

GRATERFRIENDS

A Publication of The Pennsylvania Prison Society

Promoting a humane, just and constructive correctional system and a rational approach to criminal justice since 1787

Volume 47, Issue 6

www.prisonersociety.org ■ www.facebook.com/PrisonSociety

December 2017

Choices We Make

By Kevin Brian Dowling, DY-6243, SCI Greene

It is hard to believe that 16 years have passed since that fateful September morning when thousands died just going to work to support themselves and their families.

Having grown up in the shadows of New York City, I walked in and out of those towers many times, especially when I worked nearby on Wall Street in the 1980s. I thought about those times as I watched the two planes strike the Twin Towers on CNN news from a cell on death row, a place I had no reason to be.

Every choice we make alters our fate in life. In 1996, I chose to leave a general manager store for a position with Sheetz stores. They were moving into central Pennsylvania and building many new stores. I stood in line for rapid advancement to become a District Manager.

With 20 years of management experience under my belt, I was certain that I had finally found the company for permanent success to take care of my family.

First, I had to learn their management system, which took three months of training. I was given the choice to train in either Berks County (Reading) or in York County (Hanover). I lived in Lancaster County which was right in the middle of both, 49 miles in each direction. I knew the traffic was slower to Reading, so I took a test drive to Hanover on August 5, 1996.

After visiting the store and looking around, I left and drove quickly to reach my restaurant in Highspire just in time for lunch. My first day at Sheetz in Hanover was on September 30, 1996.

On December 4, 1996 while at work, police visited my store and asked me to go for questioning about an incident they thought I had witnessed. I was arrested in Hanover and falsely accused of having committed an armed robbery of a framing gallery on Route 30. Turns out, this armed robbery occurred on August 5th, which was the same day I did my test drive to Hanover.

I finally bailed out on February 22, 1997. While awaiting trial, the alleged robbery victim was murdered at a new location on October 20, 1997. Conclusions were jumped to, and I was charged with murder on October 29th of the same year.

I never left prison again, and that was twenty years ago...

(See Choices We Make, continued on page 5)

In this Issue

From the Editors.....2	Survey.....11
Think About It.....3	Resources.....12
Our Voices.....4	Announcements.....13
Mailroom.....6	Transportation Info.....14
Legislative Highlights.....8	Word Search.....15
Literary Corner.....10	



From the Editor

Many thanks to the inmate organizations I have had the opportunity to talk with over the last several months. In July, I met with the board of the I.H.O.P.E., the first inmate organization at SCI Benner, which is fundraising for local organizations, positively impacting their institutional environment and producing a great newsletter.

In August, I went to a meeting of the board of the Gray Panthers of SCI Graterford. I was accompanied by two members of their external board for a far-reaching conversation about the group's aspirations for organizing and increasing awareness about mass incarceration and related issues.

This October, I sat down with the executive committee of Lifers Inc. at SCI Graterford. One week after I had the privilege of attending the Philadelphia premier of the new documentary film, 'Second Looks, Second Chances for Pennsylvania Lifers: Commutation by the Numbers.' This film was produced in conjunction with the University of Pennsylvania's Program on Documentaries and Lifers Inc. with help from the Prison Society. We discussed the reception of their new film, the future of HB 135 (parole eligibility for lifers), and their concerns regarding the upcoming move to SCI Phoenix.

Most recently, two members of the Prison Society board and I joined several state officials at the L.I.F.E. Association at SCI Dallas's banquet. Unfortunately, families were not included in this year's event. That said, the L.I.F.E. Association worked hard to invite and follow-up with many legislators and leaders.

Those attending included Stacey Wright, chief of staff to Rep. Kinsey, Thomas Young, chief of staff to Rep. Bullock, Christopher Phipps from Rep. McClinton's office, Henry Hunter from Sen. Street's office, Virginia Whitaker from Decarcerate PA, Chief Philadelphia Public Defender Keir Bradford-Grey and Federal Defender Christi Charpentier. The program, which focused on HB 135 and related issues, was excellent, the food was plentiful, and the conversation engaging.

