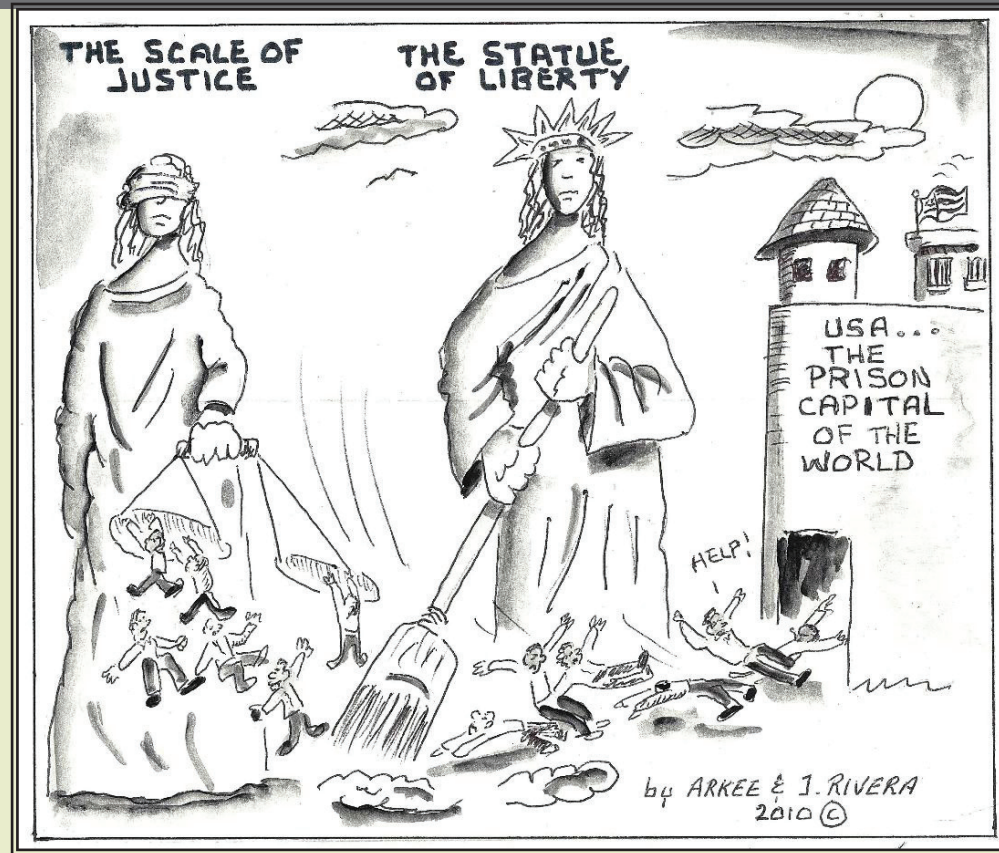
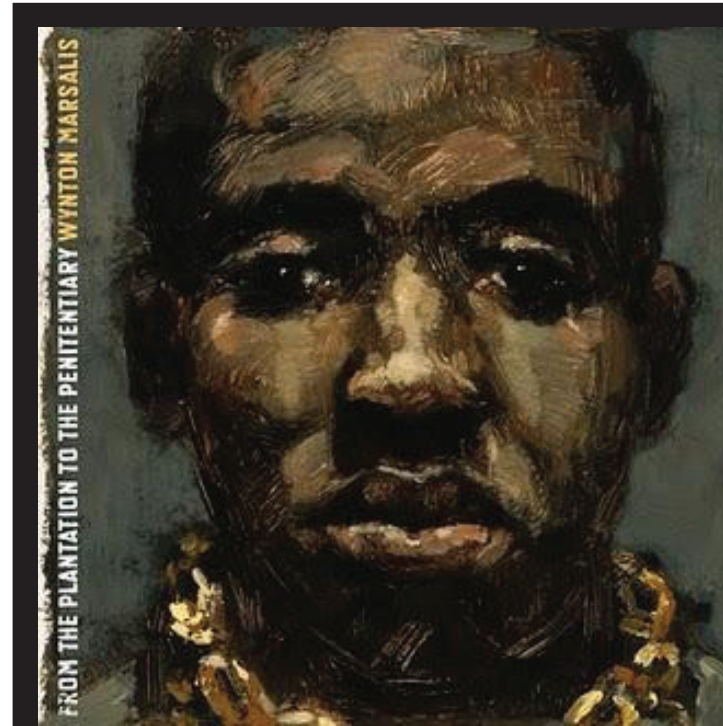


Political 'Toons



Stateville Speaks
C/o Justice Studies
LWH 4062
Northeastern IL University
5500 N. St. Louis Ave.
Chicago IL 60625-4699



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STATEVILLE

SPEAKS

VOICES FROM INSIDE □

MAY 2011

Welcome

By Gayle D. Tulipano

A Welcome from the Editor to Northeastern Illinois University's *Stateville Speaks*

Welcome to this edition of Northeastern Illinois University's *Stateville Speaks*. Though much has happened since our last issue, it seems apparent that little has changed. Gone is Michael Randle as head of IDOC, in is Gladys Taylor as acting Director. Many feel Randle's demise was a political one, as he was held accountable for everything that was wrong with the prisons, including the ill-received early release, or Meritorious Good Time (MGT) program. While there were no "secret" inmate releases and Randle followed the law, the political frenzy the media created was too great for his administration to overcome. While the resignation of Randle is a disappointment to many, we can only look ahead and hope that the current Director will follow and expand on the programs that have been started.

After a long and relentless campaign, the

abolition of the death penalty sat on the Governor's desk, awaiting his signature. Though the Governor admits he supports the death penalty, he does acknowledge that the current system had serious flaws. While 15 people were on death row in Illinois, many, including the Governor, know the real dilemma was whether he was willing to take away the coveted bargaining chip that the death penalty had become for law enforcement.

The Governor had asked constituents for input on helping him make this decision. Many urged him to sign the Bill including former prosecutors, judges, attorneys, victim advocates, abolition groups, as well as average citizens. Though many were hopeful that Illinois was on the verge of the repeal, it must be noted that in addition to the resistance of the state's attorney's offices, the Department of Corrections powerful American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union presence was feared to have

a greater influence in this Governor's decision. Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan was also urging the Governor to veto this bill. Much to both our surprise and relief, Governor Quinn did indeed sign the abolition of the death penalty into law.

Another newsworthy event was the sentencing of Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge, who was given four and a half years for perjury involving his cover-up of countless acts of torture, dating back several decades. Many following this case were outraged by the short sentence considering his heinous human rights violation and wondered if this is a barometer of the overall erosion of our civil liberties. The irony is the tolerance of such abuse in our society while being quick to judge and admonish other societies for their social transgressions.

Equally perplexing, Burge's superiors were

Continued on page 6

hope / change / redemption

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Your Questions from Within: Stateville Speaks Asks for Answers



In an attempt to answer your most frequently asked questions *Stateville Speaks* submitted both a list of those questions and sat down with acting Director Gladys Taylor for an interview to help clarify them. Below are both your questions and her answers.

- 1.) We get so much mail regarding medical complaints. We know that most medical is outsourced to Wexford, but are there State/DOC/ other employees that oversee that care? And who sets the standard for that care i.e., for how often do women get pap smears/mammograms/men prostate exam, glaucoma, regulating hypertension, etc?) Is this information available and where?
- 2.) If health care costs exceed contracted amount is there an emergency fund or provisions for continued healthcare?
- 3.) We are told there is no money, but what's your opinion about the pay now or pay later policy? Do we treat diabetics with medicine, or do we pay for dialysis later? And don't our same tax dollars pay for medical care for prisoners, whether through a county, state, or federal Medicare type of system? Why not spend it earlier when it's treatable/cheaper and not later when it's complicated/ expensive. So, again knowing there is money, who decides for IDOC how much will be spent on inmate healthcare?
- 4.) Do the prisoners have any recourse that they may take if they feel they are not getting proper treatment, especially if it is bordering on serious to life threatening? What advice or procedural steps can we print or recommend them to take?
- 5.) What do you think of an ombudsman?

6.) What would you like DOC to do differently that would have a humane, meaningful impact on medical care? What will you do to see that it happens? (Director Taylor would not directly answer questions regarding the medical issues in our interview, but supplied us with a written response.)

The Office of Health Services (OHS) oversees health services for inmates of DOC. We spend the appropriate amount of money for the health care needs of the offenders – many who have had little or no care prior to their incarceration.

We are always looking for ways to reduce our administrative costs in delivering necessary care, for instance we are in the process of updating our intact system to implement an electronic medical record for increased efficiency. We are also studying the impact of a designated facility to act as a “hospital” for those offenders who require more intensive nursing care long term.

The Department does contract with Wexford to provide medical care – this contract has a provision that allows for the vendor to request reimbursement for services in excess of contract amounts, provided the appropriate documentation exists. No needed care is ignored. We focus on non-elective and preventative care.

Regarding specific care, no diabetic (or any chronic illness) is denied treatment to “save cost”, but we do focus on preventative care and certainly try to be as cost effective as possible. Our standards of preventative care are based on the National Prison Standards, which provide the following:

- Pap smears are done yearly
- Mammograms are done every other year beginning at age 50 through age 75 earlier and more often if clinically indicated- these fall under the USPTF standards
- Prostate exams are done during the inmates complete physical exam after age 40
- Hypertensive offenders are placed in the hypertension clinic and are seen at least three times per year.

Inmates who have a complaint regarding their care are encouraged to follow the grievance process. This process is explained at the facility orientation as well as in the facility handbook. The inmate may also send a letter to the Warden or the HCU office.

