

# Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

---

Vol. 25, No. 2      P.O. Box 1911, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1911      February 2000

---

## HEPATITIS C:

### GIVE YOUR LOVE A HEALTHY LIVER

What is hepatitis? According to Dorland's Medical Dictionary, it is inflammation of the liver. What is inflammation? Again, according to Dorland's, it is a "localized protective response elicited by injury or destruction of tissues, which serves to destroy, dilute or wall off both the injurious agent and the injured tissue."

The liver is essential to life. It reconstructs and packages proteins and carbohydrates, stores sugars and vitamins, breaks down fat and frees up essential vitamins stored in fat. The liver

also filters medicines, alcohol, street drugs, and waste products. It makes important proteins such as clotting factors and enzymes.

In reading literature about Hepatitis C, one of the disturbing things is the contradictions and unsubstantiated claims among authorities. Another is the admission that much is unknown and the appearance of a complete certainty regarding what should be done. We must remember that early medical takes on health problems by "experts" often turn out to be wrong, either in fundamental anal-

(continued on next page)

### **WE STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH ALL THOSE CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN FEBRUARY**

We recognize the \$8 million settlement for Attica prisoners while remembering the 43 people killed and knowing that it is 25 years late. This was a crucial prison uprising and is the biggest settlement in a prisoners' rights case to date.

**FORWARD TO THE STRUGGLES AND VICTORIES OF 2000!**



## HEPATITIS C cont.

ysis or in specific tactical actions.

Given that there is no vaccine for Hepatitis C and that treatment options are few, of limited value, expensive, and often debilitating, a clear choice is prevention, which comes down to avoidance of risky behaviors. And like so much other health behavior information, what is good for avoiding one health problem has other important advantages: such behavior can help avoid other possible health problems and it does not harm us.

One problem with this, however, is that it might not fit in with our way of life or with our circumstances. What we have to offer such situations is to urge reconsideration, acknowledgement of available information, thoughtfulness for others, and over-all harm reduction. This is the sort of stuff that is easy to say and hard to do, especially in restrictive and brutal circumstances.

One source says that Hepatitis C is more common in males, at lower income levels, and among Hispanics. If this is true, it is important for these prisoners to know it.

The symptoms of Hepatitis C are like the symptoms of a lot of other diseases and many people with it do not have any symptoms. Those that do often feel like they have the flu; feeling enormously tired is frequently mentioned.

So, how do you get Hepatitis C? It is spread through blood and blood products: This commonly happens through sharing needles, sharing personal grooming items, sharing a cocaine straw, unprotected sex with multiple partners, and receiving blood donations especially before 1992. Know such actions are dangerous. Yes, it can happen to you.

It is important to remember that Hepatitis C is serious for some, but not for others. Common current medical information now states that most of those who get it carry the virus for the rest of their lives (75-85%). Most of those who have it, have some liver damage, but many do not feel sick from the disease. Some may develop cirrhosis (20%) and fewer (5%), liver cancer. The time between initial infection and the beginning of such endangering diseases can be 20 to 40 years. Yet Hepatitis C was not identified until 1988; it is now just 12 years later. Look at these numbers again -- what are the experts basing their calculations on?

As to treatments, interferon alone is said to successfully eradicate the virus 15-20% of the time. Since 1998, combination therapy of interferon and ribavirin for 12 months has resulted in its elimination 40% of the time. These figures are not based on any long-term studies, which are necessary for them to be accurate.

(continued on next page)



## HEPATITIS C cont.

If you believe you have Hepatitis C or are at risk for it, what can you do to help yourself? Do things that will slow it down. One of the most important is: Do not drink alcohol. Currently, there is no known amount of alcohol consumption proven to be safe. So, "Drink to me only with thine eyes."