To those I met and those I will meet -- many thanks for all that you do. Please know that we are working to make the Prison Society an even more valuable support for you, for all incarcerated Pennsylvanian's, and for your families. We are also very excited about our new location! (*Please see Announcements on page 13*)

Sincerely,

Claire

GRATERFRIENDS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Claire Shubik-Richards

EDITOR: Emily Cashell

DESIGNER: Kaci Lewandowski

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Jennifer Stevens

FOUNDER: Joan Gauker

The Pennsylvania
PRISON SOCIETY
SINCE 1787

230 South Broad Street · Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Telephone: 215.564.4775 · Fax: 215.564.1830

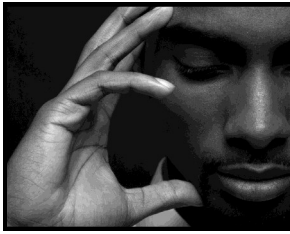
www.prisonsociety.org · www.facebook.com/PrisonSociety

Graterfriends is a publication from the Pennsylvania Prison Society. The organization was founded in 1787 and works toward enhancing public safety by providing initiatives that promote a just and humane criminal justice system.

We reserve the right to edit submissions. Original submissions *will not* be returned. We *will not* print anonymous letters. Allegations of misconduct *must* be documented and statistics should be supported by sources. Letters more than a page in length (200 words) *will not* be published in their entirety in Mailroom or Legal Chat, and may be considered for another column. All columns should be no more than 500 words, or two double-spaced pages.

To protect Graterfriends from copyright infringement, please attach a letter stating, or a note on your submission, that you are the original author of the work submitted for publication; date and sign the declaration.

If you have a question about Graterfriends, please contact Emily Cashell, Executive Assistant at 215-564-4775 x116 or ecashell@prisonsociety.org



Think About It

A "Crab Pot" Situation

By Maxwell Tyler Houghton, #1086609, Lovelock Correctional Center, Nevada

As a small boy, I remember having seen a painting of a stormy seascape with the deck of a large wooden ship in the foreground. Standing on the deck were open barrels filled with lively, red crabs submerged in murky water. Toward the bottom of the work, a solitary crustacean had managed to climb over the edge of one of those barrels and began his escape back to sea.

Typically, when a single crab would get a grip on the edge of the rim, the others would pull the escapee back down into the water. No one can really say whether the others pull the first crab down because they love him too much to lose him; or because they are trying to climb over him. I suspect the latter. Either way, there is no denying that the crabs are holding each other back.

I recently received a letter from an old friend who left prison about four years ago. From the last time I heard from him, about six months ago, it sounded like he was doing very well for himself. He had found a job with a livable wage, was engaged, and it sounded like things were starting to line up for him as far as his job and dealing with a landlord willing to accept a violent felon as a tenant.

Unfortunately, this new letter changed everything.

My friend, Tom, was at work one day when a man he had known in prison came into his place of employment, a family-owned restaurant. The two men had played "catch up" for no more than a few minutes before the man from prison, Jerry, asked Tom if he could speak to the boss about hiring him. Tom told Jerry that he would love to, but he has not worked there long enough himself to feel comfortable with such a request.

The two parted ways, and that was that. Or was it?

No more than two hours after Jerry had left, Tom was called into his boss' office and asked, "Is it true that you nearly killed a man in prison over a gambling debt?" Tom's mind has reeled back to an incident that he had long forgotten. "It wasn't really a big deal," he said, "it was a misunderstanding, and I had no choice but to do something to the guy because if I hadn't..." His boss held up a hand. "I'm going to have to let you go."

When Tom had asked why he was being let go, his boss said, "When we talked about your criminal history, you told me you had worked really hard to change while you were in prison. This new discovery makes me think you were telling me what you thought I wanted to hear; not the truth. I'm sorry, but my decision is final."

I don't think we need inspector gadget to solve the mystery of how Tom's boss got this information that cost him his job. The only question is, why would Jerry do such a thing?

Does this sound familiar from what was mentioned earlier? Maybe we should all try a little harder to raise one another up instead of pulling each other down like a bunch of jealous crabs.

Big news!

We are now accepting email submissions for *Graterfriends*.

If you are an inmate or family member of an inmate, please feel free to share your thoughts or a story with us electronically using a *ConnectNetwork* account.

Each submission through the account will cost 25 cents, and is allowed up to 2,000 characters a session.

If you would like to send in a submission, please send it to:

graterfriends@prisonsociety.org
Username: graterfriends



Our Voices

Reporting Secondhand Smoke to the PA Health Department

By Karl Rominger, MR-1860, SCI Somerset

The PA Department of Health (DOH) is the clearinghouse for complaints related to the Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA). They are charged by statute to investigate every reported incident of indoor smoking. If, however, the county in which the alleged violation occurs has opted to do the investigation, the DOH will forward the complaint to that county for investigation.