7.) Video conferencing was in a pilot phase. Are you considering expanding the program to include more facilities? Are you satisfied with program or can more be done?

While we are still piloting the video visitation program we are currently writing a request for proposal to expand inmate communication across our system, this proposal will not be limited to video but will also include email. (Continued on Page 6)

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Restitution or Retribution? On blame and victim's rights

Anonymous

Victim's rights in a murder case often aren't the rights of the victim, but instead rights of his family, friends, or society. He has the right to dignity.

This is different than arguing about whether a death is in vain.

Dignity is restitution, which includes finding the killer.

But as for the destruction of his life?

That could come through eternity in the penal system, it need not be the worst form, capital punishment.

Blame is laid squarely on the killer, no ands, ifs, or buts.

Poverty is NO excuse.

Suspiciousness is NO excuse.

Jealousy is NO excuse.

On the other side, the killer sees all this attention and...he is speechless.

Yes, I took a life.

Yes, I deserve castigation and final judgment.

It is only when, even if only for an instant, he glimpses the poverty, suspiciousness, or jealousy as part of the whole human experience that he can glimpse forgiveness of himself.

This probably also is necessary for true rehabilitation.

No, I will never do this again.

I do not fully understand how I got to that point, but I was in poverty...and psychotically, I was suspicious and unbalanced... I was also enamored in jealousy.

And for this I deserve judgment.

And for this I can glimpse asking forgiveness.

I hope not to be defined: killer

Keep it coming...

We would like to thank you for your membership and support. Please, continue to send all subscriptions and address changes to:
Stateville Speaks, 2237 Sunnyside Westchester IL 60154

Send all other correspondences and submissions for publication to:

Stateville Speaks, c/o Justice Studies Department, LWH 4062, 5500 N. St. Louis Ave., Chicago IL 60625-4699.

Submissions considered for publication should be no more than 1-2 pages and should address general issues and concerns--not individual cases. Let us know if we can use your name or not. We are looking for submissions for our women's section and IDOC staff section. Please do not to send originals as we cannot return submissions.

Also, please let us know if you moved, so we can update our records.

Thank you for your continued support and contributions, filled with wisdom and candor. **

Lord I'm Thankful

By India Williams

Lord I am thankful for the things that you have done. I'm thankful for you being god and all by yourself. I'm thankful for the peace you gave me. I'm thankful for the joy you put in my heart.

Lord, I'm thankful for the things that you have done. And I'm grateful for the victory we won.

Lord I'm grateful for you giving me your breath. I'm grateful that you gave me my mom back.

I'm grateful that you saved my mom's soul to save her kids.

I'm grateful for your son Jesus who died for you and me.

I'm grateful & thankful for the wisdom you gave me on a daily basis.

Lord, I'm grateful for the things that you have done.

And I'm grateful for the victory we won. I could go on and on about your works.

Lord, I'm thankful that soon the troubles of the world will be over.

I'm grateful that you allowed me to walk in this journey to give you all the praise in the end.

I'm thankful that at the end of this tunnel there is a light of joy.

I could go on and on about your works because I'm grateful, grateful, so grateful just to praise you lord. Flowing from my head the issues of my heart are thankfulness.

Moments

By Phillip Hartsfield

If the measure of a man was to be measured by one moment's actions.

Then the men in which I stand among would be measured every minute.

The actions which take only a second can last a lifetime, memories lost in time.

But the morals of his character of which he is convicted should be the standards by which he is upheld.

Caught in a moment's time, almost lost in space to reflect but not change the course of action,

can regret but not change what happened.

Have you ever been stuck in time?

Told to move on but nowhere to move?

The men I stand among have been caught in time by a moment.

Forced to relive the same minute over and over. Their manhood is measured by a moment, just a moment.

Me Myself & I

By Jernava Lee Horton

Sitting here alone, wondering why, should I had paid attention to those lies

that were told to me, still wondering why.

Now that I'm here, where is everyone who was near, and told me it would be fine,

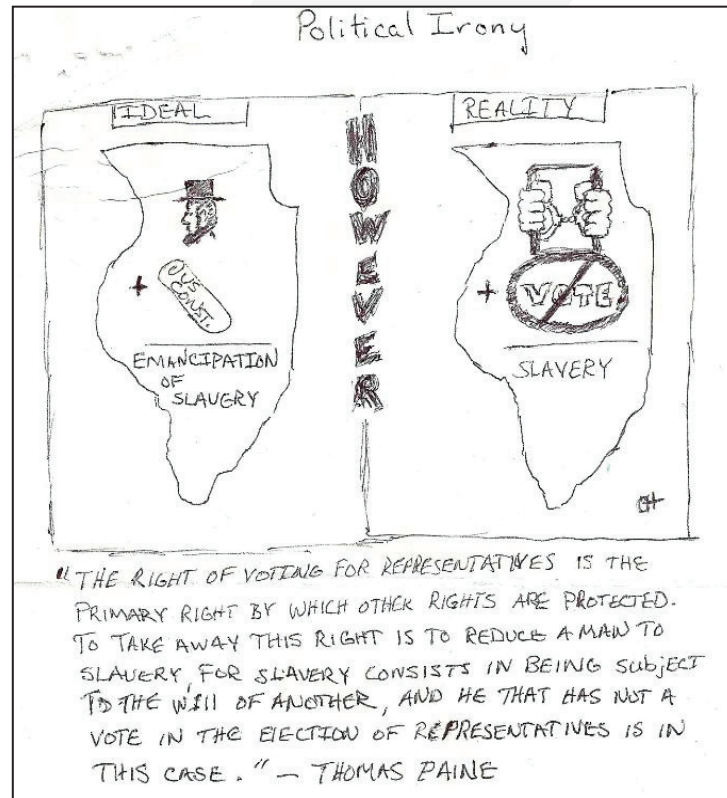
or was I just blind. It seems so wrong to belong. Should I fear and be weak or should I

be strong and carry on. I choose to be strong, cause I got Me,

Myself & I here alone.

Creative Corner

WHEN INSPIRATION HITS...POEMS WRITINGS CONNOTATIONS...



My Life

By Lloyd Saterfield

With a stoke from my pen,
 I can begin to tell my life
 in one fold.
 Whether right or wrong, I
 will stand strong,
 As I move from home to
 home.
 With no family to care,
 I had to bear being a man
 alone.
 You can L.O.L.,
 I would just smile.
 As I break these walls
 you make.
 You can stop looking at
 my life because
 I have no more you can
 take.

House of Healing – (Cont.)

What would you like the community at large to know about the HOH class and program? That when we support curriculum designed to enable healing within our inmate population it is a win/win situation for staff, inmates and the community at large. No one loses! We need to promote classes and programs that encourage and enable education and healing to happen within the IDOC.

What is next - any new programs at Stateville? Frank Peard will be on board in August to begin teaching a new class and Kim Skarupski will return to begin teaching another sociology class ■

T-Shirt Design Contest

Calling all inmate artists, cartoonists, satirists, poets, and essayists! Enter our contest to design a *Stateville Speaks* T-shirt & possibility of a logo for *Stateville Speaks*. Goals of the Contest: (1) Increase awareness and start a dialogue about prisons on campus; and (2) Raise money, from the sale of t-shirts, to help defray our costs at the paper. Submissions DUE by August 1, 2011. Please send only a copy as we will be unable to return originals. We will run the best entries and announce the winner in our August/September issue. ■

****This issue of Stateville Speaks is generously supported by Cynthia Kobel.****
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The New Acting Director Named by Governor Quinn



Houses of Healing at Stateville

By Minister Dennis Digby

I have been involved with the Houses of Healing program since 2003. I am one of the teaching mentors in the advanced HOH class. The class is an inside mentoring program for inmates to assist others with prison life and to share our experiences with each other. We have recently also begun an outside youth ministry which is very productive. Our news letter, "American Prisoner," conceptualized by Bilal Shakur, aka Patrick Pursley, has given us a vehicle to reach back to the youth in the community and to assist them as well.

The founder, facilitator, and mentor of HOH is Chaplain Lori Wilbert. Lori is a Deaconess in the Lutheran Church, a volunteer for IDOC, and was recently recognized for 25 years of faithful service in prison ministry. I conducted this interview with her recently to give her the opportunity to share her thoughts and to speak about the purpose, objectives, goals, and accomplishments of the HOH program.

When did HOH begin? I started teaching Houses of Healing in 2003. I discovered the book in the late 90's along with Marge Ronzone, a Stateville social worker at the time. Marge and I decided that it would be an excellent curriculum that provided essential tools for those doing time at Stateville. Houses of Healing provided an opportunity for individuals to experience healing and enabled that healing to happen as a community experience and within a classroom of peers. I feel strongly that the prison system offer classes that promote healing for individuals serving out their sentences within the prison community. This kind of healing is a win/win for everyone who has a stake in the system: offenders, offenders' families, victims, and victims' families, along with the community at large.

What prompted the class? The lack of programs at Stateville. There were many dry years at Stateville when little if any long-term programming was offered. When I first started teaching the class, I found the content of the Houses of Healing curriculum resonated strongly with inmates in a way that nothing else had.

Continued on Page 8...

Amid controversy during a close bid for re-election, Governor Quinn announced his replacement for Director after the abrupt resignation of Michael Randle. Getting the nod as acting Director is longtime Chicagoan Gladys Taylor. Just prior to her appointment to the top spot at IDOC Taylor held the position of Assistant Director which she was appointed in May of 2010. In February 2010 she was Chief Fiscal Officer and Director of the Public Shared Services Center. She was responsible for fiscal planning and budgeting, procurement, grant formulation, to name a few.

