up. It dawned on me that our ancestors went through worse...

So hold on, pain is ending!

Don't be your own worst enemy!

Sincerely,

Maurice Washington H-45297
CSP- Los Angeles County
B-3-135
PO Box 4490
Lancaster CA 93539

Gamesmanship/Stratagem Tactics Nevada Continues - April 2017

Case 3:17-CV-00228-MMD-WGC Warren V. Nevada Dept of Corr. et al was filed on 4/12/17 against a prison system that I have been a prisoner of since 12/15/86 with no such security issue until Dec 7, 2015 that sent prisoner to Carson Tahoe Hospital in which a bill of \$1919.00 was generated from a prison weapon used upon him in which is believed questionable prison officials using inmates affiliated with a security threat group and disruptive group told them it was "open season" on prisoner and since statement put out by a Correctional Officer (9-23-13) "that he was my judge's court bailiff and I should have killed myself, etc." The adverse action taken by NDOC prison officials 5-30-14, 12-2-14, 12-7-15 lead to the final occurrence of bodily harm with no investigation 16 months later ever spoken to warrant of occurrence.

It's time to hold state actors accountable for the mistreatment they do to all prisoners of any race no matter what they're in prison for.

To all Nevada inmates of any race, let us break the chain of hatred going into 2017 and fight with the pen against those who keep us chained up. Do not allow the adverse actions taken by prison officials...to be the prisoners downfall.

Keith Warren #23562
Lovelock Correctional Center
1200 Prison Rd
Lovelock, NV 89419

Bridgeton NJ - April 2017

In April 4, 2017, I received an American Civil Liberties Union Survey. I was very careful when I filled out this form. This survey was about the State of New Jersey prison conditions and how they can change the prison system.

I had nothing to say about Southwoods State Prison. Most of my statements were displayed, in the survey.

I also had suggested that "in order to send a survey and receive a proper results, survey must be sent to prisoners who have a lot of years to do and been incarcerated for such a long time."

Thank you for your time,
Sincerely yours,

Darrell Hann #592792
Southwoods State Prison
215 S. Burlington Rd
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Federal Prison Shuts Down Commissary Hours for Facilities Workers - April 2017

A group of approximately 140 inmates were denied the opportunity to purchase necessary commissary items in an apparent conflict between corrections officers, their labor union, and prison administrators this past January. Beginning with the new year, CO's working in the commissary at FCI Elkton (OH) eliminated late afternoon and evening hours, thus omitting the only times when inmates employed in the facilities department were allowed to shop. Since prison regulations forbid inmates from engaging in any "unofficial" activities during work hours, workers were left no other option than to risk purchases during their normal meal times and sacrifice required nutrition. Bear in mind, BOP prisoners are issued very little and all shortcomings must be supplemented out of their own pockets. Simple, basic needs including postage stamps, over-the-counter medications like allergy pills and cough syrup, deodorant, reading glasses and shaving cream, so-called "additional" clothing such as shoelaces, even toothbrushes and coffee must be bought at over-inflated prices out of seriously under-market wages. Union negotiations are said to have forced these changes after months of talks, yet without any real thought or concern to the effects it would cause for those it impacted most- prisoners.

I was one of the inmates caught up in the battle between staff and administrators. I/we were both disgusted and angry that prisoners' fundamental needs were so carelessly and haphazardly abandoned in the decision to placate the demands of an all-too-powerful corrections officers' union. Surely this was a violation of our constitutional rights and not a "privilege" as some have argued. It must be evident to all that hygiene, basic medications and the freedom to communicate with loved ones and attorneys represent crucial liberties to be ensured and protected by this institution regardless of union disputes, labor contracts or prison politics. To add insult to injury, Unicor workers who share a schedule similar to that of Facilities were granted a separate time slot specific to their commissary needs, suggesting a priority for their department by prison officials. Many weeks passed with no response from the administration to inmates' informal requests for a reasonable and fair solution.

At the suggestion of certain staff members, Facilities workers were encouraged to join together in their demands for formal resolution. Their support cannot be underestimated, for they risked potential backlash from their own supervisors in advising us. Their honesty and candor in recognizing the injustices of prison life was a welcome reminder that there are those within the system trying to do the "right" thing. Emboldened by their recommendations, Facilities inmates initiated a series of filings seeking administrative remedy through the prison's official grievance procedure. We were able to openly discuss our options while at work, agree upon being pro-active and decide who amongst us were willing to be involved. Workers then submitted BP-8 grievance forms to their superiors and/or department heads, as well as utilizing prison email to inform operations staff and the warden of their concerns. It is not known how many inmates participated in this semi-organized campaign, but within 7-10 days of our initial filings, workers were assigned a time slot to shop.

Please note, conflicts still exist. Early AM inmates who must report to work have little or no time to eat breakfast AND complete other tasks such as clothing and linen exchanges, legal mail, receipt of the weekly distribution of toilet paper, etc. And it was a slow process to gain the attention of prison officials, one which took nearly 3 months before receiving any formal confirmation regarding the situation (in a bulletin dated 22 Mar 2017). But it got resolved.

Now, my brothers and sisters behind bars, let me encourage you - do your homework, educate yourselves, be aware of your rights, learn how the system works and take it upon yourselves to approach your problem from a basis of knowledge. And when faced with a challenge or systemic wrong perpetrated on you by the PIC, take full advantage of the official channels available to inmates. Petitions, strikes, demonstrations and protests can and do happen. Moreover, there are times when these actions may be the only way to lift our demands to those in power and give voice to our collective concerns. However, let them be a last resort, not the first. If there is one thing I have learned about the BOP during my time inside, it's that they don't like paper and forms. They like being required to talk to us even less. Use this as your weapon and beat them with their own system.

[...]Talk to each other- wisely, cautiously and calmly. Organize, coordinate, and devise a strategy. There is power in the many, numbers matter, WE matter when we work together for the benefit of all. [...]Give the system a chance to work and try it their way. You might be surprised by the results one can achieve with enough patient, reasoned persistence. Remember, the revolution will come soon enough.



Alvaro Luna Hernandez, wrongfully convicted twenty years ago