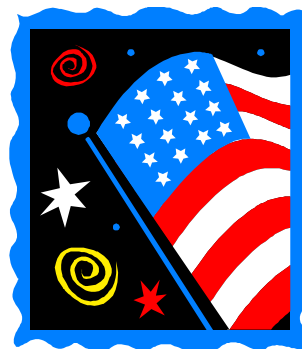




LostVault: Unlocked - Issue No. 5

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**The staff of
LostVault: Unlocked
would like to wish
everyone a safe
and happy
Independence Day!**

JAIL HOUSE HELPERS

By Morigayn Johnson (Motty)

I know a woman here in Tennessee that, although she will never pick up a pen to write a prisoner, does believe in doing what she can to make a difference. One day, over a year ago Julia found out a relative of hers was writing to prisoners and talked with them about it. The relative told Julia that it had been a most rewarding experience, and that she wished there was something she could do to maybe brighten the local inmates days now and then.

Julia thought long and hard about what the relative had told her. One day the time came for action. She, along with other community members, was going to put on a play. There was only one problem - all the people involved were older women, neither they, or their husbands could build a stage or move it on their own. "That's it," Julia thought, "the inmates!!" She called the local jail to find out if they would "loan" her the trustees for a few days now and then. The ladies would feed them all a home cooked meal and even put on a special performance of the play for them. A week later the answer came back, "Yes!"

Promptly, Julia called her relative to tell her the news. She was elated to hear her talk had made even a small difference. That was the birth of the local "Jail House Helpers," over a year ago. The inmates get to come out around once a month to do things in the community. There are different things they get to do, sometimes it is bailing hay for a farmer down on his luck. Other times it's patching a roof, helping to plant a garden or even helping round up local farm animals for their annual shots. Every time they come out, they are met by the community ladies who started the program and the smell of homemade food.

The time has rolled around again and this year's play is less than three weeks off. I had the pleasure of being able to come to the stage set up this time. I made a point to talk with the officer in charge, some of the inmates and even a few of the ladies behind the food table. Officer Bird told me "I was skeptical last year when this all started, but now I believe this program has made a world of difference. Our jail is overcrowded as it is, but with this program, they have a reason to stay out of trouble while in jail. Only inmates who are on trustee status get to do this, and believe me, they all work hard to stay trustees."

Continued on page 10



LostVault

Who We Are and What We Do

LostVault.com is the biggest and best completely FREE prison pen pal site on the internet. Founded in September of 2003, we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a free place for inmates to find pen pals. Unlike many of the other prison pen pal sites, we do not charge the inmate OR free world people for this service. Our services are free for everyone, all the time, with no exceptions. We exist solely on donations from our members and by receiving donations in the form of postage stamps from inmates; however, we will never ask or expect anything from you in return for our services.

Want a FREE Pen Pal Ad on our Site?

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

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

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From The Editor's Desk

Letters to The Editor



Welcome to the July edition of LostVault Unlocked. There have been many things happen the past month and we have some exciting things coming up in the near future. I'd like to assure you, no you aren't crazy and yes, this is the Editor's Corner as I am the new editor. There are a few things that I have to address this month, so let's get to it!

As you all know, LostVault is a site run TOTALLY by volunteers. When things are done this way, you may come up with volunteer shortages and other issues that cause things to fall behind or even come to a screeching halt. No, there is no halting here, but we are at a bit of a crawl due to volunteer problems. For those of you who have not gotten pictures back from the mail-in ads you sent, we apologize. They are coming, abet slowly. Now on to the good things!

September 05, 2004, there will be two very special things happen. The first thing will be that LostVault is officially one year old! The second thing, and I am very excited to announce this, is the first ever "LostVault Pen Pal Day!" We have chosen the color orange to signify this day.

Here are a few things that you can do this year to help make LostVault Pen Pal Day a success!

As a pen pal, you can:

- Wear something orange or an orange ribbon.
- Pass out ribbons or flyers.
- Use orange paper, pens or envelopes on this day.
- Include a note of send a card to your pals.
- Run an ad in LostVault Unlocked for your pals!

Go to www.lostvault.com and get a new pen pal or even just pick someone to send a card to and brighten their day!

As an inmate you can:

- Color your pal something orange.
- If you have access to it, use orange paper, pens or envelopes. Send a letter that just expresses how you feel about having a pen pal. Spread the word with other inmates to write their friends, family and pals that day and to tell them about LostVault!
- If you are allowed, make a little orange piece of paper and attach it to your shirt for the day to help remind you and others that they have people in the "free world" thinking of them.

These are just a few of the many options that you have, be creative and think of things you can do!

Thank you Dee aka Lucidity, from all of us at LostVault! Without you, LostVault Pen Pal Day may never have manifested!