Since all DOC facilities meet the definition of public buildings, any complaint under the CIAA to the PA DOH should be fully investigated. It is time to let the DOH know what it really going on within the DOC. It is important to include the following information:

- The location of the violation and the address of the facility, including county;
- Whether it was an inmate or staff member;
- The frequency/quantity of smoking for ongoing violations; and
- Your complete contact information.

Include information for them to contact you for a follow-up, or in case additional information is required.

Your complaint can be mailed to the location listed below:

**Tobacco Prevention & Control
Attention: Clean Indoor Air Act
Pennsylvania Department of Health
Room 1032 Health & Welfare Building
625 Forester Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0701**

If the PA DOH gets enough of these complaints, they may investigate the DOC's systemic secondhand smoking crisis.

Urgent Message to PA Lifers on Parole Eligibility

By Daniel Cummings, AF-4891, SCI Graterford

I have been locked behind the walls of Pennsylvania penitentiaries for over 45 years and I am ready to go home....so I will keep my message short and simple. I'm sure that all of us have heard something about House Bill 135. The pathway to our freedom has been laid and now is the time for all of our in-house organizations to come together and speak with one voice, rallying and echoing one chant, "Parole Eligibility for Lifers."

Forty-five years ago, communication between lifers was much more difficult. Today, Graterfriends is our media and I encourage all of my Brothers and Sisters who have been sentenced to Death by Incarceration to get a subscription to *Graterfriends*, as this is necessary for sharing accurate information pertaining to House Bill 135. Politicians are looking for solutions to the problem of mass incarceration, so now is the time for criminal justice reform.

We cannot procrastinate. It is time for all lifers to get to work. Educate your family and friends about House Bill 135 and tell them to contact their elected representatives.

Editor's Note: This bill works to provide those who are on probation for committing a serious crime under the age of 18 the right to have parole and probation power. This act amends Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses), 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes.

Have an inmate who wants to be profiled? Interview them and send in a submission to have their story or profile published in the next edition of *Graterfriends*!

Please be sure to include permission from author and interviewee to publish.

(Choices We Make continued from page 1)

If I had chosen to reject the offer from Sheetz, or just chosen to do training in Reading, I would probably not be here. I would have never been falsely accused of the robbery, and police would have arrested the correct person for the murder. Especially considering there was clear evidence that existed against him.

I believe that I would be in an upper management position with Sheetz, and would have 40 years of experience. More importantly, I would still be married marking 32 years, and still have the love and respect of my wife and three children.

Free will can sometimes come at a terrible price. Choosing one job over another, going west rather than east; all of these choices we make can put us in the wrong place at the wrong time. Sadly, life cannot be that simple.

Creating a Lifers' Photograph Portfolio

By Clarence Sutton, AF-2458, SCI Huntingdon

Request to all Pennsylvania Lifers: On August 9, 2017, the Pennsylvania Lifers Association at SCI Huntingdon decided to start a statewide Lifers' Photograph Portfolio, to show the public that we are not animals, that we have changed, and that we should be given a second chance.

Please send two photographs of yourself, one from the time you were first arrested and one more recent photograph.

Please include your age and the number of years you have been incarcerated. Please note that these photographs cannot be returned.

Send the photographs and information to:

CADBI c/o Decarcerate PA
P O Box 40764
Philadelphia PA 19107
Phone: 267-217-3372
CADBIphilly@gmail.com

(Our Voices continued)

Time Keeps Dragging On

By David Lusik, CQ-3760, SCI Albion

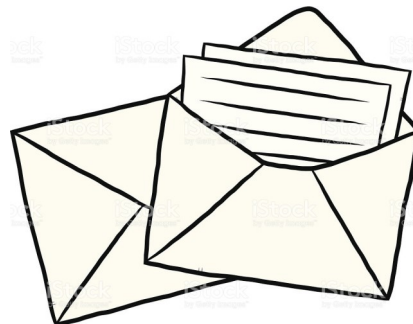
Do you recall the song Folsom Prison Blues by the late Johnny Cash? Of course, he had done a stint in the legendary Folsom State Prison out in California. One of the lines in the song goes, "I'm stuck in Folsom prison and time keeps dragging on..."

I have been obsessed with the concept of time behind bars and its positive, but more likely negative effects on the human psyche. We are doing time under an "indeterminate penal structure," which means you are serving a minimum and maximum sentence. Time is often used as a weapon by prison parole boards and administrators.

The initial intent of the system was made to depend on progress of the inmate associated with good behavior and willingness to change. However, staff often uses the parole and review hearings as a tool to manipulate the prisoner into passivity and obedience to the regime.