But Taylor is no newcomer to the Department, as she spent a year and a half, starting in 2005. She was considered crucial in planning and securing funding for several programs, most notably treatment and transitional jobs programs. The Sheridan National Model Drug Treatment and Reentry Program, the Methamphetamine Treatment and Re-entry Program at Southwestern Correctional Center, Halfway-Back and the Statewide Job Preparation programs, all considered key programs to assist re-entry.

Before Taylor joined IDOC she worked as Deputy Director in the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. She also has significant prior corporate experience with over 25 years working for both L'Oreal and PepsiCo. Taylor is a graduate of DePaul University with a Bachelor of Science in Business. ■

There is a new Illinois CURE chapter started by Madeline Ward. Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants is a membership-based grassroots organization that believes that prisoners should be given the resources to turn their lives around. Join and help Illinois prisoners tap into this strong voice, already recognized by the United Nations.
 Electronic Home Detention is the law, 730ILCS5-5/8/1. Please apply for it, and then contact or have a family member contact Illinois CURE at 312-590-6129 or 4904 S. Drexel Blvd, Chicago, IL 60615 or madedeary@gmail.com.

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Cost is \$2 for prisoners or \$10 for individuals
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 Washington, D.C. 20013
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In Remembrance of My Dear Mother

Dr. M. T. Burroughs

By William T. Jones



"Nothing can dim the light which shines from within."

Please, please listen for just a moment. What you hear is silence. What you hear is silence. The voice of Dr. Margaret T. G. Burroughs, my beloved adopted mother's voice, has been silenced by death. But there is so much that can be said and felt in silence. Speech is not the only means of understanding between two souls. It is not the syllables that come from the lips and the tongue that bring hearts together. My readers, there is something greater and more pure than what the mouth utters. Silence illuminates our souls, whispers to our hearts, and brings them together. Silence separates us from ourselves, makes us sail the firmament of spirit, and brings us closer to Heaven. It makes us feel that bodies are no more than prisons and that this world is only

a place of exile.

Dr. Burroughs's voice might be silenced, but the love she showed to so many people throughout the world is now speaking out in many voices, and one such voice is mine.

Who Am I?

My name is William Thomas Jones. I am a fifty-five year-old man who has spent thirty years in prison—twenty-three of those years on death row. I have been labeled a murderer, a robber, and a thief—a person who would not be rehabilitated. But to Dr. Burroughs, I was somebody who needed love, guidance, and understanding. I along with almost every other member of death row found so much hope and life every third Sunday of the month when Dr. Burroughs and Queen Mother Helen Sinclair

made their visit. Pontiac's death row was a cold and barren place not fit for people such as Dr. Burroughs and Queen Mother, but there they were in their colorful African attire. And such big smiles on their faces. Dr. Burroughs spent her time out on a Sunday to walk the gallery throughout all the elements, from heat to cold. She did it to bring a little comfort to a few lost souls like me. She made me believe in myself. In my despair, she raised her voice and told me: "My son, do you know you are a descendant of great Kings; you are someone and I love you. Now get to your work station and write me a poem. I will be back the third Sunday of next month and you have to have something for me."

I kept thinking about what that old lady said and that damn

poem. I woke up one morning and decided to write the poem. My first poem was about a tree I saw each day through my window. If I remember correctly the poem was only six lines long, but I wanted to have something when this old lady returned. Sure enough, the third Sunday came, and when I stuck my mirror out through the bars, there she was coming down the gallery, stopping at every cell. When she made it to mine, I stuck the little poem outside to her. She took it and then smiled at me and said, "William Thomas Jones, you are a great writer. You're destined to write books and do other great works of art." Even though she may have building me up, I believed her. She gave me the power to believe and the motivation to do more. She gave me success in my accomplishment.

Dr. Burroughs, through her teaching, allowed me to strive for a better life, even on death row. She put love in my heart instead of hate, and let me tell you, I am only one of the inmates who Dr. Burroughs helped over her many years. I miss her, and so will the rest of the inmates in IDOC, because she was a mother to the motherless.

Please rest Dear Mother, your work is done; it is now our turn to pick up the pace. ■

Margaret Burroughs was a well-known Chicago artist and the co-founder of the DuSable Museum nearly fifty years ago. She died November 21, 2010 at the age of ninety-three or as other records show, ninety-five. Her home, dubbed "Little Bohemia," was like a museum of African-American history and a gathering place for the likes of W.E.B. Du Bois and writer James Baldwin. In 1989, she was inducted into the Chicago Women's Hall of Fame and President Jimmy Carter appointed her a member of the National Commission on African-American History and Culture. Margaret Burroughs was a familiar sight at Stateville Prison, where she taught art and poetry. She spent more than twenty-five years walking through prisons and inspiring the men inside. She was a devoted woman who, even in this last year, would take a bus from Chicago to Stateville, carrying her art supplies and rarely missing an appointed class.

Dear Bill Ryan:

I am an individual incarcerated at the Stateville Correctional Center in Crest Hill Illinois. Over the years of my incarceration I have come to understand some of the workings of politics within the Department of Corrections and Stateville in general, and how it affects us as prisoners. I must say that we are truly treated as society's throw-aways! Take the commissary for example. The Department of Corrections has been interpreting the commissary statute in their favor to overcharge up to 9%. The Auditor General has called them on this twice, telling them to get the opinion of the Attorney General's office. To this day the Department continues to add up to 9% duplicative charge.

Not only is the Department overcharging but the Stateville commissary staff are playing for overtime and utilizing their union (AFSCME) for support to do so. The commissary staff appears to be on some form of a strike by refusing to continue to efficiently do their job, waiting for the administration to give in to their ransom for overtime pay. This affects prisoners because commissary staff intentionally dragged their performance; this has cut our trade/shop from 3 times a month to twice a month. In addition and as an example, Stateville staff records provide the evidence showing overtime pay for working Thanksgiving and

Christmas day of 2008, when in fact we know no commissary orders were received or had been filled on these dates.

Active prisoners like me are looking for ways to expose and present our offered opinions and suggestions. For Example: "firing" commissary staff may not be an option with the union in back of them. Surely there are other staff (like Thompson Staff who still want and need a job) willing to do the job efficiently as before, or that can be trained to do so. The current commissary staff can be reassigned to a different assignment/post, preferably to a least desired assignment.

We can go on and on about the ills inflicted upon prisoners but we can only tackle one issue at a time to be effective. Currently many of us are engaged in exhausting administrative remedies on this commissary overcharging issue. I am also waiting on the response from the ACLU (Chicago Division), Uptown People's Law Center and others for legal advice and or assistance and support. Keep in mind this overcharge has been going on since January 2006. If the courts agree many of us that brought complaints could possibly receive 7 to 9 percent of every commissary purchase back. Four years worth of purchases 7 to 9 percent is something I'm sure many of us can use in these hard times. And with that I leave as I came...

Sincerely,
Rickey Robinson

Parole Board- (Cont.)

IDOC were convicted of murder, or of a Class X of Class 1 felony. Not all inmates have the self-motivation and determination Lars showed. However, with the added incentive of the possibility of an earlier parole date, others might find the motivation they need.

If determinate sentencing stays the same, then the good time statutes could be altered to achieve most of the same effects as the Parole and Pardon Board. Good time is not available or distributed equally throughout the department. A majority of the nonviolent offenders have the opportunity to



receive additional good time for school, drug and alcohol treatment, and some work assignments. Depending on their offenses, one inmate could be eligible where another would not. At first glance, one might think violent offenders shouldn't receive the good time. However, these offenders are sentenced to longer prison terms and tend to be in the most need of a change in their lifestyle.

A new look should be taken at the way felons serve their incarceration in Illinois. The benefits of a revised system could help reduce the costs to the state and lower the recidivism rate through a better informed and motivated parolee. The more educated an inmate is, the more likely that inmate is to get a job that will pay more taxes into the state coffers.

If one thing hasn't worked in Illinois, it is continuing the same policies and expecting the results to be different. ■

Dear Sir:

I am writing in regards to a current problem at Menard C.C. The prison law library has not received any new case law, statutes, etc., as a result of the State, I.D.O.C. or Menard itself defaulting on their West Publishing Co. contract. This problem began essentially in the beginning to mid August of 2010 and is ongoing.

I work in the law library; I have written to the John Howard Association and have filed a grievance. All are unanswered. I am writing to your organization hoping to spur someone to action. I realize everyone is broke, but that shouldn't be an acceptable excuse.

On another note, I for a few years regularly received your newsletter, but within the past one and a half years only received one issue. Do I now have to pay for a subscription to continue receiving them?

Editor's Note: People in prison do not have to pay for Stateville Speaks. You should receive three issues a year (winter, spring, fall). Let us know if the problem continues. Also, anyone who is transferred needs to send us their new address.

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Update on 3 R's By Walter Woosley

After the last issue of *Stateville Speaks* there is a little clarification needed on the 3 R's program (Reading Reduces Recidivism). The 3 R's is a new secular off shoot of the Books to Prisoners program (B 2 P). There are a few major differences between the programs even though many of the staff originated from the Books to Prisoners program.

Books to Prisoners mails books directly to inmates that request books due to the lack of materials

in prison libraries. B 2 P buys books if they cannot get them donated.

3 R's does not mail books to prisoners, but focuses on dropping off books, saving the cost of shipping, to stock the shelves of prison libraries with books that they are lacking. Focusing more on circulation books, the 3 R's does not buy new books and manages to suffice off of donated books alone. The 3 R's works through chapters, each one linked to a prison, which allows for more scheduled drop offs and creates a community feel to the organization.