### Resources

American Liver Foundation  
1425 Pompton Avenue  
Cedar Grove NJ 07009-1000

Centers for Disease Control  
Hepatitis Branch, Mailstop G37  
Atlanta GA 30333  
Hepatitis Hotline: 1-888-443-7232

Hepatitis Foundation Internat'l  
30 Sunrise Terrace  
Cedar Grove NJ 07009  
1-800-891-0707

National Institutes of Health  
NIDDC  
2 Information Way  
Bethesda MD 20892-3570

Southland Prison New  
PMB-339  
955 Massachusetts Ave  
Cambridge MA 02139



## VOICES IN SOLIDARITY

### **New Mexicans for Compassionate Use**

To save the Lynn Pierson Act for the Medicinal Use of Marijuana and support legal growing of hemp in New Mexico, contact Libbie Palmer, **NM for Compassionate Use**, c/o 140 Washington SE, Albuquerque NM 87108, (505) 268-2400.

### **Thresholds of the state of Delaware, inc.**

Started in 1980 at the Delaware Correctional Center in Smyrna, now also at Gander Hill and the Women's Correctional Institution, **Thresholds** was begun by a former prisoner to help people in prison take control of their lives. **Thresholds** is a program in which decision-making skills are taught in a ten week course by trained volunteers. PO Box 1552, Hockessin DE 19707, (302) 234-2406.

### **eTc Campaign Update**

CURE and the Michigan Criminal Justice Program of the AFSC are announcing their national campaign to address the high cost of prisoner-initiated telephone calls. Please send us the name and address right away of anyone who has not received this mailing but is interested in participating. You will receive a packet, probably in early March, which will include an instruction brochure and campaign materials designed to be mailed on to policy makers. MI-CURE, eTc Campaign, PO Box 2736, Kalamazoo MI 49003-2736.





# VOICES FROM INSIDE

## **THRIVING BUSINESSES**

Pontiac IL November 25, 1999

...Who are the major stockholders in the lock'em up business? General Electric, Bristol Myers, AT&T, Fruit of the Loom, and many other conglomerates...It's us against the economic powers that be...

## **TREATMENT ACCESSIBILITY**

Beaumont TX December 5, 1999

If you are a TX inmate and have the Hepatitis C virus (HCV), and are not receiving treatment for it: I have drafted a legal document for the Directors of TDCJ Health Services and several media affiliates and others. to start drawing attention to this. Notify me of your wish to be added to the list supporting this document by sending your name and TDC no.: Chandler Wendless Jr, 607007, 3060 FM 3514, Beaumont TX 77705.

## **NO MONEY, NO FOOD, NO CLOTHES**

Beeville TX December 21, 1999

...I'm trying to put together a 1983 Civil Rights action to fight back: they tell me that the TDCJ is not giving any money to "illegals" any more on release. People from the United States are getting \$50 at the walls and \$50 at the parole board and we get deported back to Mexico without any money - no food, no clothes, nothing. Just think: a lot of us have been in the United States for 10 and 15 and 30 years. We do not know anybody in Mexico. Think without any money how hard it will be!

## **AVAILABLE CELLS**

Lovelady TX January 2, 2000

Prisoners after months and years of seg, hearing the constant screaming "cell warriors," try to climb fences to get to other prisoners. At the first sign of any potential cage rattling, they fire CS gas. It fills the wings, choking everyone in the blocks, and they have no escape from it. The guards run get their gas masks and laugh at everyone. One prisoner can go rattle his cage and get 200 gassed...

The Coalition for Prisoners' Rights Newsletter is published monthly by the Prison Project of Santa Fe, Inc., P.O. Box 1911, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1911. Subscription rates are: free to prisoners, their family members, and ex-prisoners who request it themselves; \$12/year for other individuals; \$25/year for government agencies and for-profit institutions. Please do not send names of other people; order only for yourself. We appreciate those who help us by sharing their newsletter and by sending stamps.



Mailing list additions and address changes should go into effect within two months from their post-marked date. We don't have the resources to acknowledge these requests by letter. Requests for referrals and other correspondence will be answered within four to six weeks. Letters intended for publication must say "Do Print."

The Coalition makes information available on resources and services for prisoners. We strongly urge that readers keep copies of all papers, especially legal papers, sent to those offering assistance, and be careful about sending money. **In most cases we do not have direct experience with the quality or reliability of the services provided by the groups mentioned.**

---

### **NO SILVER PLATTER**

South Walpole MA      January 8, 2000

The right to vote while incarcerated was not handed to us in Massachusetts on a silver platter. It was won through the efforts of a talented jailhouse lawyer named Richard Cepulonis, in Cepulonis et al. v. Fair, Commissioner of the MA DOC, around 1985. I do not have the citation. MA Correctional Legal Services, 8 Winter St, Boston MA 02108 could help locate it, whether it was litigated in Federal or MA court.