When an inmate gets his hearing, his time acquires a new, positive meaning. If that date is denied, time perspectives are ultimately shattered. Inmates know what I am talking about when parole gets denied. Home plans must be resubmitted, family and friends start to give up hope. It is upsetting and difficult to hold onto any hope at that point.

In the words of the immortal Johnny Cash, "When I hear that lonesome whistle, I just hang my head and cry."





Mailroom

Graterford Gray Panthers Hosts Seniors Day Event

By Frederick Page, BU-2238, SCI Graterford

On August 20th of this year, the Graterford Gray Panthers, a group who represents incarcerated seniors, hosted its first ever Senior Day Event. The event was the largest that has ever been held by the Gray Panthers, attracting 400 Graterford seniors. The event encouraged unity among the elderly population at Graterford during an afternoon of live musical performances, food, and drinks.

A large portion of elderly incarcerated seniors no longer participate in yard and recreational activities as they age. This is what makes this type of event a milestone for Graterford as a whole. The Gray Panthers aspire to motivate the people they represent to become socio-politically galvanized in the fight for reforms to the criminal justice system, such as: prison conditions, commutation, and sentencing.

The Seniors Day event created a medium for staff and resident interaction. A positive social construct in criminal justice is achieved when staff and residents respectfully share a common bond. Kudos to Superintendent Cynthia Link and her staff at Graterford for their positive humane efforts to care for, and about, all of the residents at Graterford.

The Graterford Gray Panthers are now working on an Aging Out Pilot Program proposal. The pilot program's purpose is to create a release valve for seniors who are 50, and above who have been incarcerated for 25 years or more. The goal is that they will be eligible for release based upon their own merit review. The proposal would review lifers and long-term offenders for a bracelet monitoring program upon release. This could save the state an enormous amount of funding that it now spends to over-incarcerate rehabilitated seniors.

Reconciliation

By Angel G. Lebron, LY-1417, SCI Albion

"We don't fail because our dreams were shattered, we fail because we did not have a plan." Have you ever felt that no matter what you do, nothing comes out right? Have you ever tried to kick an addiction and just could not?

Addictions come in many forms. I was not only addicted to heroin, but the chase of my high as well. Day and night, I would anxiously wait for the dealer to come to me, or vice versa. Seconds after consuming the heroin, an enormous amount of physical and mental pain would fade away.

As I used, I was unwittingly causing more trauma on myself. I had a heart filled with resentment, and I was blind to those who loved me. As my self-destruction increased, so did the pain that I was causing my family.

In this lifestyle I oversaw everything with one thought in my mind: the next fix. I would think about the next dollar, how to avoid the sickness, and how to acquire the same rush.

A more accurate description of this lifestyle would be driving a very fast car with no seat belt, at top speed, head on into a brick wall. Careless and wanting to die.

I would use up all possible resources to obtain money to get heroin. I would say, "If you don't give me money I will harm myself," and out of fear my family and friends would give me the money. My brain was no longer functioning properly.

I can still remember the faces on my loved ones: heartbroken, disappointed, frightened, and stressed, wishing they could help me. I was afraid of stopping, of the withdrawal symptoms, of where to go, and most importantly I was afraid I wouldn't be able to maintain my sobriety.

My addiction is what led me to committing a serious crime that landed me in prison for a minimum of five and a half to 24 years. The withdrawal process in prison was horrible.

(Mailroom continued)

Without proper care, my heart rate slowed dramatically to the point that a nurse had to inject me with an EpiPen for adrenaline. I was throwing up consistently, with uncontrollable shakes and sweats that went on for months. On top of this, I was extremely suicidal.

As I look back, I wish every day that I had gotten help. The pain that comes from being locked away causes more trauma on my family and I as the days go on. Heroin took my whole life before my eyes and gave me destruction in return.

We all suffer from some sort of traumatic event in our lives. We may even know someone who is suffering from trauma. The use of heroin and other drugs is the worst way to cope with whatever problems you are facing.

It changes a person's behavioral patterns, harms the brain, and causes users to lose touch with reality. A person tends to forget who they are and who they want to be with the use of drugs.

The addiction becomes an unpredictable being.

To overcome addiction, I began with myself. I realized that this was a disease that can be beat. I educated myself to prove that I have the will power to regain my life. I have now dedicated myself to helping other addicted people and reassuring them they can be a success.

We need to stand up against heroin and other drugs to prevent further damage. Addiction causes a significant impact on families and communities; together we can stop it. We must.