Currently there are three established chapters of the 3 R program. The first chapter, and only functioning chapter, is the Oak Park / River Forest Chapter which was founded on August 30, 2010, with its first delivery taking place November 4 of 8 boxes and 5 bags of books at Dwight Correctional Center. This chapter is comprised of 10 people and is housed in the Third Unitarian Church. This chapter plans to drop off books on a monthly basis and is working on scheduling the December drop off of 25 boxes of books.

The recently started second Chapter is the Effingham /

Charleston Chapter which is focusing on Robinson and Lawrence Correctional Centers, and has not started dropping books off at this time. The Third chapter is the Carbondale chapter that is focusing on TAMMS Correctional Center which has not started dropping off books either.

There are hopes of starting other chapters in the near future in Springfield, Bloomington, Dixon, and near the South Side of Chicago. The 3 R's has a good working relationship with IDOC and is very appreciative of the cooperation it has received. For example, Decatur Correctional Center appointed a new librarian in June of 2010. We look forward to more progress. ■

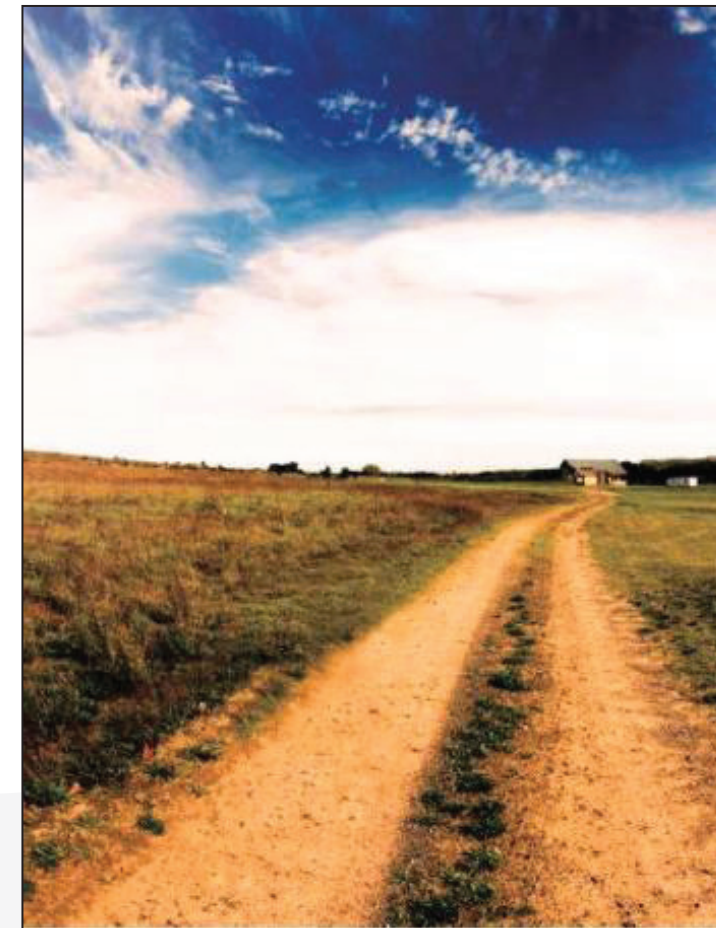
Coming Home By Brian Nelson

I arrived at Tamms Super Max prison in Tamms, Illinois, in 1998 and spent 12 years in solitary confinement. I was serving what is known as deadtime. This is when the Department of Corrections gives extra time to a prisoner, taking away his "goodtime" and then restoring "goodtime" every 90 days. This year I was released on June 29. In all, I spent one month less than 28 years in prison.

Before I could be released I had to be transferred to another prison to do a pre-start/pre-release program and counseling. Tamms has no pre-release programs to help re-integrate prisoners into society. The reason to move a prisoner from Tamms to another prison is to reintroduce that prisoner into population since he has been in solitary confinement.

In late May I was transferred to Menard Correctional Center, a maximum security prison. I was a level III prisoner at Tamms. I had property, was allowed yard time and 5 to 7 showers a week. I was allowed commissary every other week, and I had a television and radio in my cell at Tamms.

Upon arrival at Menard, I was taken to the handicapped segregation unit and issued a disciplinary investigation report stating that I was being confined in segregation because I was a threat to Menard prison. The



disciplinary report was issued by the Internal Affairs Office prior to my arrival at Menard. After receiving the disciplinary report, I spoke to a lieutenant concerning my placement in segregation. I was told that because I came from Tamms and was considered to have influence over some prisoners that Menard Administration did not want me at Menard so they

decided I would be issued an investigative report and placed in segregation. I asked about the programs, pre-start/pre-release, and I was told that I would not be allowed to go anywhere nor talk to anyone while at Menard.

I was placed in the segregation unit/annex. The cell had two vents but no air coming out of either one. It was extremely hot.

The only property I received from my transfer was soap, toothpaste, paper, pen and my Bible. Ninety per cent of my property was lost. Clothing was issued to me from the Menard clothing room. For my entire 33 days at Menard I was never allowed to shave, shower, place phone calls or go to commissary. In reality, I was thrown into a cement box and left there until my release.

The heat in the cell was unbearable. It was impossible to sleep because of the lack of air. I wrote several requests to the major over the segregation unit asking to be allowed to purchase a fan or receive a state loan fan until my release. I never received a response. After a few days I developed a heat rash over 60 per cent of my body. I received cream and medication from some of the nurses who made rounds. I asked for a sick call, but I was never seen.

I did receive a visit from my mother and sister after a week at Menard. Both were very concerned about my rash and requested to speak to the segregation major. They were allowed the meeting, but nothing was done after their discussion.

Shortly after my arrival at Menard another prisoner was brought from Tamms. He was also being released in the next few weeks.

Continued on Page 8...

The Underground Railroad □(Cont.)

Locating a Case

One of the most basic things to know about researching an issue is how to find a particular case. Yet it is amazing how many people don't know how to find a case by reading the case citation. Usually a case citation has the following features: (1) the name of the case (People V. Coleman, Brady V. Maryland, etc.); (2) the volume number or book the case can be found in; (3) an abbreviation of the particular reporter that publishes the case (N.E.2d, Ill. Dec., etc.); and (4) the page number on which the case begins.

- A normal case is published in three separate reporters, and therefore a full case citation has three separate series of numbers. For example, United States Supreme Court cases usually look like: Brady V. Maryland, 373 U.S.83, 83 S.Ct.1194, 10 L.Ed.2d 215.
- Illinois Supreme Court case citations look like: People V. Coleman, 183 Ill.2d. 366, 701 N.E.2d 1063, 233 Ill.Dec.789.
- And Illinois Appellate Court cases look like: People V. Thurman, 337 Ill.App.3d.1029, 787 N.E.2d 263, 272 Ill.Dec.448.
- Notice the commas in between the sets of numbers. These commas let the reader know that the next set of numbers deals with a different reporter.
- United States Supreme Court cases are normally published in (1) United States Reports (U.S.); (2) Supreme Court Reporter (S.Ct.); and (3) Lawyers' Edition, Second series (L.Ed.2d).
- Illinois Supreme Court cases are published in (1) Illinois Reports, Second Series (Ill.2d.); (2) North Eastern Reporter, Second series (N.E.2d); and (3) Illinois Decisions (Ill. Dec.).
- Illinois Appellate cases can be found in (1) Illinois Appellate Reports, Third Series (Ill.App.3d); (2) North Eastern Reporter, Second Series (N.E.2d); and (3) Illinois Decisions Series (Ill. Dec.).
- Regardless of what reporter is used to find the case, the format is still the same. That is, the first set of numbers represents the book the case can be found in, and the last set of numbers represents the page the case begins.

Therefore, when looking at People V. Coleman, 233 Ill. Dec. 789 in the Illinois Decisions Series, the 233 represents the book number where the case can be found, and the last number, 789, is the page where the case starts at in the book. Usually the "full" citation is not given, but all you need in order to locate a case is a partial citation. If you only have the North Eastern Reporter citation (N.E.2d.), but only have access to the Illinois Decisions Series, you can find the case by looking at the top of the pages of the Illinois Decisions series books and you'll see the North Eastern Reporter citation in small bold print.

If for some reason you find yourself with a citation that only has the book number, then you can find the case starts by looking in the front of the book, which will usually have an index of all the case decisions that are reported in that book.

During the American Revolution many great words were spoken with the intended goal of stirring the masses to respond to British oppression. A few of those words were spoken by Patrick Henry:

Gentlemen may cry "Peace, peace." But there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the North will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand idle?... Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

The same questions need to be asked of ourselves today. Why do we sit in prisons cells idle? Is television and music so important as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Why do we waste our lives on frivolous pursuits? Is freedom not important? Is the fight for liberty not worth fighting? Why don't you turn your television off and open a legal book and search for those loopholes in your case?

-THE CONDUCTOR

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Cover Story- (Continued)

not held accountable for these acts of torture, either for their compliancy or ineptness, even though allegations surfaced several times over many years. Meanwhile, countless torture victims remain in prison. This may be the biggest crime all.

We are also concerned by the outrageous workman's compensation payments to guards at Menard for repetitive injuries caused by antiquated locks. How, we may ask, can our cash strapped state afford the over \$1.5 million paid thus far? We will all be awaiting the state insurance fraud investigators final report. While the aforementioned may be



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day to day incarceration. When responding to your letters, we will do our best to answer your questions, but with the lack of transparency at IDOC, it is often hard to get basic questions answered, though we will keep trying. We have almost completed our transition into the University, but we are still working hard to expedite the pace of our return letters and the timeliness of the paper. Although some prison mail rooms have been gracious enough to tell us you have been moved, please let us know where it is you have moved.