Best Wishes Always,
~Motty



Prison News

News From Around the Globe

By Dawna

American Bar Association Urges End to Mandatory Minimum Sentencing

A report issued by the American Bar Association on June 23rd stated that mandatory minimum sentences, especially for small drug related offenses, are patently unfair and allow no room for extenuating factors. The report also said that even though more people are behind bars because of minimum sentencing laws, there is no evidence that minimum sentencing is effective at reducing or preventing crime. Furthermore, the report urged judges to send non-violent drug offenders to treatment instead of prison.

Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy asked the American Bar Association last year to examine whether minimum sentencing laws were unfair, and he was present when the ABA presented the study. "The political phrase 'tough on crime' should not lead us to moral blindness," Kennedy said, adding that he believed minimum sentencing practices was immoral. Last year, Kennedy also encouraged lawmakers to revise federal minimum sentencing laws. In order for federal sentencing laws to be changed, Congress will have to pass new legislation, and for state minimum sentencing laws to be changed, individual state legislatures will be responsible for new laws.

The ABA report also encouraged state governors to pardon prisoners with good conduct records, if the governors felt the inmates had been unfairly sentenced. It is unlikely that many will be pardoned, and it will be difficult to repeal mandatory minimum sentences, because appearing "soft on crime" is often political suicide. Those who tout mandatory minimum sentencing often wish to appear "tough on crime," which can help political careers.

The ABA will vote in August whether the report's recommendations will become official positions of the association. Although the ABA's official positions are not law, the ABA's official positions can be quite influential.

Connecticut Supreme Court: There will be no "Patient Bill of Rights" for Prisoners

The Connecticut Supreme Court ruled recently that the Patient Bill of Rights stops at the prison gate. The suit, brought by the family of a mentally ill inmate who died during a prison fight, claimed that the inmate's rights had been violated because he had not received adequate treatment for his illness. The Court ruled unanimously that this was not the case. Justice Flemming Norcutt wrote that the patient bill of rights could interfere with prison operation and safety.

Bill Introduced in Congress to Help Paroled Inmates

A bill introduced into Congress on June 23rd promises to help parolees with a variety of services if it becomes law. The bill, which has the support of the Bush administration, would help recently-released prisoners with mentoring, assistance in finding adequate housing, employment opportunities, and counseling for substance abuse. Nationwide, about two-thirds of parolees are re-arrested for a felony within three years of release. The bill will attempt to lower this figure by giving parolees the tools they need to find employment, housing, and community support.

Court Ruling: Ohio Inmates need a Hearing before Transferred to Supermax Prisons

The 6th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled recently that Ohio inmates cannot be transferred to super maximum prisons without receiving a hearing to determine if their crimes are serious enough to warrant the transfer. The Court also broadened the definition of what crimes could warrant transfer to supermax prisons, however. "We won on the hearing, we lost on the standards," Pittsburgh lawyer Jules Lobel stated. Lobel said that the ruling could affect as many as 400 prisoners in Ohio, and could affect many more prisoners nationwide if the ruling is adopted by the other regional courts.

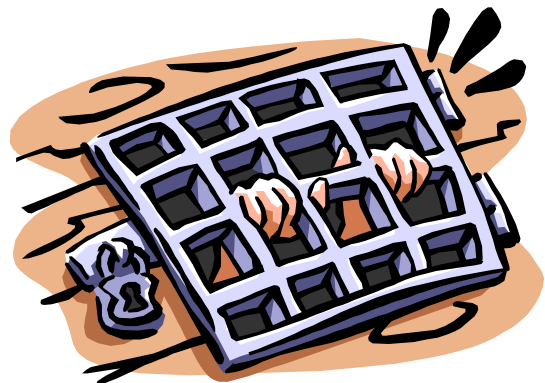
The Ohio chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union filed the suit in 2001 on behalf of Ohio prisoners, stating that the treatment of supermax prisoners at the Ohio State Penitentiary was cruel and unusual punishment. Inmates in the facility are locked down for twenty-three hours a day in 90 square foot cells. The Ohio State Penitentiary opened in 1998 in response to the Lucasville Riots of 1993. The facility was intended to house prisoners who had records of violent behavior, but some inmates complained that they had been transferred to the prison for only minor infractions and had had no chance to contest their transfer.

Court Ruling Will Change California Solitary Confinement

If approved by a federal judge, a lawsuit settlement will change how solitary confinement is handled in California. Under the agreement, correctional officers will have to demonstrate how the evidence they collected clearly relates to gang activity or membership, and the inmates charged will be able to dispute the evidence. Charles Carbone, an attorney who represented the inmate-rights group California Prison Focus, stated that this settlement will hopefully "keep thousands of people out of SHUs [Secured Housing Units]."

