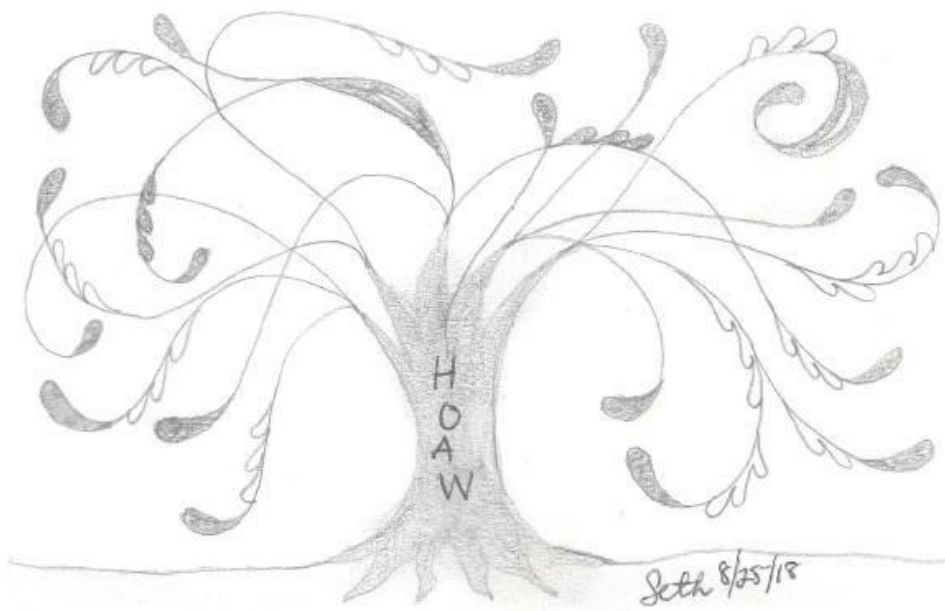


Hearts on a Wire

Issue # 24— Winter 2019



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♥ support incarcerated and detained trans and gender variant people ♥
♥ build community through bars ♥
♥ organize for justice ♥

We are Pennsylvania-based trans and gender variant people, and allies, building a movement for gender self-determination, racial and economic justice, and an end to the policing and imprisoning of our communities.

We meet in Philly at William Way Center
1315 Spruce Street

Mondays at 5:30pm

Dear Beloved Community:

We are pleased to share Issue 24 of our newsletter with you!!

To follow up on the changes to the PA DOC Mail system: The mailing of the issue 23 seems to have gotten through to most of the 200+ PA addresses on our inside list. It seems that at least 2 people who were never on our mailing list were sent the newsletter by Smart Communications. This seems like the kind of mistake we can expect to occur when adding a third party and extra administrative step to any process. We hope those who received the

newsletter in error learned something through their unexpected glimpse into our community.

We have been involved in ongoing efforts to roll back the isolating and dehumanizing changes to PA DOC's mail and publications policies. Efforts were successful at reversing the publication policy with regard to books, so this issue contains information about books to prisons programs on Page 4.

In loving solidarity,

Hearts on a Wire
Outside Collective

STOP, YOUR BABY IS CRYING

Twanna

I had begun to ponder on how in life when we care for a baby and that baby begins to cry we instinctually run to check the baby's needs. Perhaps their diaper is soiled and needs changing. Or maybe they're hungry and need feeding. Could it be a fever brought on by irritated and itchy gums. Lord don't let it be anything more. We lovingly pat that baby on the back until we hear the satisfying relief of the baby's release of gases by way of a burp. We'll bathe them and delight in being ever so conscious of the soft spot in their head. That spot that indicates how incomplete their growth is and realizing our duty of care in this delicate and vulnerable time in their life. We may even sign to lull them to sleep, knowing that certainly a time will come again not too far away that sweet baby will wake again with a rousing wail. Never will the thought enter our mind to go to that baby and spank them for their cries. Instead we're right back to inspecting, feeding, patting and soothing. Then the thought enters my mind when I recall the sad eyes of my loved one that was clearly in need. Even as teens and adults our babies cry out to us. Have I ever beaten you when you were down? Have I ever neglected you when you needed me close? Did I shut down when you needed to hear my voice? Did I turn from you when you needed me most? Where did we lose our sense of compassion and care? When in our existence had life turned such a change in us? Have we become blind and deaf as a result of our brutal society that we no longer recognize our baby's cries? Or is it that our own cries have fallen so hard on deaf ears that we've become preoccupied with stitching our very own wounds back together? These are just my thoughts and questions but one thing's for certain, your baby is crying. Hurry before it is too late.