We still get concerned letters regarding Bill's health. No, he did not slow down; he is volunteering and spending much time in Springfield, working the important legislative aspect. We will keep you apprised if and when legislative events unfold. He remains committed to this project, as do we all.

Finally, I would like to thank those dedicated to this project, including publisher Cynthia Kobel, Justice Studies Department Chair Cris Toffolo, and Justice Professor Emeritus Kingsley Clarke, Bashir and Ryan from the Justice office and the interns who worked so hard. Most of all, I want to thank you for reading, writing to us and sharing your works and wisdom with us. Remember, when you speak, we are listening. ■

Questions – (Continued)

8.) What do you think needs to be done to reduce the recidivism rate in Illinois?

The implementation of the Illinois Crime Reduction Act will require the Department, the Court system and Illinois communities to work together to address the growing incarceration population and recidivism rates. There are several task forces working simultaneously to develop implementation strategies. You can find information about each of these task forces here:

Adult Redeploy Illinois – <http://conweb3/subsections/RANA/default.asp>

Sentencing Policy Advisory Council – <http://www.icjia.org/public/index.cfm?metasection=spac>

However, we are not waiting for the full implementation of ICRA to look at our processes. Research has shown that a key to reduced recidivism is quality programming. The Department has evaluated its programmatic offerings and recently updated education classes to remove those that are outdated or will not help the offender as they return to society. We swapped those programs for ones that can help the offender secure jobs upon release. Statistics show that offenders who are employed upon returning to the community have lower rates of recidivism than those who are unemployed. The Department will continue to operate the residential drug treatment programs at Sheridan and Southwestern Illinois Correctional Centers that have proven to be effective, and we will continue to emphasize a focus on completing GED programs. Re-entry summits which provide helpful information for offenders as they are released from the prison system are also helpful by providing much needed information on acclimating back into the community. There are also things that would be beneficial at the local and county level to help offenders have a smoother transition back into society.

9.) In addition to the medical care, many inmates have written in about the slow mail service. Some consider it their life-line. Is there is a plan on addressing and correcting this systemic issue?

The American Correctional Association standard for mail service states that, "excluding weekends and holidays or emergency situations, incoming and outgoing letters are held for no more than 48 hours and packages (if allowed) are held no more than 72 hours".

10.) Soy causes one of the leading food allergies in the

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What Happened to the Parole Board?

By Doug Fyke

Criminal justice reform can save valuable state dollars while helping to ensure the safety of the citizens. The "lock 'em up and throw away the key" attitude is an outdated and expensive approach.

The Parole and Pardon Board was disbanded in 1978 when all criminal sentencing was converted to a determinate or "fixed" amount of time. Indeterminate sentencing allowed a judge to send a defendant to prison for a term between a minimum and maximum (i.e. 5 to 20 years.) After serving a portion of a sentence the offender would have the opportunity to be granted parole by the Parole and Pardon Board. The board would then have the ability to look at each individual case to determine if it was fit for granting parole or additional supervision.



Determinate sentencing changed the dynamics of how the offender does his time. The maxim "Idle hands are the devil's workshop" is alive and well in prison today. If there is no incentive or motivation to improve oneself while incarcerated, complacency and idleness can take over. With

determinate sentencing, offenders are released from prison regardless of whether they are ready. Over 30,000 inmates are released from the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) every year. Wouldn't society prefer them to be ready? For example, Lars and Rob will both be released in five years with determinate sentencing. Lars

quickly earned his GED, enrolled in college classes and took part in various programs explaining the harmful effects of domestic violence, drug and alcohol dependency, and other negative lifestyle choices. Rob spends all his time in his cell sleeping. With indeterminate sentencing Rob might be motivated to take some of the same classes Lars did. If Rob were unable to show the Parole and Pardon Board that he is trying to take his life in a new direction, he would potentially serve much more time than Lars. Who would you rather live on your street?

The mission of the Illinois Department of Corrections is "to protect the public through incarceration, supervision, programs and services designed to return appropriate offenders to the community with skills to be useful and productive citizens." In 2004, according to the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority, 5,894 inmates released from the

Continued on Page 17...

Below is an introduction and excerpt from a new newsletter, *The Underground Railroad*, an informative, legal newsletter in which the author is currently looking for help in publishing. We are pleased to run selections from this series.

The Underground Railroad By Jonathon Meskauskus

The original Underground Railroad was started in order to lead slaves, who were brought from Africa and forced to work in southern plantations, to "freedom." Sadly, the Underground Railroad's trains stopped running before slavery was ended. The wide misconception in America is that slavery was abolished after the Civil War. However, a simple reading of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution proves contrary. Straightforward and simply put it states: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."¹ Amendment XIII (1865)

After the Civil War, slavery was never abolished, rather it was revised. Since 1865, per the Thirteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, the new slaves of America have been the prisoners of America. True, most of America's modern-day slaves don't toil under the hot sun picking cotton. In fact, most slaves now-a-days don't do anything at all. They are simply "warehoused" in cells producing a year-round yield for those who choose to benefit from today's "cash crop." With a little bit of ingenuity, an unseen force has found a way to mislead the masses into thinking they were citizens of a free nation. The fact remains that the incarcerated citizens of America are the modern-day slaves, considered nothing more than the property of the Department of Corrections of an individual state.

This being understood, the Underground Railroad is still needed to lead today's slaves to freedom. In response to necessity, this newsletter has been born. It will deal exclusively with criminal law. For only through the courts can our freedom be restored. For those yearning for liberty, may the knowledge contained within these pages lead you to freedom.

-THE CONDUCTOR Continued on Page 16...

Stateville Speaks would like to thank you for your readership and continued support. We encourage you to send us your comments, letters, articles and creative works for possible future publication. Submissions can be sent to:

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Repealing the Death Penalty

One Mistake is One Too Many By Silvertre Delgado

The Death of the Death Penalty

By Matthew V. Derrig

The state of Illinois needs one signature from Governor Pat Quinn to become the 16th state in the United States of America to abolish the death penalty. On January 6, 2011, the Illinois House of Representatives voted on Bill SB3539 to repeal the death penalty, affecting all current death row inmates and all future sentencing in The State of Illinois. There are currently fifteen people on death row in the state. The House passed the bill by a vote of 60-54. Five days later, the Illinois Senate passed the bill with a vote of 32-25. Bill SB3539 now sits on Governor Pat Quinn's desk awaiting his signature, which would make the bill a law and abolish capital punishment in Illinois.

Former Governor George Ryan declared a moratorium on the death penalty in Illinois in 2000. The temporary suspension stirred controversy and bought capital punishment to the spotlight of political debates for the past decade. During the past ten years and with much anticipation, many legislators and political activists have worked very hard on the bill. Finally, their efforts have become reality as Governor Quinn officially made Illinois the 16th state to end the practice of state sanctioned murder, via the death penalty. ■

from Zion who was charged with killing his 8 year old daughter and her friend and who spent five years in jail after the Lake County Major Crimes Task Force allegedly coerced a confession after 20 hours of physical and psychological abuse. Hobbs was cleared by DNA evidence that linked another man, Jorge Torrez, to the crime and who is now incarcerated in Virginia for assault. Though Hobbs never went to trial or death row, he went to Springfield in support of repealing the death penalty. According to the *Daily Herald*, Hobbs said, "To do that time being a nothing and a nobody is a lot harder, they're defeating the purpose by giving a man the death penalty." If Hobbs' case had gone to trial, the Lake County prosecutor would have sought the death penalty. Jerry Hobbs has filed a lawsuit against officers involved in the investigation.

These cases of misconduct are clear examples of why Illinois and the rest of America should not have the death penalty. One innocent life lost due to misconduct is too many. Once a person is executed there is no coming back. The state can't say sorry and move on. Governor Ryan and many others have said that the death penalty has to be reexamined to prevent these situations from happening, but even then why does the state of Illinois have to focus its resources into killing a human being. The state should focus its resources to reduce the overcrowding in the prison system with programs that work to address the recidivism rate in Illinois. ■



During Mayor Daley's tenure as Cook County States Attorney, his office prosecuted Leroy Orange, Stanley Howard, Aaron Patterson and Madison Hobley. All these men were convicted and sentenced to death on coerced confessions gleaned through torture administered by then Area 2 police Commander Jon Burge and other detectives under his command. On June 28, Jon Burge was convicted in federal court on 2 counts of obstructing justice and 1 count of perjury. Burge ruined the lives of these four men with his misconduct and cost taxpayers millions to settle lawsuits out of court and to pay for his legal defense.