### **OUT OF RETIREMENT**

Pikeville Tn      January 10, 2000

...After nearly 40 years of Tennessee **not** putting anyone to death, old sparky's about to come out of retirement March 23, 2000...Start making phone calls to Don Sunquist, governor. Let's stand together and let this man know that TN does not want to become a "killing state"!

### **EXPLOIT AND DEVOUR**

Huntsville TX      January 10, 2000

...Young Black males are profoundly victimized by commercial media and industries that project material wealth as an attainable goal. This often results in criminal behavior (survival!) and violence...People commit crimes because we associate ourselves with individualism, rather than with social solidarity. Capitalism must have a victim: a poor class of people - under tyranny and oppression...

### **MEDICAL FEES**

Florence AZ      January 12, 2000

Souch v Howard, CV 97-1157-PHX-HRH, US District Court. On December 15, 1999 ruled that the Arizona medical fee statute cannot be applied to me since my offense had been committed prior to April 26, 1994. Gerald C. Souch, 37346, PO Box 3200, Florence AZ 85232-3200.

### **EAT YOUR VEGETABLES**

Amarillo TX      January 12, 2000

...Over 200 Death Row prisoners are conducting a hunger strike in protest of some new and punitive conditions...The TX prison system has long held the belief that the stick works better than the carrot. I would say that nowadays the carrots are limited to those boiled and served in the chow hall.



## IN MEMORIAM

Ninety-eight people were executed by state governments in the U.S. in 1999. By the end of 1999, 598 people had been executed since the U.S. moratorium on state murders ended in 1976.

1/5	John Glenn Moody	TX	3/10	Roy Michael Roberts	MO
1/7	John Walter Castro	OK	3/17	Andrew Kokoraleis	IL
1/8	Ronald Howard	SC	3/25	Charles Rector	TX
1/8	Dobie Gillis Williams	LA	3/25	David Lee Fisher	VA
1/13	Kelvin Malone	MO	3/26	James Rich	NC
1/13	Jess James Gillis	AZ	3/3	Robert Excell White	TX
1/13	Troy Farris	TX	4/6	Alvaro Calambro	NV
1/20	Mark Arlo Sheppard	VA	4/12	Marion Albert Pruett	AR
1/25	Joseph Ernest Atkins	SC	4/13	Carl Hamilton Chichester	VA
1/27	Martin Vega	TX	4/14	Roy Ramsey Jr.	MO
2/3	Darick Gerlaugh	AZ	4/20	Arthur Ray Jenkins III	VA
2/4	Sean Sellers	OK	4/23	David J. Lawrie	DE
2/4	Tony Leslie Fry	VA	4/28	Ralph E. Davis	MO
2/9	Jaturun Siripongs	CA	4/28	Aaron Foust	TX
2/10	Jorge Cordova	TX	4/28	Eric Christopher Payne	VA
2/11	Danny Lee Barber	TX	4/29	Ronald Dale Yeatts	VA
2/16	Andrew Cantu	TX	5/4	Manuel Babbitt	CA
2/16	Johnny Michael Cox	AR	5/4	Jose de la Cruz	TX
2/19	Wilford Berry	OH	5/5	Robert Wayne Vickers	AZ
2/24	James Rodden	MO	5/5	Clydell Coleman	TX
2/24	Norman Green	TX	5/25	Edward Lee Harper	KY
2/24	Karl LaGrand	AZ	5/26	Jessie Wise	MO
3/3	Walter LaGrand	AZ	6/1	William Hamilton Little	TX
3/9	George A. Quesinberry Jr.	VA	6/3	Scotty Lee Moore	OK

(continued on next page)

## A GRIM TREND

This is being written during the holiday. Not much holly, but plenty of daze. Things were bad enough but then along comes the Grim Reaper, grinning like the Grinch. "Been quite a year," he says, "Business has been booming. I've got thirty-eight states in the U.S. with death penalty statutes, not to mention the federal government and U.S. military.