**Want to subscribe to
Graterfriends?**

**See the order form
on page 16.**

County Dump

By James R. Cruz, CL-1798, SCI Fayette

If you ever happen to end up in Fayette County Jail in Uniontown, I feel for you as I feel for those who are still jailed there.

I had the opportunity to spend two days there awaiting a hearing that was postponed, and upon arrival all I could smell was a mixture of urine and feces. Even on the second floor.

The reason it smelled like this was due to a broken sewer pipe that was in the process of being repaired, but I heard it was like that even two weeks prior to my arrival.

The cells were also dark because the lights inside of them all were broken. The plumbing issue also meant that we were only allowed to flush the toilet two to three times a day, and that was only after they turned the water back on. If you urinated or had to make a bowel movement, that sat in the toilet water until the guards came around and turned the water on.

To top all of this off, I was given half a mattress, if you would call the pad inside the plastic cover a mattress. The sheet and wool blanket on top looked like they had been shredded by a couple of dogs, too.

I was never very happy to be back at SCI Fayette; therefore, I hope I never have to make that trip again, not even in passing.

Overpriced Typing Paper

By James R. Cruz, CL-1798, SCI Fayette

For those of you who do a lot of typing on your own personal typewriter, you know that the price of copy paper on Commissary is around six dollars for 200 sheets. This is not a great deal.

You can stop buying this paper from the Commissary and improvise by buying a sketch pad for drawing which is around 72 cents with tax for 50 sheets inside. It is about the same quality as the paper in the Commissary, serves the same purpose, and you are not getting ripped off.



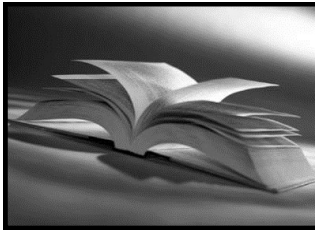
Legislative Highlights

Edited by Nicole Sloane

Several current laws are listed below. Note that this list has new and moving legislation. The bills are current and updated as of 12/1/17.

Bill & Printer No.	Description	Prime Sponsor	Action	Position
SB 8 PN719	Civil Asset forfeiture – provides adequate protections for property owners and provides procedures for the return of property.	Sen. Mike Folmer, R- Dauphin, Lebanon, York Counties	Approved by Governor 6/29/17. Effective immediately with exceptions.	Support
SB 62 PN 43	An Act amending Titles 23 (Domestic Relations), 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 44 (Law and Justice) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, provides additional reasons to avoid termination of parental rights for incarcerated parents.	Sen. Stewart J. Greenleaf R-Bucks (part) & Montgomery (part) Counties	Moved through Senate Judiciary 1/24/17; Tabled in the full Senate 3/22/17. On hold on the Senate table.	Support
SB 121 PN 104	An Act amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in State intermediate punishment, amends addicted incarcerated offender treatment to including gambling addictions in addition to drug and alcohol.	Sen. Vincent J. Hughes D- Montgomery (part) & Philadelphia (part) Counties	Moved through Senate Judiciary 5/9/17; On the Senate Floor for first consideration. but on hold on Senate Table.	Support
HB 135 PN 1268	An Act amending Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses), 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further providing for sentence of persons under the age of 18 for murder, in sentencing, further providing for sentences for second and subsequent offenses. In probation and parole, further providing for parole power. Gives Board discretion to parole prisoners who were sentenced to life after 15 years of imprisonment	Rep. Jason Dawkins	Referred to House Judiciary 4/7/17.	Support