Another example is Jerry Hobbs

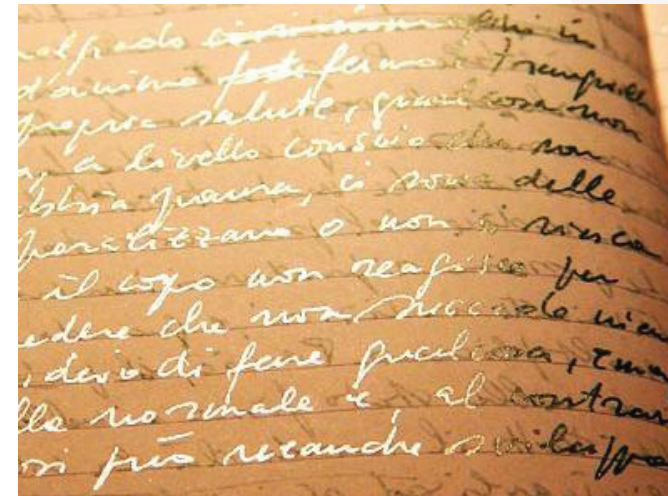
On January 20, 2009, Illinois State representative Karen Yarbrough introduced the bill to abolish the death penalty. Rep. Yarbrough, a death penalty abolitionist, along with groups such as the Illinois Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (ICADP) urged Illinois to get out of the business of state-sponsored killing. "Illinois should not be in the business of killing its own citizens," Yarbrough stated in interview with *Stateville Speaks*. The legislation would abolish the death penalty and shift funds being used to pay for appeals and direct them into a fund for victims and law enforcement training.

During the House Judiciary II Committee hearing, there was testimony from family members of victims, former and current prosecutors, anti-death penalty groups, and a person who was exonerated. The argument from former and current prosecutors was that the death penalty should be reserved for the most heinous crimes. Kevin Lyons, the Peoria County States Attorney, used the example of Andrew Kokoraleis, the last person to be executed in Illinois. Kokoraleis, along with three others, killed and mutilated several people. Mayor Richard M. Daley, the former Cook County States Attorney from 1980-89, told *NBC Chicago*, "I believe in the death penalty. . . I'll be very frank. I know there's been abuses in the past. Yes, there are. But under our system, we should really protect life. In situations like this - this should be a death penalty case." Mayor Daley is asking for the death penalty for the murder of Officer Michael Fisk. Officer Fisk is one of five Chicago police officers murdered in 2010.

We encourage those who have lost friends and loved ones, to send us their information, so we may acknowledge their passing and share our condolences. Submissions can be sent to: *Stateville Speaks* C/o Justice Studies, LWH 4062 / Northeastern IL Univ. / 5500 N. St. Louis Ave. / Chicago IL 60625-4699

Essays, Letters and Insight

PROPOSALS AND PERSUASIVE EDITORIALS



Dear State Representatives, Journalists, and Concerned Citizens...

I am writing this letter in response to the statewide elimination of the Business Management and Computer Technology classes in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The notion that minority inmates are not capable of returning to society and being able to obtain an entry level position in the work force dealing with computers is a total contradiction to the mission statement given to offenders upon entry to the IDOC where it clearly states that programs are offered to "enhance the success of offenders re-entry into society." Not all inmates who come to prison seek to obtain employment in a field of operations dealing with manual labor. Classes that deal with manual labor have not been cut

including automotive, construction, and horticulture.

Students that are accepted into Business Management and Computer Technology are accepted based on the score of their mandatory T.A.B.E. Test score. Being enrolled in classes that deal with computer concepts gives us the ability to learn about the evolving world of technology as it is increasing to be vital to the world which most of us incarcerated will surely see again.

For those of us who have made the decision to enroll in such thought provoking classes have benefited from the ever evolving world of computers. I've been incarcerated for over eighteen years, and since being incarcerated at Western Correction Center I've successfully completed Computer Technology and Business Management in an attempt to educate myself and be prepared to reintegrate back into society upon my release.

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No One's Paying Attention, So Nobody Cares

By Anonymous

What's going on inside the Department of Corrections? I am serving a six year sentence at Shawnee Correctional Center. What started out as a simple injustice concerning myself as an abused inmate has allowed me to realize the atrocities which occur each and every day throughout the IDOC. My situation is not uncommon and it began long ago, from the beginning of my sentence in February 2009. I reached my destination at the Vandalia CC in March 2009. I found myself faced with a lot of in-your-face racism, which struck me, considering one would like to believe that we as a people have moved past some of these times, and racism of this degree no longer existed.

However, I found myself feeling oppressed, depressed, and repressed. This caused me to become rebellious against the employees. During my visiting time with a relative, I became aware of the correctional officers' behavior, which was very disrespectful, as well as immature, regarding their ability to confront and deal with human beings from the outside world. These institutions view inmates and their family members as nothing more than criminals, as less than human beings, and as not deserving of fair treatment as another citizen. However, because I refused to be constantly verbally abused and used as a correctional officer's piñata, they continued to use

abusive words and racism to oppress me, in order to keep me from mentally functioning as a productive person serving his time.

I refused to allow myself to be subjected to the conditions at Vandalia CC Major Fox, and the Vandalia CC transferred me out into Graham CC, in Hillsboro, Illinois. I arrived at this institution only to be faced with conditions similar to that of Vandalia, but even worse. I have written countless letters to the John Howard Association seeking assistance with confronting and dealing with these atrocities. I have written letters and inmate grievances, as well as other documents and have had a relative send copies to the Director of Illinois Corrections trying earnestly to get their attention. I ask you, where is the rehabilitation? I am at another Department of Corrections facility finishing up my time at Shawnee Correctional Center, where I have been transferred once again into the third place. The abuse continues, same as before. There is no rehabilitation; there is only injustice.

The abuse of power by correctional officers is causing a large number of inmates to have mental breakdowns, forcing them to become dependent upon psychological drugs. This takes all of their hopes and dreams from them, forcing them to become non-productive citizens, to fail and have no desire for the future. Having no real self-esteem sometimes constitutes and almost

Continued on Page 10...

An Hour Inside By Cari Carpenter

The grounds of the Stateville Correctional Center are surprisingly manicured—stately, even—for a maximum-security prison in a bankrupt state. Lists of forbidden items are taped to the walls of the visitor center: sunglasses, car keys, coloring books. I know Donald's prison number by heart, but I have to call my husband for our license plate number. The other visitors and I crowd into a small room, temporarily intimate. I watch others so I know what to do. I settle on one woman: white, reddish hair, about my age. Visiting her father, I know somehow, instantly. We are each patted down in manageable pairs, as if vaguely criminal. We move through rooms, each smaller and more removed from Freedom. "I make candles and just give them away," one woman tells the others, once we are reunited. It is reassuring to see the others again. "I just give them to strangers. If I see someone screaming at a clerk in a store I give them one. It calms them down." The screamer, she means. The clerk is always grateful. But who will give her a candle?

When we walk to the main building she points out cracks in the sidewalk to a woman with a cane, who thanks her each time. This gesture is a kind of candle in itself, I think. We become an odd, makeshift family: multiracial, young and old, pockets emptied—stripped bare save for the invisible stamp on our right hands. We are marked with a state authority that glows mysteriously when put under the light. The woman with the candles informs us that she has four Chihuahuas at home.

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Coming Home – (Cont.)

He was placed in the handicapped segregation unit as well and was told that he would remain in segregation because he came from Tamms and was also considered a threat. He did not receive a written investigation report as I had. At no time did I see anyone who was investigating this investigation report. Nor was I allowed the opportunity to challenge the report before the Adjustment Committee as Illinois Department of Corrections rules state.

Now that I am out of prison I find, as with most people who have been confined in isolation for long periods of time, I have trouble being around groups of people. After 12 years in solitary confinement, how does one talk to people? I have a great family and some friends who are helping me to adjust and get to places that I need to go to get necessities like a State ID, a resume or job applications. I am learning to drive. With all this coming at me at once, I do wonder what I would do without this help? IDOC did nothing to help me make this adjustment and even denied me the right to the little help that they were suppose to give me.

Not giving a prisoner, especially prisoners who have been in isolation, the proper exit strategy is almost ensuring ex-prisoners return. I was taking medication while in prison. According to IDOC rules I was to be given two weeks of medication and a two-week prescription for medication. I received neither. What happens to the former inmates who walk out and hope to find a place to live? Hope to find agencies that will help them?

There are IDOC employees to whom taxpayers' money goes for counseling ex-offenders. There are counselors who teach pre-release programs to prisoners, but, apparently, not all prisoners. This program is designed to keep former prisoners from going back to prison and to make the community safer as well. There are procedures for a prisoner to go through before going back into society – none of this was given to me. How many other prisoners are walking out the front door of a prison without the tools to adjust in the community? ■

House of Healing – (Cont.)

Students in the classroom responded in positive ways and I found that when people are given an opportunity to change, many times they choose to do so. Some people have never been presented with an opportunity to think, act or react in a different way; they never knew they had options. When we realize the possibilities of change within our attitude and real-life living, anything is possible.

Briefly, what are the objectives for students attending HOH?

The Houses of Healing curriculum includes anger/violence management, parenting from behind the wall, addictions and recovery, forgiveness, restorative justice - taking responsibility for the harm done to your victim, and finally, asking the question, "Where is God in all of this?"

What is expected of each student?

A student must not only attend class on a weekly basis, but also contribute to discussions, turn in assignments, show respect to their peers - especially when they disagree with someone who has a particular view point that is different from their viewpoint, and help new students entering class for the first time. Also, an individual will get out of the class what they put into the class. The more someone invests of self, the larger the return. I facilitate the class but the participants make it happen. Peer accountability is everything; we all need others to help keep us in line and remain accountable. I expect students to participate in all the required elements or move on. There are too many people on the waiting list who want to join the program and we cannot afford to keep someone around who is not working as hard as everyone else.

Do you see genuine changes within individuals? Yes, all the time. Some folks are ready to make changes and some are not; like anywhere else, people show varying levels of initiative behind the wall or on the street.