The lawsuit was originally filed ten years ago by Steve Castillo, an inmate who has spent the last decade in the Pelican Bay SHU near Crescent City. He was accused of being a gang member, but Castillo claimed that he was being held in the SHU because of his prison activism. Terry Thorton, a spokeswoman for the Department of Corrections, disputed this claim and stated that inmates were not put in SHUs because of prison activism.

Human rights groups such as Amnesty International have condemned the use of SHUs, arguing that prolonged isolation of inmates can cause mental problems.



Death Row

Capital Punishment Talk

By Lene Gabrielsen (Cassi)

Public Opinion

Gallup Poll Finds Decreased Support for Death Penalty When Compared with Life Sentence

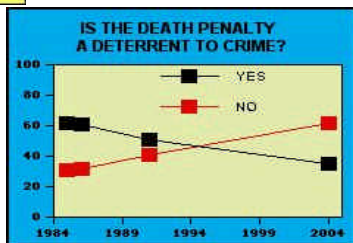
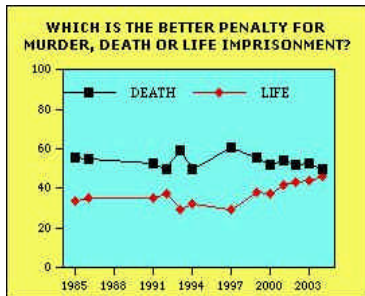
A May 2004 Gallup Poll found that a **growing number of Americans support a sentence of life without parole rather than the death penalty for those convicted of murder.** Gallup found that 46% of

Over the years, support for the sentence of Life Without Parole as an alternative to the death penalty has steadily increased, to the point where now the country is evenly split on capital punishment. In 1994, only 32% favored Life, with 50% favoring death. In 2004, support for life without parole had grown to 46%.

respondents favor life imprisonment over the death penalty, up from 44% in May 2003. During that same time frame, support for capital

punishment as an alternative fell from 53% to 50%. The poll also revealed a growing skepticism that the death penalty deters crime, with **62% of those polled saying that it is not a deterrent.** These percentages are a dramatic shift from the responses given to this same question in 1991, when 51% of Americans believed the death penalty deterred crime and only 41% believed it did not. **Only 55% of those polled responded that they believed the death penalty is implemented fairly, down from 60% in 2003.** When not offered an alternative sentence, 71% supported the death penalty and 26% opposed. The overall support is about the same as that reported in 2002, but down from the 80% support in 1994 (Gallup Poll News Service, June 2, 2004).

In less than 20 years, public opinion regarding the deterrent effect of the death penalty - long the backbone of its support - has reversed itself. In 1986, 61% believed the punishment to be an effective deterrent. In 2004, 62% believed that the death penalty did **not** deter crime.



News From Death Row

Court Says New York's Death Penalty Is Unconstitutional

New York's highest court has ruled that a provision of the state's capital punishment statute violates the state constitution, a decision that appears to invalidate the sentences of all four men on New York's death row. In New York, if a jury deadlocks, the judge imposes a sentence of 20-25 years to life, giving the possibility of parole. In its 4-3 ruling, the Court of Appeals said that these sentencing rules might unconstitutionally coerce jurors into voting for a death sentence rather than risk a deadlock by holding out for life without parole. The Court advised the legislature to correct the sentencing problem if the state is to continue trying defendants on capital charges (Associated Press, June 24, 2004).

Texas Democrats Endorse Moratorium on Executions, End to Juvenile Death Penalty

The Texas Democratic Party has adopted an historic party platform that contains a number of death penalty reform recommendations, including a call for legislators to enact a moratorium on executions, to ban the execution of juvenile offenders and the mentally ill, and to consider adopting a life without parole sentence in Texas. More than 1,700 attendees at the Democratic Party's state convention signed a resolution calling for the moratorium, surpassing the 30% signature threshold required to bring a measure before the full voting body. That voting block overwhelmingly supported the recommendations and added the measures to the final party platform (2004 Texas Democratic Party Platform, June 19, 2004).

Florida Death Row Inmate Plans Hunger Strike

July 1, 2004 will begin a hunger strike for Florida death row inmates to gain public attention to the drastic conditions, abuse and injustice to which they are subjected. Masterminded by Ronald W. Clark, Jr. at Florida State Prison in Raiford, this effort seeks resolution for the following three issues:

- **Intense Heat** - temperatures reaching astronomical numbers partnered with poor ventilation make it dangerous to the inmates as well as prison employees.
Proposed Solution: Make fans available for purchase from the canteen.
- **Use of Chemical Agents** - Correctional Officers abuse the administration of chemicals to inmates because incidents are not filmed.
Proposed Solution: Film all incidents and have an independent review board view all footage.
- **Investigate Assaults** - Few documented assaults are investigated and are rarely ruled in the prisoner's favor. Not all inmates are troublemakers and the Correctional Officers often abuse their authority.
Proposed Solution: Administer polygraph and/or stress tests to both the inmate and the officer(s) and provide a thorough investigation.