THE COMPETITION

Prissy Morgan

*Teammates against each other is that considered a race or simply a team
who is already on the losing side?*

We the LGBTQs were made differently for obvious reasons. I am amused at the misconception within our community. I've heard on many occasions "she's not real she don't have work done" or "my hair's longer, my butt's bigger, I twist harder, I'm on 'mones and she's not, she's a boy I'm trans." I've witnessed girls assume because the boys are on their heels this makes them greater than the next. This nonsense needs to stop. There is no need to compete. We all have different flavors. You may offer a quality that I don't and vice versa. That is what is called being unique. This mess stunts our growth. We need to change, because we are all on the same team fighting for equality but we're so busy trying to outshine each other. The reality check is we are a minority, oppressed, cheated, discriminated against. It makes no difference our cup size or how caked up we are. You know why the rainbow represents us? Because of it's representation of uniqueness. Different colors yet when together it's a beautiful masterpiece. Let's celebrate each other's diversities and appreciate the commonalities. The world wants us to continue to accept the inner dysfunctions because that's how they view us. We are a team and the only way we can win this is if we stop running against ourselves

A LIQUID SELF

Violet Swann

I want my identity to be firm
A solid steadfast core that I can know
An axis on which I can safely turn
An earthly ground where I may reap & sow

I only yearn to begin knowing me
But the more I learn the more that I see
I must dive of the continental shelf
Of my amorphous flowing liquid self

My heart's desires lie unrecognizable
My secret depths dark & unknowable
The patterns changing before my own eyes
Facts mixed with fiction
& truth mixed with lies

While I seek within the depths of this sea
I am yet afraid of who I may be

MANY TIMES IN MY LIFE

Juicy Queen Bee

Many Times in my Life I had battle to fight
Trials to Win couldn't give up
Had to keep going to make it through
Many times in my life I heard people
Talking about me Couldn't amount to me
Cause the courage

I have is stronger than a giant
A beast trying to attack me
Many times in my life I mess up

Made mistakes
Had to start all over again
Fall to the ground had to get back up
And many times in my life had ups and downs
But made it through
Stronger than ever

THE ROSE THAT GREW FROM CONCRETE...

Blue Diamond

did you hear about the Rose that grew
from a crack in the concrete
proving nature's law is wrong it learned to walk
without having feet
funny it seems, but by keeping its
dreams, it learned 2 breathe fresh air
long live the rose that grew
from concrete when no one else ever cared

THINKING ABOUT SILICONE?

Adrian Lowe, with substantial input from Miss Major Griffin-Gracy
(reprinted from *Hearts on a Wire Newsletter 3—Summer 2011*)

The practice of getting injected with loose silicone [“sil”] is common in many trans communities, especially among Black and Latina trans women on the East Coast. The method was developed in South Asia in the 1950s. Sex workers could make more money if their bodies appealed to the taste of American GIs for large breasts. For many trans women coming home after an extended prison stay, “getting body” is understandably high on the priority list of things to obtain in reentry.

How it works

Silicone is a thick sticky liquid that becomes a solid. You might think that the silicone is what gives a person body, but actually the silicone is a foreign substance that the body reacts to by trying to isolate it with scar tissue. So what actually gives body is scar tissue forming around little bubbles of silicone.

Questions to ask a provider:

- Does the practitioner use new syringes?
- Does the practitioner use medical grade silicone?
- How was the practitioner trained?
- How long has this provider been in practice?
- Has the practitioner ever had a patient with serious complications?

If you decide to get sil injections:

- Choose a provider who has a good reputation in your community, whose work you have seen.
- Pay attention to how long ago the work was done – does it still look good a year later? 2 years? 5 years? 10 years? 20 years?
- Choose someone who has never had a client die.
- Choose someone whose work you have seen on other people.

Before-care

Because silicone injections change your shape and stretch your skin, it is important to have your skin be as moisturized and pliable as possible.

- Moisturize the area where you are going to get work done with elasticin lotion, cocoa butter, vitamin e or aloe.
- Drinking lots of water increases skin health and elasticity.

Aftercare

Generally, do things which promote healing and health. Eat well. Drink liquids. Get enough rest. Avoid stress. And so on.