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Long Term Sentences Pearl Tuma



I've been in Dwight Maximum Security Prison for nearly 31 years. I'm 67 years old and have a life sentence which means I do not see the parole board. My only chance for relief from my sentence would be through a clemency petition decided upon by the parole board. They give you a hearing if you have an attorney or people who are willing to go and speak on your behalf. After 30 years of imprisonment, I've submitted my 4th clemency petition under Governor Blagojevich and it's still pending almost 5 years later without a response from Governor Quinn.

Over the years I've been trying to advocate for lifers and those incarcerated with long terms based on 80% or 100% --"life" consuming sentences. I believe in positive change and self rehabilitation. When I arrived in Dwight, most of the offenders for murder were under the old law of what was called indeterminate sentences. They saw the parole board (they meaning "lifers") back then, did 11 years, before being eligible to see the parole board.

The sentence for life was 20 years, but you were eligible for release after 15 or able to go to what was called permanent party work release. I can recall many of the women who were in Dwight with sentences of 80-90 years but all of them became eligible for release. The parole board has released everyone with the exception of one woman. Out of all those releases, any woman who served 15 or more years has never returned. Only 2 former offenders who previously committed the offense of murder and served 10 years of a 20-year sentence have returned to prison for a second offense of murder. Those 2 women now have life sentences under the new law. This letter is not about them, but about the many women who have never returned to prison and the hope

and need of new sentencing policies, or perhaps the return of the parole boards to revise the cases of "lifers" and those with exceedingly long terms.

There are women in prison who have used every avenue available to them for self-rehabilitation and who could become law abiding tax payers. The state has stopped giving the 2 sets of 90 days good time and stopped the meritorious days for achievements or outstanding behavior accredited to instances of necessity. There still exists the day for day credit that applies to nonviolent cases such as drug sales, theft, forgery, prostitution, and drunk driving. Prison lumps all offenders together. Over the past 30 years I've had cellmates whose release dates were coming within a matter of months. Most women in prison

are mothers and grandmothers who may not exist physically in the home but do very much exist in the spirit of the home. Children are at the forefront of every aspect of their lives. They provide in ways that are imaginative and unimaginable. I have written senators, state reps, magazines and other newsletters that aspire to helping prisoners, promoting change and the possibility of release to everyone who has served a substantial amount of time and can show self improvement, behavior change, scholarly achievements or growth. I am proposing a letter to President Obama because he spoke on disparity in sentences and equality in 2008 in Ebony Magazine.

I'm willing to help by writing about prison life and our needs. I welcome your help on this journey and I thank you earnestly.

□The only kind of fights worth fighting are those you're going to lose, because somebody has to fight them and lose and lose and lose until someday, someone who believes as you do wins. □

--I.F Stone ■

And Justice For All? – (Cont.)

Fund of Chicago violated Illinois' pension code by allowing Burge to continue to receive his pension.

While many members of the public and state officials like Attorney General Madigan believe they are seeking justice, members of the board that voted to let Burge keep his pension disagree. They argue that Burge's crimes do not relate to his duties as a police officer, nor did he have any police-related duties when these crimes were allegedly committed.

Madigan seeks to have Burge return the funds he has received since his conviction. Time, however, is running short on this demand, as Burge is scheduled to report to prison on March 16. ■

Health Care Needs □(Cont.)

Such complaints served to concentrate Illinois officials' attention on a couple of related questions: What kind of health care should the state provide for its inmate population? And what kind of services can the state afford? Indeed, prison officials everywhere are worried, though they're shelling out an increasing number of taxpayer dollars to provide mandatory health care opportunities for prisoners.

Despite serious issues with overcrowding and increased healthcare expenses, according to a 2000 study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Justice, the average daily spending in 1998 on health care for each inmate ranks Illinois second lowest among the states at \$3.45.

Ultimately, this is not a problem that can be solved with panels and constant article discussions. The problem will only be amended by legislative action and implementation. Maria Somma of the Illinois Nurses Association, a lobbying group for state nurses, says privatization could have worked in the short term to solve nursing shortages. But as it has grown, she says, the goal of better health care has been lost." The nurses' association is only one of a few that is lobbying to get corrective measures issued as law. While there has not been much progress, we can only remain hopeful that soon value will be accorded to the lives of citizens in the corrections population. ■

Are Inmates' Healthcare Needs Met?

By Justin Carter



contact, mother-to-child, having sex with an infected person, being tattooed or pierced with an unsterilized tools that were used on an infected person, getting an accidental needle stick with a needle that was used on an infected person, using an infected person's razor or toothbrush, sharing drug needles with an infected person. Most people have few, if any, symptoms after the initial infection, yet the virus persists in the liver in about 85% of those infections; persistent infection can be treated with medication.

Knowing that he had not received any outside medical care in 35 years, he questioned the medical utensils' cleanliness and wondered why he is just being diagnosed. He said that since his incarceration, his blood has never been drawn other than for medical purposes. In the letter he stated, after receiving his diagnosis, he has not seen a doctor in several months, and he is very concerned about his well being. This letter raised a concern at *Stateville Speaks* as well, sparking research into medical care in Illinois prisons.

Are inmates' health care needs met behind bars in Illinois? This question was posed Monday afternoon to a panel of three experts, Dr. Michael Puisis, chief operating officer for Cermak Health Services, Benjamin S. Wolf, associate legal director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, and Frank H. Easterbrook, chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. The lunch-time event was co-sponsored by John Marshall Law School student chapter of the American Constitution Society, the Chicago Lawyer Chapter of the American Constitution Society, and the ACLU of Illinois. Although a number of important questions were posed to the panelists, the panel did not set forth an outline of actions that will be taken to address the growing problem.

Stateville Correctional Center may argue they adequately "treat" inmates who have chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension, and near-epidemic levels of infectious diseases like hepatitis C, as well as those who suffer violent injuries as prison crowding stokes tensions and growing concerns. However, based on a letter sent to *Stateville Speaks* from an anonymous prisoner, there are those who beg to differ.

The inmate explained his medical situation and reason for imprisonment. He explained that he was diagnosed recently with hepatitis C. He has been incarcerated for well over 35 years and was perplexed about when he managed to contract it.

Hepatitis C is an infectious disease affecting the liver and refers to inflammation of the liver. Inflammation is "the painful, red swelling results when tissues of the body become injured or infected. Inflammation can cause organs not to work properly." The infection is often asymptomatic, but once established, chronic infection can progress to scarring of the liver, which is generally apparent after 10 years. Hepatitis C virus is spread by blood-to-blood

One writer has described the problem this way: Picture a pristine waiting room with two patients lying quietly on cots. Next door, a doctor checks someone who has a sore throat, while a nurse treats a man who complains of stomach pains. Just down the hall, patients file in and out of a dentist's chair for regular checkups. Then picture another waiting room. This one is overflowing with patients, sprawled out on cots, across the floor and into the hallway. Nurses check on several men who complain of headaches and chills, but they can't be treated because the staff has run out of aspirin. The groaning of the sick can be heard down the hall, and some have spent days waiting for attention.

These two imagined scenes would seem to come from vastly different locales, but critics contend they can both be found in Illinois in prisons run by the state Department of Corrections. While some Illinois inmates receive quick treatment from well-trained medical units, others, housed in prisons that lack adequate resources, must endure inferior care. In fact, over the past year, a number of prison nurses have begun to complain about poor health services in some of the state's prisons. They maintain that at some prisons private contractors don't provide enough supplies to treat inmates and restrict treatment for inmates with serious health problems. Further, they charge that when medical staff complain, they're rebuked, even punished, for insubordination.

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An Hour Inside – (Cont.)

"That's one too many," the husband of the woman with the cane says, seriously. "You're only allowed three."

We look warily at the guard, who waves it off with a surprising grin. Inside, more surprises: a marble staircase and a sign for a picnic. But we are not invited; only staff, who get to retire at 50. After several locked gates I am directed to table 30, which I have to look for. I am not, and never will be, a regular—unlike the woman with the cane who is no doubt visiting a wayward son. She is greeted by a guard, who asks her how she's been. Or the daughter, whose father, in a fatherly way, leans in for a long hug. Much time—too much, I think—is spent getting items from the vending machines. Plastic-wrapped food and drinks are spread out at every other table, prepared by mothers and wives and daughters as if they were a Sunday feast: too-yellow popcorn, Doritos, waxy candy.

Donald appears from the stairs, halting, and stops to ask where table 30 is. He, too, is not used to this. We hug although the sign

above forbids it. My leg, crossed, falls asleep. With no food between us, we speak easily of prison (all soy diet—the processed kind; no parole; days when things were really bad). Politics are not kind to prisoners. When the governor released some inmates 30 days early to save money, the other side pounced. Donald has gone 18 years—the entire length of his time served—with no tickets for bad behavior. But the best he can hope for is a transfer to a place that is not this. I ask him how he keeps up such a good attitude (a cruel question, perhaps). He is quick to answer, as if he expects the question. "I pray and I never watch anything sad or depressing on tv." A good idea for everyone, I tell him. They say the prison building where he removes black mold is haunted, but he hasn't seen anything. Not like the basement apartment he lived in at age five, where his brother swore there was a boy talking in the closet. No one has lived there since. He's not sure what he believes. He is a smart guy. What other future could he have had?

Time is up and my short, painless sentence ends—I am released, blinking, into day. ■

House of Healing – (Cont.)

I remember many individuals who entered the class with hostility and pent up anger, but have been able to work through their anger and go on to help other younger students joining the class. In helping other students they help themselves.

Who funds the program? Many individuals and congregations within the Northern Illinois district of the Lutheran Church. The program is not state-funded in any way.

Does the class have the support of the IDOC? Overall, I would say yes. There have been many individuals along the way from line officers in the cell houses who get inmates out of their cell for class to the movement team who ensure a weekly class list is up to date and students allowed to come over for class. They make it happen.