The above issues have been previously presented to DOC officials without an amicable resolution. While Ronald hopes others will join this effort, he plans to go at it alone if need be. When asked what his main goal is for this hunger strike, Mr. Clark said, "The relief sought is quite reasonable and will start guiding the F.D.O.C. in the direction of human decency, which is surely lacking throughout the F.D.O.C."

In Memorium - May They Rest in Peace

- 06/08/04 - William Zuern (OH)
- 06/08/04 - Robert Bryan (OK)
- 06/17/04 - Steven Oken (MD)



A View From The Inside

An Inmate's Perspective

By Connie

How to Write Your Children While in Prison

Being a parent in prison is not an easy role to fill. Many inmates have a difficult time when confronted with a white sheet of paper, much less that same white sheet and the sense of parental responsibility to write their children. Many parents faced with this problem resign themselves to their situation and completely miss out on being a parent in any way, shape, or form. Just because you are incarcerated doesn't mean you don't have something to share with your children. Being away does not mean that you cannot know who they are. Many convicts have a good sense of street smarts that cannot be learned in a classroom. Some of your experiences may prove to be invaluable to your children.

1. HOW OFTEN TO WRITE?

A. Try to write as often as possible, at least every other week.

2. WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOUR CHILDREN DO NOT WRITE BACK?

A. Don't be discouraged; keep writing so at least they get an idea of who you are.

B. Let them know you still care about them. (Tell them how much you love them. They need to hear it.)

C. Keep sending them cards on their birthday, at Christmas and other special times of the year.

3. WHAT KINDS OF THINGS SHOULD YOU WRITE ABOUT?

A. Some things will depend on their ages.

B. Tell them the kinds of things you do and what you're interested in

1. Don't brag about stuff here in prison.
2. Tell them about the things you accomplish here (schooling, programs, etc.)
3. Always make it sound like it's not "all right" to end up in prison.
4. Try not to be depressing all the time when you talk to them.
5. In certain events, maybe tell a story about what it was like for you growing up.
6. Keep things light, especially if they are young.

C. Keep informed about things they like to do.

D. Try to find a common interest and find new things to talk about

E. Give them praise for the things they do. This will help them develop their self-worth.

F. Talk to them about their boyfriends or girlfriends.

1. Don't be discouraging. Give positive advice.
2. Try to be understanding.

4. WHAT IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD TO WRITE?

A. Don't treat any one different from the other(s).

B. Try to stay informed about all of them.

C. Since we inmates have limited funds, when writing to more than one child at the same residence, give each child their own PERSONAL letter, but send them ALL in the same envelope. Put all their names on the envelope. Change the order in which their names appear on the envelope every letter to make each of them feel important.

5. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR YOUTH.

A. When they are young it is easier for them to forgive you for not being around all the time.

6. DON'T COMPLAIN IN YOUR LETTERS ABOUT YOUR MOTHER, GRANDPARENT'S MOM'S BOYFRIEND ETC.

A. Remember you are not out there on the streets to see what's going on to be fair and objective.

Continued on page 7

Spirituality

Inspirational Words

By Dee (Lucidity)



Make me an instrument of your Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
 Where there is injury, pardon
 Where there is doubt, faith,
 Where there is despair, hope,
 Where there is darkness, light,
 Where there is sadness, joy.
 O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
 seek to be consoled as to console,
 not so much to be understood as to understand,
 not so much to be loved, as to love;
 for it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

~St. Francis of Assisi

Religious Books For Inmates

American Muslim Foundation

1212 New York Avenue NW Suite 525
 Washington, DC 20005

American Bible Society

1865 Broadway
 New York, NY 10023
Free bibles, including large print and study guides. Can send through a chaplain.

Coalition for Jewish Prisoners

1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20036

Human Kindness Foundation

Rt 1 PO Box 201 N
 Durham, NC 27705
Two free books or catalogue of other hard to find spiritual books.

Healing Tao Center

PO Box 471
 Revere, MA 02151
Books on Taoist yoga methods.

Islamic Center

22551 Massachusetts Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20008
Free Koran and study guides. Can send through chaplain.



Rant & Rave with Motty

A Voice with Flavor

By Morigayn Johnson (Motty)

I'm on my 11th cup of coffee. I've sat here for 3 hours now, thinking of events that have happened. I have come to realize something that I always thought was important has now really hit home. What is this "thing?" It is **keeping your word**.

It used to be that a deal was sealed with a hand shake. No contracts were needed and most could only sign "X" as their mark anyway. Those days though, you knew your neighbors and new people in the area were regarded with open suspicion. What happened to those days? When you said you would do something, it really meant it would get done, if not you weren't trusted any longer.