Bill & Printer No.	Description	Prime Sponsor	Action	Position
SB 522 PN 875	An Act amending Titles 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes Merger Bill. The consolidation of the Department of Corrections DOC and the Board of Probation and Parole BPP into the Department of Criminal Justice will increase cost savings, decrease overlapping functions, and increase efficiencies. The BPP will maintain independent decision making and Corrections will oversee agents supervising parolees	Sen. Stewart J. Greenleaf R-Bucks (part) & Montgomery (part) Counties	Moved through Senate Judiciary, 3/16/17; Passed Appropriations 5/8/17. Moved through the Senate 5/24/17 (38-12). In House Judiciary 5/25/17.	Support
SB 523 PN 867	An Act amending the act of November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No.111), known as the Crime Victims Act, Merger Bill. An Act amending the act of November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No. 111), known as the Crime Victims Act; further advancing the merger of the DOC and the BPP. Provides for the Office of Crime Victims and costs of offender supervision programs.	Sen. Stewart J. Greenleaf R-Bucks (part) & Montgomery (part) Counties	Moved through Senate Judiciary, 3/16/17; Passed Appropriations 5/8/17. Moved through the Senate 5/24/17 (48-2). In House Judiciary 5/25/17.	Support
HB 631 PN668	An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for a mandatory period of three years' probation following release from incarceration for certain sex offenders.	Rep Ron Marsico R-Dauphin (part) County	Moved through House Judiciary, 3/21/17; Passed House Appropriations, 3/22/17; Passed the House 4/3/17 (189-9). In Senate Judiciary 4/6/17. Waiting for final vote on Senate floor as of 9/20/17.	Oppose
SB 529 PN 854 (see HB1419)	An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Clean Slate Clean Slate calls for automatic sealing of most non-violent misdemeanor convictions (M2, M3, and ungraded) for individuals who have remained conviction free for at least 10 years. It would also automatically seal records of arrests that do not lead to convictions. It includes a provision for employer immunity for liability. Sealed records are hidden from the public, but still available to law enforcement. Clean Slate reduces the burden on the courts and expands on expungement legislation which passed in 2016.	Sen. Scott Wagner R- York (part) County	Moved through Senate Judiciary 5/6/17. In Senate Appropriations Committee 6/12/17. On the Senate floor 6/20/17. Moved through the Senate on 6/28/17. In house Judiciary as of 6/29/17.	Support



Literary Corner

Questions of Reason

By John Griffin, AM-8535, SCI Graterford

Who will answer these questions for us?
Who will solve the problems?
Are there any men or women of courage?
Anyone to lend a hand, or perhaps a voice of
common reasoning?

Who will speak for the prisoner?
The rejected and despised, never deserving, but
always generalized.

Will anyone scratch the surface and peek through
the wall?

Look into the faces of those who struggle against
all odds to redeem themselves.
To stand as corrected individuals,
Before their families, communities, and society, as
a whole.

But, for their efforts, receive only looks of
condemnation,

From the public's jaundiced eye.

Who will challenge these politicians that use the
necks of prisoners as podiums,

To bellow out their one-liners as campaign
speeches:
"I'll pull the switch, throw away the key, I'll build
new prisons where coal mines used to be."

Will common sense ever prevail?

Will the taxpayer realize that there are no
dividends, no returns on their investments?

That prisons have become big businesses whose
profits come from the suffering of human beings,
And the longer they are confined,

The blacker the bottom line.

"I, Too"

By Angel G. Lebron, LY-1417, SCI Albion

I too lived in soberness, I too lived in distress,
A trial of heartbreak, joylessness, sadness and
unhappiness.

I too was silent, refraining myself from the world,
I too, was discontent.

I too had a subliminal amount of emotions running
through my head,
I too felt as if I failed my children, that I failed
myself.

I too had self-inflicting thoughts that became my
reality, my fate became my fatality.

I too remember that day like it was yesterday.

I too opened up and managed to get help,

I too got inspired by helping others,

I too witness the showers astray.

And I too live in gratification today.

We Are One

By Roman Ellis, CU-3580, SCI Bellefonte

To my fellow brothers and sisters on lock down, I
see you and you are not forgotten. I come to you
with an open heart and mind. Our race is human,
and it is time that we put an end to that division.
We all need each other. It is time to respect one
another as well as ourselves.

This is the time when we need to come together
and show the world that we are not wild animals,
and that we are people who know how to love and
carry ourselves well.

We must put our minds together and share the
information we come across because that is what
will free us from these cages.

Ask yourself what it is that you want for yourself,
your family, and this nation. I believe that it
starts with respect.

Respect yourself, respect your family, respect
your nation. We are one family of people.

SURVEY: What's Your Opinion?

Please fill out this form and mail it back to us at our new location for future issues. We want to take your thoughts into consideration!

New Address: 230 South Broad Street, Suite 605, Phila, PA 19102

- 1) Would you like us to include statistics on prison populations and other facts?

___Yes ___No

- 2) Would you like us to include a section on the latest technology?

___Yes ___No

- 3) Would you like us to include profiles on organizations that assist prisoners?

___Yes ___No

- 4) Would you like us to include book or movie reviews?

___Yes ___No

- 5) On a scale of 1-10, how important is *Graterfriends* to you? (1 being the most important, 10 being the least:

1___ 2___ 3___ 4___ 5___ 6___ 7___ 8___ 9___ 10___

- 6) What is the main reason you read *Graterfriends*? (Please rate 1-4; 1 being most important)

A. To learn what other inmates are talking about _____

B. For legal news and advice _____

C. For the resources _____

D. There's nothing else worth reading in my mailbox _____

- 7) What's Your Opinion:

How can we make *Graterfriends* a better publication? (Please print legibly)

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts. Your opinion is important to us!