Twenty states killed ninety-eight people this year - a third more people killed this year than last. Yes, a banner year. Why, this is my busiest year in the U.S. since the 1940s."

I couldn't bring myself to share in his enthusiasm. But despite my silence and disapproving look, he went on.

(continued on next page)



## IN MEMORIAM cont.

6/16	Bruce Kilgore	MO	9/21	Richard Wayne Smith	TX
6/17	Michael Poland	AZ	9/24	Willie Sullivan	DE
6/17	Joseph Stanley Faulder	TX	9/24	Harvey Lee Green	NC
6/18	Brian Baldwin	AL	10/12	Alvin Crane	TX
6/30	Robert Walls	MO	10/14	Jerry McFadden	TX
7/1	Charles Tuttle	TX	10/15	Joseph Parsons	UT
7/6	Gary Heidnik	PA	10/19	Jason Joseph	VA
7/7	Tyrone Fuller	TX	10/21	Arthur Boyd	NC
7/8	Norman Lee Newsted	OK	10/27	Ignacio Ortiz	AZ
7/8	Allen Lee Davis	FL	10/28	Domingo Cantu	TX
7/21	Thomas Strickler	VA	11/9	Thomas Lee Royal, Jr.	VA
8/4	Ricky Blackmon	TX	11/12	Leroy Joseph Drayton	SC
8/5	Charles Boyd	TX	11/16	Desmond Jennings	TX
8/6	Victor Kennedy	AL	11/17	John Lamb	TX
8/10	Kenneth Dwayne Dunn	TX	11/18	Jose Gutierrez	TX
8/11	James Otto Earhart	TX	11/19	David Junior Brown	NC
8/17	Marlon Williams	VA	12/2	Cornel Cooks	OK
8/18	Joseph Trevino	TX	12/3	David Rocheville	SC
9/1	David Leisure	MO	12/8	David Martin Long	TX
9/1	Raymond Jones	TX	12/9	Bobby Lynn Ross	OK
9/8	Mark Gardner	AR	12/9	D.H. Fleenor	IN
9/8	Alan Willett	AR	12/9	James Beathard	TX
9/10	Willis Barnes	TX	12/9	Andre Graham	VA
9/14	William Davis	TX	12/14	Robert Atworth	TX
9/16	Everett Lee Mueller	VA	12/15	Sammie Felder	TX

*Thirty-two or 33% of those killed were African-American.*

## GRIM cont.

"Now take Texas. There is one industrious state when it comes to my business. Texas killed 35 people in 1999. The next closest was Virginia which killed 14 people."

"Most of my work was done by lethal injection but Florida's electric chair got a lot of press. Of course, five states did each commute a death sentence, which is more than any year since 1991 when

there were 10 commutations. But during the 1990s, 478 people were executed out of a total of 598 since y'all reinstated the death penalty in 1976. So, you see what I mean? The trend is in my favor. Death is a growth industry for these states."

Despite my daze, I saw it clear enough even as I wiped away the tears.



# Crime of the Month

## aka Crimetoppers

A recent decision in a federal lawsuit will result in the continued recycling of thousands of tons of radioactive metal for use in household products. Because of a loophole in the Superfund cleanup law, a federal judge said she could not order the Department of Energy (DOE) to stop the practice of recycling nuclear materials and using them in everyday products.

Owners of weapons facilities and deactivated power plants can save money on clean-up costs and even profit by selling contaminated materials to scrap dealers

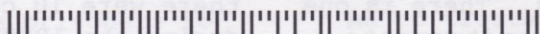
and steel companies, where it is mixed with clean metal for the production of household items.

In spite of studies illustrating the dangers of exposure to radiation for increasing the risks of cancer, leukemia, genetic defects, and reduced immunity, there are no apparent plans even to require labeling of products made from recycled radioactive materials. There seems to be no end to the dangers our government is willing to expose us to for the sake of corporate profits. That is our Crime of the Month.



SANTA FE NM 87501-2341  
1818 PASEO DE LA CONQUISTA  
CAROL L. COUCH

6



02/00

Address  
Service  
Requested

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Santa Fe, NM  
Permit No. 122

Coalition for Prisoners' Rights/  
Prison Project of Santa Fe  
Post Office Box 1911  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-1911