"Promises are like pie crusts, easily made, easily broken," from the very wise Mary Poppins. How right she is in today's society. Words seem to be just that...things people tell you because they think it's what you want to hear. "I will do this," is only good sometimes. Whether for procrastination, quitting 1/2 way through, even taking on responsibilities only to never start.

Why has society declined into a place where one can only be sure a job gets done if you do it on your own? Don't get me wrong, there are sometimes reasons and very good ones at that, to not get a job done and "back out on your word." It is when you take on responsibilities and the just "drop them" with no rhyme or reason is when it is wrong.

What can you do to make sure that your word is always good? Only commit to things you are sure you can do. Don't over schedule. Once you have made the commitment, do NOT FORGET! Mark it on your calendar, your hand, whatever it will take. Just be sure to remember it! If you feel overwhelmed, try asking for help. What harm can it do to admit you may have taken on more than you can handle? Sure you have to admit to taking on a bit too much, but it is better to ask for help and admit to a mistake then to give up totally on a commitment. Remember: You are ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR WORD! If you don't think you can come through with your end, DO NOT agree to it! It's always better to say "No, I'm too busy" or "I don't think I can handle that alone," than to accept a responsibility you can't follow through with and lose trust from friends, family or business partners.

If you MUST go back on your word, or are not able to finish a job, remember to be polite. Explain your situation or just say "I'm sorry I can't do this." Keep in mind YOU are the one not getting the job done, not the other person.

How to handle someone who can't get the job done: Remember we are all only human. Take into consideration that it takes guts to admit to not being able to keep your word & at least they admitted to having too much on their plate. Although you may not fully place your trust in them any longer, try not to ostracize or condemn them (that is assuming they didn't just back out & drop off the face of the planet...even then, there still MAY be a reason for it). Although it's a disappointment, one day the tables may be turned and you may very well be the one in their humble shoes.

I hope all this isn't just the now 13 cups of coffee speaking and that I have actually made sense. For now, I wish you well and leave you with the following words:

Humble shoes I walk in
As I come to you
To ask for your pardon
And start this life anew.

I have made mistakes,
This I know.
With these words
I hope to show

That I mean each word
I speak,
Softly I mumble
"I'm sorry I was weak"

You embrace me calmly
For you know
You have been in my humble shoes
Not so long ago.

~M.B.J.~ □

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

Pen Pals of The Month

Inmates Desiring Mail



Joyce A. Moss
Gatesville, TX

Joyce likes to be called "Jazz." She is an outgoing, energetic lady with lots of class. She is honest, loyal, trustworthy, and bold. She is seeking someone to help her pass her time; someone she can be herself with. She is looking for a taste of life.

If you would like to write either Joyce or David, please visit the pen pal section of our website at www.lostvault.com/penpals or send an email to penpals@lostvault.com for more information.



David Doogan
Buckeye, AZ

David is hoping to find someone who enjoy writing and getting to know new people. Being in the environment he is currently in, conversation with those around him tends to get rather monotonous, and new conversational topics would be very refreshing. He is a good listener and enjoys being a good friend to anyone that reaches out to him.



Dear Libbie

Advice for the Lovelorn

By Joanna L. Massing (Libbie)



How long is too long? A few people I know have asked themselves that and it has crossed my mind as well on a few occasions. Being in love with a man that is incarcerated for more than a few years brings up doubts in ones mind. Yes you love your significant other with all that you have, yet sometimes the loneliness threatens to swallow you up. It is a loneliness that can only be alleviated by being with the one you love. You know in your heart that you want to be true to your love and the questions isn't really about the actual act of fornication....it's about the lack of companionship. It's about lack of the human touch of a simple hug or kiss that we miss. Of doing the mundane things together like grocery shopping, laundry, even bickering about what video to rent out. We don't have the ability to look into each other's eyes and with a simple gesture or touch of the hand to wipe away each other's fears, to let each other know we are here and not leaving. Instead we have to rely on the occasional visit, the occasional phone calls and letters to communicate all this and more. And sometimes it is hard to get our message across as well as hear this message coming from our loved ones.

A friend of mine whose husband is in prison for quite a few more years said to me, "the thought of him having this amount of time left and myself basically being alone for that length of time used to weigh heavily on my mind until I stopped looking at the time itself and started focusing on the fact that I wasn't the only person in this relationship feeling this way...my husband is the one doing the time, he is the one that deals with as much solitude as I do but he has no outlet for it. I at least have the ability to go and come as I please and I choose to be in this relationship because simply put I am in love with this man and I am going to stick it out through the thick and thin with him...because that is what my heart is telling me to do."