Resources

STATE OFFICIALS

Governor Tom Wolf

Governor's Correspondence Office
508 Main Office Building
Harrisburg PA 17120
P | 717-787-3391
F | 717-772-8284

Attorney General Josh Shapiro

PO Box 22635
Philadelphia PA 19110
P | 215-886-7376,

Senator _____

Senate PO Box 203 ____*
Harrisburg PA 17120

Representative _____

PO Box 202 ____*
Harrisburg PA 17120

*Editor's Note: *The three-digit district numbers are available at:*

*www.PAsen.gov for senators and
www.house.state.PA.us for representatives.*

DOC OFFICIALS

DOC Secretary John Wetzel

19020 Technology Parkway
Mechanicsburg PA 17050
P | 717-728-2573
W | www.cor.pa.gov
E | ra-crpdocsecretary@pa.gov

PRISONER BOOK PROGRAMS (these offer books on requested topics)

Books Through Bars

4722 Baltimore Avenue
Philadelphia PA 19143

Books Behind Bars

Prison Mindfulness Institute
PO Box 206
South Deerfield MA 01373

Prisoner Literature Project

c/o Bound Together Books
1369 Haight Street
San Francisco CA 94117

Prison Book Program

c/o Lucy Parsons Center and Bookstore
1306 Hancock Street, Suite 100
Quincy MA 02169

Also offers free list of prisoner resources.

PRISONER ADVOCACY RESOURCES

Coalition to Abolish Death by Incarceration

c/o Decarcerate PA
PO Box 40764
Philadelphia PA 19107
P | 267-217-3372
W | www.decarceratePA.info
E | decarceratePA.pgh@gmail.com (Pittsburgh)
E | CADBIphilly@gmail.com (Philadelphia)
E | decarceratePA@gmail.com (Philadelphia)

PA Institutional Law Project: Philadelphia

The Cast Iron Building
718 Arch Street, Suite 304 South
Philadelphia PA 19106
P | 215-925-2966 Philadelphia
F | 215-925-5337 Philadelphia
P | 570-523-1104 Lewisburg
P | 412-434-6175 Pittsburgh
W | www.pailp.org
E | alove@pailp.org

Prison Activist Resource Center

PO Box 70447
Oakland CA 94612
P | 510-893- 4648
W | www.prisonactivist.org/resources
E | info@prisonactivist.org

Memorandum of Understanding Between the Department of Corrections and Pennsylvania's Board of Probation and Parole

On October 19th, 2017 Governor Tom Wolf announced that his administration is moving ahead with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) that results in the combining of the agencies' similar, shared and overlapping resources and functions.

The consolidation became effective on October 23, after the MOU was signed by all involved parties, including the chairman of the PBPP, the secretary of the DOC, the respective agencies' chief counsels, and the deputy general counsel of the Office of General Counsel.

"On June 30, both the House and Senate passed a \$31.83 billion budget that decreased spending while still prioritizing funding for important government functions like schools, health and safety," Gov. Tom Wolf said.

Under the MOU, both agencies – the DOC and the PBPP – will remain separate from each other. However, the community supervision of parolees and all other reentry services will be combined under a new, centralized chain of command. It will involve reentry tasks, such as inmate/reentrant records, inmate/reentrant reentry planning, reentrant placement and supervision and parole violation management and return processes.

Employees will continue fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of their respective agencies and there will be no changes in salaries or collective bargaining agreements.

PBPP Chairman Leo Dunn said. "The Parole Board will continue to exercise its exclusive and independent decision-making role with regard to decisions to parole, re-parole, commit and recommit for violations of parole and to discharge persons sentenced by any court at any time to imprisonment in a correctional institution."

In addition, the Office of Victim Advocate and the Sex Offender Assessment Board will continue to be independent from the DOC.

Announcements

We have moved!

As of November 27th, 2017, we have been residing at our new location:

**230 South Broad Street
Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA 19120**

Therefore, any submissions you would like to send in should be sent there, and *not* to our old address on North Broad Street.

We thank you, and we are looking forward to receiving your submissions and continuing to service you as best as we can.

LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE (LWOP)

Women Lifers Resume Project of PA
PO Box 324
New Hope PA 18938

Reconstruction, Inc
ATTN Fight for Lifers
PO Box 7691
Philadelphia PA 19101
215-223-8180

Juvenile Law Center
The Philadelphia Building
1315 Walnut Street, 4th Floor
Philadelphia PA 19107

Decarcerate PA
Coalition to Abolish Death by Incarceration (CADBI)
PO Box 40764
Philadelphia PA 19107
267-606-0324

The Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth
1319 F Street, NW Suite 303
Washington DC 20004
202-289-4677

Transportation Services

What prisons do you visit?