Comment on a couple of class accomplishments, individuals or a class as a whole. Over a year ago, one of the students, Patrick Pursley, suggested that we develop a newsletter for at-

risk youth ages 14 to 18. Patrick and the other men thought it would be an opportunity to get to youth on the street before they make decisions that will bring them to prison. Many youth and gangs glorify prison life in a way the men know is a myth—a lie that leads many youth to prison or an early death. The newsletter is a way to reach these kids and help them to think as they read the stories of men who found out too late what street life and gangs lead to. Two high schools in Chicago have used the newsletter in their classrooms and were so impressed with the content that they had their students write assignments on the articles, reflecting on the material and how it affected their thinking. Another newsletter for younger kids, ages 7 to 13, is in the works.

What obstacles are you faced with in order to keep the program going? Raising awareness and funding through the churches and community to support the classes; this is an on-going process.

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Dear State Reps – (Cont.)

The purpose of incarceration aside from paying a debt to society is to "correct and rehabilitate" the offender who broke the law. How can we be rehabilitated when decisions are made to eliminate programs that assist inmates in computer literacy, job preparedness, and the vital tools needed to obtain employment once released from prison?

Being able to enroll in a college course that offers you the ability to enhance your overall understanding of academic

achievement is priceless. Having instructions and a college coordinator who not only teach, but also encourage inmates to achieve academics is what we need to continue.

My approach to academics is with a positive attitude that whatever class I am enrolled in I will successfully complete. I never met a person who knew everything and don't think I ever will. However the free exchange of ideas is what learning is all about. I hope that the idea that resulted in the decision to eliminate the computer related classes was

not done under the impression that inmates would be better off just learning how to do work that requires manual labor.

I am honored to have been given the opportunity to attend Computer Technology and Business Management classes that Lakeland College provided for inmates at Western Correctional Center. I thank both my instructors Mr. Garwood and Mr. Frillman for teaching me the fundamentals of computers and business management. I also would like to thank Ms. Billingsly and Lakeland College for giving me a chance to further my education beyond the

high school level. In closing I hope that state representatives, journalists, Lakeland College representatives and our family and friends are able to bring attention to this matter. To all those who've made this unfortunate decision who are themselves computer literate I have one question: Why shouldn't inmates be afforded the ability to learn about computers during the process of rehabilitation?

Sincerely,
A ■

F.I.S.T. Making a Difference

By Walter Woosley



In Waukegan, Illinois, there is a perfect storm that has manifested right across the street from the Lake County Jail. Former Inmates Striving Together (F.I.S.T.) is the heart of that storm. F.I.S.T. is a faith-based organization that is comprised of former inmates to help recently released inmates. F.I.S.T. offers assistance in any way possible. They offer some programs but also act as a lifeline to other support networks with resources that they don't provide.

F.I.S.T. has gained the approval of the mayor, city council, sheriff, and many people in the area, yet still flourishes without the assistance of governmental financial aid. It is not that F.I.S.T. couldn't get aide: they don't want it, with the pride preferring to manage on their own donations and fundraisers. They have contracts with the city to maintain vacant lots and have completed several projects for local churches. Not all projects are paid allowing inmates to complete their required community service hours. F.I.S.T.

is currently raffling off a 2000 Ford Eddie Bauer Series Expedition that they received on donation.

They help by bringing coats and clothes to inmates who are released in the winter. They also receive calls from the jail letting them know when an inmate is released. F.I.S.T. has managed to keep a closet with coats on hand at the jail specifically for this. The coats were received from donations or purchased from local thrift stores.

F.I.S.T. will even "Give'em a Ride Home," a program set up to give inmates released a ride home. F.I.S.T. has coordinated for inmates to get a train ticket home as far as Texas and Florida, when driving is not practical. The phone number to F.I.S.T. is listed on a plaque above the phone in the jail. The organization is getting a cell phone to allow twenty-four-hour assistance with an on-call driver available.

Questions – (Continued)

United States. Though IDOC's official statement has been that they provide an alternative diet for inmates with these allergies can you confirm this? If so what is the alternative? What process must an inmate go through to prove that he has health problems due to the soy diet?
We cannot comment on pending litigation.

11.) Almost everyone agrees that more programs are needed: Programs to prepare those re-entering society and programs for long term prisoners so they are more than just warehoused and as a probable incentive to good behavior. Costs are almost always sighted as an obstacle. As representatives from a state teaching university, who can we speak with to try and implement some free volunteer programs? What can be done to hasten this process? Safety is often the other concern sighted, yet aren't the majority of inmates in for non-violent offenses? Don't most inmates strive to obtain training and perhaps use it for employment both inside and out?
IDOC operates under union staffing vs. volunteer constraints and we continue to work to provide more programming for inmates while adhering to union

There is a lot to be said about the pride and faith of this organization. President Joe Schmitt and the staff at F.I.S.T. are all unpaid and receive no salary for their contributions to the community, although they could not help the approximately 700-800 people each month without the support and cooperation of the local community. This organization is just what the inmate community needs, truly breaking the chains of recidivism. ■

contract rules and stipulations. A little more than half the prison population is incarcerated with non-violent offenses, and the Department makes every effort with available resources to provide some type of effective program service prior to release to the community.

14.) What is your response to the article that sighted 1.5 million dollars were paid out to workman's compensation claims at Menard? Is that being rectified?
Workers Comp Claims are handled by CMS and the Worker Comp Commission. Therefore, although the Department has been in communication with these agencies regarding these cases, we have no authority to resolve these cases.

15.) We are hearing about this a Strategic Plan. Can you briefly explain the plan? When will a copy be made available?

We will be presenting to the Administration next week; public disclosure will follow the Governor's Office review and approval.

While we thank Director Taylor for taking the time to meet with us, we feel there are still many questions and issues that need clarification. Please give us your comments and opinions on what information, if any, you gained from this interview and what specifically needs further explanation. ■

No One's Paying... - (Cont.)

guarantees their return to the Department of Corrections, to be used as commodities, warehoused like cattle. They are incarcerated for the purpose of financial gain, to line the inner pockets of the bureaucracy and employees of the state who are sending their children off to the best Ivy League schools across the country while our youth suffer. This constitutes modern day slavery. I say this as an inmate who knows the truth inside the walls, because I live it every day. ■

And Justice For All? Charlie DiMuzio & Adam Shacter



Former Chicago Police Lt. Jon Burge was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Joan Lefkow to four and a half years in prison on January 20. This was the close of a two-day sentencing hearing and a case that goes back to the 1970's when Burge was first suspected of torturing suspects to force confessions. When handing down the sentence Judge Lefkow stated, "You denied any knowledge of torture. ... Unfortunately for you, the jury did not believe you, and I must agree that I did not either."

Reactions from onlookers and courtroom members varied. Mark A. Clements, an alleged torture victim of Burge, stood in front of the press with hands shaking and tears in his eyes. "This is a smack in the face once again to the African-American community... This is a complete injustice. These people stole my [bleep] life! I hate to tell you the truth. I sat in a prison cell, and prayed for this

day! . . . I was sixteen years old! This is America! Sixteen years old! What are we going to do about other people sitting in those prisons?" When asked how he felt about the verdict, Clements stated, "I'm relieved that finally at least one of these people is now going to finally feel the pain. My daughter is twenty-nine years old. I missed all of those years with my daughter, sitting in them prison cells for a crime I did not commit. I do not feel sorry for Jon Burge. That's all I have to say."

The defense was clearly upset with the sentence. Asking for only 18 months behind bars, defense attorneys expressed concerns with the court's decision. One of Burge's attorneys, Richard Beuke, believes this trial sent a bad message to the public. "I'm concerned that this type of a sentence, what happened today, may cause lawyers to think that it's open season on suing the police," Beuke said.

Prosecutors and several other legal professionals believe some good has finally been done "Justice should have come sooner," said U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald. "But justice delayed isn't justice completely denied." In fact, Judge Lefkow issued a sentence longer than that stipulated by law for the crimes of perjury and obstruction.

However, a question still remains as to why nothing was done sooner? Chicago's current Mayor, Richard M. Daley, was Cook County State's Attorney at the time the previous allegations were taking place. In 1982 a doctor reviewing injuries of a suspect in Burge's custody wrote a letter to then police superintendent Richard Brzezczek, indicating suspicion the suspect was abused in police custody. The letter did reach the desk of Daley who said the letter reached his office "after the fact" and there was nothing he could do.

Daley stated, "We did everything possible in that time. After you look back you could change a lot of things." He added, "I regret a lot of things in my life, just not that." Even though those who held high ranking positions within the police department and the states attorney's office were aware of allegations of torture, an investigation was not launched until nearly 30 years later. At that time the statute of limitations to criminally charge an individual with those abuses had run out.

Perhaps the most controversial part of this story occurred only recently. On January 27, the Police Board voted to allow Burge to continue to receive his \$3000 a month pension. Despite a stipulation indicating that no pensions are to be given to anyone "convicted of any felony relating to or arising out of or in connection with service," the board remained one vote shy of the five (out of 8) needed to revoke Burge's pension.

While many members of the public have expressed their displeasure with this decision, one in particular is taking action. Civil Rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson announced his plans to file a lawsuit in order to prevent Burge from receiving his pension (according to CBS).

While no progress has been reported on that lawsuit, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan filed one of her own Monday, Feb. 7, also with the intention of preventing Jon Burge from receiving his pension. Madigan's suit claims that the Policemen's Annuity and Benefit

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