In a perfect world we would be able to see our love daily, to interact like normal couples do and to do the mundane and as well as the exciting things together but our world is far from perfect. Being in love with an inmate definitely does not fall in a "perfect world" but does being in love with a person in the free world ever fall in a "perfect world" either? The major difference is the 40 foot walls and iron bars that separate us but one day those will be gone and out of our way and then we can bicker about which video to rent, go grocery shopping and shower each other with many hugs and kisses: until then we just do the best we can.

This months questions:

Libbie, I've been writing to my pal for 9 months now and in the beginning it was just friends but I find myself falling in love with her. The thing is I made a mistake I told her that I was only writing to her but in the beginning I wrote to two other ladies as well as her. The problem is that she just sent me a letter returning my last letter because I had written it to one of my other pals but sent it to her by mistake...now she wants nothing to do with me and I am heartbroken...
~Sad Joseph, GA

Well Sad Joseph all I can say is...Shame On You for lying! To be quite honest I don't blame her for not wanting anything to do with you. I can only give you my opinion...and that is if this had happened to me I would probably have done the same thing she did. I understand sometimes pals, inmates don't tell the whole truth about who or how many people they write, for their own reasons they keep it to themselves, but to send

someone a letter intended for someone else I think that is just really careless. All I can say is maybe try and write her another letter explaining your side but don't expect much in return because it sounds like you hurt her a great deal.

~Libbie

Hi Libbie, I just wanted to say I enjoy the newsletter a lot and look forward to it every month as well as my pals. My sweetie recently decided that we should get married. I love him but I really don't want to get married just yet, but he said if I really loved him I would want to get married now. I was raised a very strict Christian but I no longer follow it but my family is very devout. I am so stressed out I don't know what to do, where to turn. I do love him but I want to have a relationship with him outside of the prison first before I think of marriage...do you think that is wrong? I feel guilty if I say no because I don't want him to think I don't love him because I do so much but there's other things in my life that need to be dealt with first before I can even think of marriage...Help!

~Anonymous, TX

First of all thank you for the praise! We all try our best here. I think you sound like a smart woman with a good head on your shoulders. I don't see why there is a rush to get married, did you ever ask him why he is in such a rush? If you two are in love it shouldn't matter when you get married and if this means so much to you then he should understand. You seem to have your priorities straightened out, I do believe maybe it would be wise to wait and then you will have the ability to introduce your sweetie to your family....and not in a prison setting. I think it is a very wise move on your part as well as a realistic one to want to see if your relationship can flourish first before you commit yourself to marriage. You already seem to know what should be done and I think you've already answered your own questions. So take a breather and do what is good for you. Good luck!

~Libbie ☐

Do you have a thought, story or question of your own that you would like to pass along to Dear Libbie? If so feel free to by email me: Dearlvlibbie@yahoo.com, personal message (PM) by visiting www.lostvault.com, or by snail mail, just be sure to mark on the outside of the letter that it is for "Libbie". Whether you're an inmate or a person involved with an inmate I would love to hear stories, questions or thoughts regarding your relationship so get those thoughts rolling in!

View From the Inside Continued from page 5

7. WHAT TO TELL THEM IF THEY ASK ABOUT WHY YOU ARE WHERE YOU ARE?

- A. Depends on their age and what they know already.
- B. Keep the conversations light.
- C. Don't lie!!!
- D. Don't brag about being where you are and what you did to get where you are.

What do you do if you can't write directly to your child for some reason or another? One suggestion to overcome this is to keep a journal. In this journal, you can write your child letters over time. Eventually you may be allowed contact. This will help them to understand you were thinking about them, even when they couldn't hear from you.

Many thanks to Craig Sutlief for this article, who is serving his time in Minnesota. ☐



Inmate Art & Poetry

A Look Within

When it all comes down

Say it's true
but what do you do?
When it all comes down.

See me through,
forever blue...
When it all comes down.

Be around,
can't leave your town...
When it all comes down.

I know lives
are redefined...
When it all comes down.

Was it real
or plush appeal?
When it all comes down.

Sometimes in the bad
truth can be found...
When it all comes down.