We have buses to all Pennsylvania State Prisons except Camp Hill, Chester, Graterford, and Quehanna Boot Camp.

Who can travel?

Anyone can travel as long as he or she is on the inmates visitor list, including infants and children. **Please check with whomever you are visiting prior to purchasing a ticket to ensure that you are on his or her list.** You will not get a refund if you are unable to visit because you are not an approved visitor.

How can I pay for a ticket?

Cash, debit, or credit card in the office. There is a \$2 surcharge per ticket to use a credit card.

How do I get a seat? Can I mail in my payment?

Tickets can be purchased online, over the phone, in the office, or by mail. We only accept money order payments via postal mail. **Do not send cash in the mail.**

Send payments to:

Family Transportation
Pennsylvania Prison Society
230 South Broad Street, Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Please make money orders payable to: PA Prison Society at the address listed above.

When sending payments through the mail, please include your full name, prison you are visiting, and your telephone number. We may need to contact you.

Editors Note: For more information, contact Ebonee Allen at: (215) 564-4775 x 103, eallen@prisonsociety.org, or www.Prisonsociety.org

2017-2018 Family Transportation Schedule

DATE	DESTINATION
November 3rd	Greene
November 6th	Laurel Highlands & Somerset
November 10th	Albion
November 10th	Coal Township
November 13th	Forest
November 13th	Frackville & Mahanoy
November 14th	Muncy
November 17th	Fayette
November 20th	Huntingdon & Smithfield
November 25th	Waymart
December 1st	Greene
December 4th	Laurel Highlands & Somerset
December 8th	Albion
December 11th	Forest
December 14th	Houtzdale
December 14th	Benner & Rockview
December 15th	Fayette
December 15th	Pine Grove
December 18th	Cambridge Springs & Mercer
December 18th	Dallas & Retreat
January 5th	Greene
January 8th	Forest
January 8th	Frackville & Mahanoy
January 8th	Laurel Highlands & Somerset
January 9th	Muncy
January 12th	Albion
January 12th	Coal Township
January 19th	Fayette
January 22nd	Huntingdon & Smithfield
January 27th	Waymart

Word Search

PA Prison Society inmates confinement Graterfriends volunteer visitor
reading writing incarceration permission submission freedom

F R E E D O M T L G N I T I R W A S D F H J O I
L K Y T H G P A P R I S O N S O C I E T Y K U N
O R E W Q I B V C A S D F X Z M B H T I Q S N M
E I V A V V I S I T O R T R W K T E Q A I U O O
B V T C O N F I N E M E N T Q D O N M P L B B X
B N H T L U R N E R J U N B V T E O K K L M O I
Q O P L U W E M P F B V C Z W Q R T G B I I I K
W E E K N K J A P R B N T Y B V C Q Q B N S O P
Q S R L T R E T O I O L A A Z X V C B N M S K L
K L M K E G T E P E N M B V C F D S C V W I U T
O O I L E N I S Q N F E E A S J H K M N B O K K
W Q S W R I M N B D E E A S D C B Z X X K N R L
N B S W D D Q V B S O J K L M B C V W E D X S X
E E I B V A A S D F X Z M B B V C A S D F X Z M
K U O W E E K N K J A P R B N T Y B W E E K N K
Q I N C A R C E R A T I O N B V X Z Z A Q W K N

What did you think of this? Let us know on the “What’s Your Opinion” section of the survey on page 11!

First Class postage is required to re-mail

December 2017

The ^{Pennsylvania}
PRISON SOCIETY
SINCE 1787

230 South Broad Street
Suite 605
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

GRATERFRIENDS

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CLAYSBURG, PA
PERMIT NO. 84

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Support our mission and become a member!

Receive *Graterfriends* for:

\$3	Prisoner	\$250	Sponsor
\$10	Prisoner Family/ Student	\$500	Founder
\$40	Regular Membership	\$1,000	1787 Society
\$100	Friend of the Society		
\$200	Patron		

Make a check or money order payable to

The Pennsylvania Prison Society
230 South Broad Street, Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Prisoners may pay with **unused** postage stamps.

Name _____ Prisoner Number _____ Institution _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Payment Amount _____ Payment Method _____

NEW SUBSCRIBERS: Please allow 12 weeks for receipt of your first issue.