J. Aguilar - New Boston, TX

John Troy VII - Raiford, FL



Joe Paul - Huntsville, TX



James E. Lopez - Amarillo, TX



Jessie's Jokes & Junk

...The Fun Side of Life

Jessica C. Snyder (Jessica)

~Joke of The Month~

True story, I was happy. My girlfriend and I had been dating for over a year, and so we decided to get married. My parents helped us in every way, my friends encouraged me, and my girlfriend? She was a dream! There was only one thing bothering me, very much indeed, and that one thing was her younger sister. My prospective sister-in-law was twenty years of age, wore tight mini skirts and low cut blouses. She would regularly bend down when near me and I got many a pleasant view of her underwear. It had to be deliberate. She never did it when she was near anyone else. One day little sister called and asked me to come over to check the wedding invitations. She was alone when I arrived. She whispered to me that soon I was to be married, and she had feelings and desires for me that she couldn't overcome and didn't really want to overcome. She told me that she wanted to make love to me just once before I got married and committed my life to her sister. I was in total shock and couldn't say a word. She said, "I'm going upstairs to my bedroom, and if you want to go ahead with it just come up and get me." I was stunned. I was frozen in shock as I watched her go up the stairs. When she reached the top she pulled down her panties and threw them down the stairs at me. I stood there for a moment, then turned and went straight to the front door. I opened the door and stepped out of the house. I walked straight towards my car. My future father-in-law was standing outside. With tears in his eyes he hugged me and said, "We are very happy that you have passed our little test. We couldn't ask for a better man for our daughter. Welcome to the family.

The moral of this story is: "Always keep your condoms in your car."

~Fun Facts~

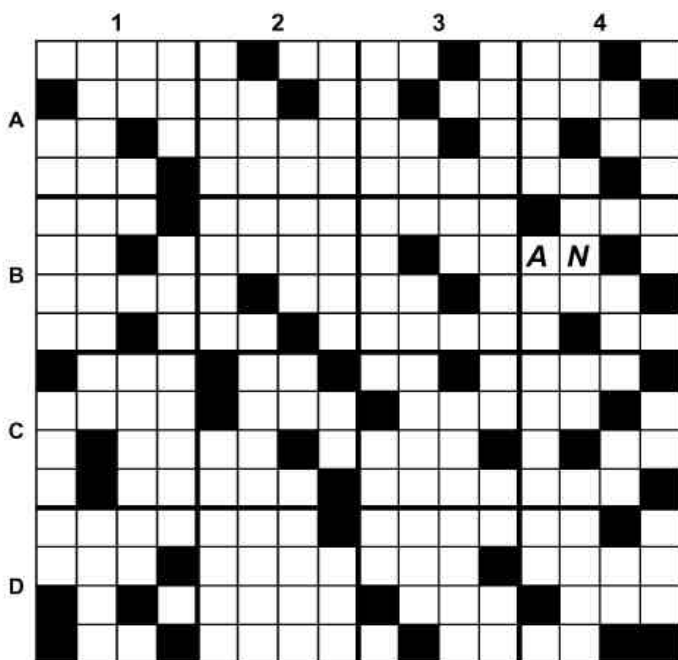
World Dumbest People:

- A man in Johannesburg, South Africa, shot his 49-year-old friend in the face, seriously wounding him, while the two practiced shooting beer cans off each other's head.
- The Chico, California, City Council enacted a ban on nuclear weapons, setting a \$500 fine for anyone detonating one within city limits.
- David Posman, 33, was arrested in Providence, Rhode Island, after knocking out an armored car driver and stealing four bags of money. Each bag contained \$800 dollars. However, the bags weighed thirty pounds each since they all contained pennies. The hefty bags slowed the fleeing criminal to a sluggish stagger. Police easily ran down and arrested the suspect.
- A convict broke out of jail in Washington D.C., a few days later he accompanied his girlfriend to her trial for robbery. At lunch, he went out for a sandwich. She needed to see him, and thus had him paged. Police officers recognized his name and arrested him as he returned to the courthouse in a car he had stolen over the lunch hour.

Answer to Last Month's Puzzle

	SEAT 1	SEAT 2	SEAT 3	SEAT 4
Name	Joseph	Daniel	Stephen	Noah
Shirt	Green	Red	Blue	Yellow
Quarter	1	4	2	3
Snack	Popcorn	Pizza	Hot Dog	Nachos

JIGSAW SQUARES



Solution Next Month

Your goal is to fit the PUZZLE PIECES into their proper places in the diagram to reveal an anecdote. Fill the diagram by placing the PUZZLE PIECES horizontally into their corresponding sections of the diagram. There are 16 sections, identified by letter-number combinations (A-1, A-2, A-3, etc.). The anecdote reads left to right, line by line. A black square indicates the end of a word. One PUZZLE PIECE has been entered for you.

PUZZLE PIECES

A-1 O TO HAB HER HENR	A-2 O Y FO IT EXEC FFIC	A-3 F H O ES GO RD UTIV	A-4 A F W AD ES OT ING	B-1 H R SE TO HEN AVIN	B-2 G O IS TH ATHE PROB	B-3 C R EM TH FFIC LEMS	B-4 E H AN ✓ HE ARO OME
C-1 E N LE SA DID TIME	C-2 T ID IT AVE IVE	C-3 S TO FOU HAT ANOT	C-4 H I CA ND AVE HER	D-1 C I TO ORE FELL	D-2 OWS LEAV OULD QUIC	D-3 E MI GET KLY OFFI	D-4 M CE NE HIM THAN





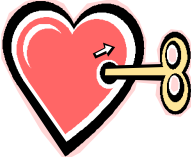



LostVault Ads

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LostVault: Unlocked
P.O. Box 294
Washburn, TN 37888

Ad prices range from \$5 to \$7 for personal ads and upto \$30 for business ads (we will accept postage stamps from inmates); all proceeds benefit LostVault.com and help keep us free. Your ad may not contain sexually explicit wording and ads soliciting products, services, or legal advice are not permitted from inmates.

 <p>Have you seen Motty lick an envelope? It's sexy! Wheelchair Boy</p>	 <p>Listen to the Prison Show with Ray Hill KPFT Houston - 90.1 FM Friday Nights 9PM-11PM CST Show information: www.rayhill.info/PrisonShow.html Listen live on the web: www.kpft.org -or- www.kpftx.org</p>	<p>Tarot Card Readings By Lucidity \$10.00 donation 100% of the proceeds benefit LostVault.com Any 3 Questions Answered</p>  <p>Hello everyone, I'm Lucidity and I have been reading Tarot Cards for close to 30 years. I work with many different decks, along with gemstones and crystals. I am a self taught Astrologer and Reiki practitioner.</p>
 <p>Happy Birthday to Michael my Leo!</p> <p>Wish we could celebrate your birthday the way we should but one day we will be able to!</p>	<p>To My Texas Sugar, I'm always thinking of you.</p>  <p>Love Ya! From Your Canadian Angel</p>	<p>For your reading I will need 3 handwritten questions, your birthday, a photo (not required) and a SASE. You will receive a typed reading shortly in the mail, or email if you prefer.</p> <p>Astrology Charts by Lucidity \$10.00 donation I will need your date of birth, time of birth and city of birth. I will send you approximately a 10-15 page read-out. For either of the above services, please make your money order made payable to 'D. Martin' or see our website for PayPal information.</p>
<p>I love you much!</p>  <p>Love Always, Joanna XOXOXO!</p>	<p>Chris, I'm so glad you understand my slow mail. Thank you.</p> <p>~Motty~</p>	<p>Mailing address: Dee Martin P. O. Box 63095 New Bedford, MA 02746</p>

Jail House Helpers Continued from page 1

I asked an inmate "Why are you here today [helping]?" He smiled really big, rubbed his slightly large belly and said "The food is great!" We both had a good laugh at this as I agreed. I questioned another "Why are you here? Has this helped you any?" He told me he was here because his brother had been on the "play crew" last year and had loved it, so he wanted to see this year's (I found out they both had to do time, but had to serve it separately to avoid possible conflicts). As for helping him, he answered "I am trying to give back a little, the food is awesome and I love to be out of that cell, but my daughter goes to school here. I am helping her in the end. It makes me proud to know that I can be a small part of all of this even if the reason I am here is not something to be proud of." He is right, the money earned from the plays goes straight into a fund for local children to go to summer camps and even earn a small college scholarship.

Next I wanted a view from the community. I found Nora, a lady who has been involved with the project since day one. "Nora, what do you think about this program?" I asked. With a slight smirk she said, "Last year, I thought Julia had lost her mind! I wasn't so sure I wanted anything to do with [the inmates] or the JHH program. Now, I love to see them! They are always polite and unlike my husband, they don't care what I make for dinner, they eat it and smile!" Darlene, a girl who is new to the JHH program and one of the youngest had this to say when I asked her feelings. "I didn't know what to think when Julia said we needed to get food cooked for 'the prisoners.' I was worried, I haven't been around anyone in jail before, but they are nice."

Today as I mingled around the gym helping when I could and having an over all wonderful time, I couldn't help but let my heart swell with pride. I went over to Julia and gave her a huge hug. I am so proud to know that I have such a wonderful mother who cares enough for my "cause" that she initiated a program to help make at least a small difference. Thank you mom not only from me, but from the many inmates who work so hard to overcome bad choices made in the past. □

Vaulter of the Month

One of LostVault's Finest

The vaulter of the month for July is Dawn (AKA Dawna, or Melly). Dawn is 24 years old and will graduate from college in 2006 with an associate's degree in nursing. She plans on getting her master's degree and becoming a nurse practitioner. Dawn has always lived in the same county in Ohio but eventually plans on moving out of the state.



Dawn has been writing to pen pals since she was eight years old, but as she grew older it was harder to find dedicated pen pals. While meandering around on the internet, she found a prison pen pal site and decided to write to someone whose ad caught her eye. That was four years ago, and she now has several more pen pals. She views all of her pen pals as very cherished friends. When not writing letters, Dawn is usually on the computer or outside enjoying nature. □