- Many practitioners recommend taking warm baths and massaging the affected areas to keep the silicone from clumping together while scar tissue is forming
- For at least the first week, you need to keep the area where the silicone was injected relatively still. For this reason it is recommended that you sleep in garments that hold shape and stay off the work (if you had work done on your rear, sleep on your front) There should be enough scar tissue after 2 weeks to hold sil in place.
- Don't get work done in more than one area at a time.

Long term considerations

- If you inject hormones, you should not inject them into an area where you have had silicone injections. Hormones need to go into muscle, not scar tissue, to be effective.
- Mammograms can't see through silicone, so special care is required to detect breast cancer.

Things to consider:

Regulation

Silicone injection is not legal – therefore it is unregulated.

That means there is no state control over the qualifications of the practitioner, the quality of the work, the grade of the silicone, or the sanitary conditions.

Cost, Accessibility, Speed

Silicone injections are cheap compared to collagen injections and cosmetic surgery. In some communities sil is more accessible than other cosmetic procedures because there are fewer gate-keeping steps (like needing a therapist to sign off before surgery). Additionally, the results from loose silicone injections are immediate, giving people the body/face they want much quicker than hormones.

Risks

A few years ago In Philadelphia there was a lot of media attention because a young woman died after getting loose silicone injections in her butt. It is unclear whether she was injected with medical grade silicone. Horror stories circulate about providers injecting people with industrial grade silicone from a hardware or auto parts store. Because it is an underground industry, it is up to the consumer to make sure that what is being used in medical grade silicone.

Even medical grade silicone can be dangerous. Sil sometimes causes an allergic reaction that can be fatal.

There may be long term effects. No one has studied the long term effects of

loose sil. There have been studies of the effects of silicone breast implants leaking or bursting, which introduces loose silicone into the body. On the one hand those studies didn't find any long term effects. On the other hand the implants and loose sil were removed as soon as they were discovered, so it doesn't really give good information about the long term effects of sil that has been left in the body.

This is an injection with a massive needle. All the usual risks associated with injections apply here – risk of bacterial infections, and if needles are reused, risk of transmission of viruses like HIV and Hepatitis C.

Again, it is up to the consumer to make sure the syringes are brand new.

Seek immediate medical attention at the first sign of itchiness, dizziness, or difficulty breathing. This could be a symptom of a potentially fatal allergic reaction.

Recommended: Do a test shot and wait a few weeks to make sure you are not allergic.

unlike the needles used for drugs or hormones, there is no way to effectively clean a needle that has been used for silicone

RIP MISS KEMA

Hearts on a Wire Outside Collective

DEEP END

Violet Swann

Hearts on a Wire is sad to report the death of Kema Kirkland on December 8, 2018.

Miss Kema had been part of the Hearts Community at SCI Pittsburgh, SCI Chester and a few other facilities.

On the outside, she was the Philadelphia co-founder of the House of Movado and East Coast Regional Mother.

This was a devastating loss and our deepest condolences go out to her ballroom family who feel her sudden absence so keenly.



I've never hated me
But I haven't been quite
What I wanted to be
And now it seems I might
Be becoming that self
I've idolized so much
Of course I've had some help
Often the slightest touch
Pushing to the deep end
That is so frightening
But once you are within,
Is so enlightening

BOOKS TO PRISON PROGRAMS

We received several requests from inside members of the Hearts on a Wire community regarding books to prisoner resources.

Books Through Bars
4722 Baltimore Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19143

Book'Em – Pittsburgh PO
Box 71357
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Books Through Bars provides small packages of free books to individuals incarcerated in the Mid-Atlantic region: Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, New York, Maryland, and Virginia.

Book 'Em sends free educational books and quality reading material to prisoners and prison libraries in Pennsylvania.

Books For Prisoners at UCSD sends socially conscious reading materials for prisoners nationwide.

An incarcerated individual can send a letter that includes their **name, prisoner ID number, full address,**

Books For Prisoners at UCSD
w/Groundwork Bookstore
0323 Student Center
La Jolla, CA 92037

any restrictions on incoming books, and types of books wanted.

Make your request by subject rather than specific title or author, and provide several areas of interest if possible. For example, African-American history, basic math, carpentry, how to draw.

Please be patient. These programs get many requests so it may take a while to receive the books.



RESPONSE TO ANONYMOUS @ CAMBRIDGE SPRINGS

Monica @ SCI Rockview

In Issue 23, Anonymous @ Cambridge Springs wrote about being forced to live on a mental health unit indefinitely.

I've been in SCI-ROC for 14 years, mostly on the SNU or RTU so I've seen people in your sort of situation here. They have to vote you off these units so start with a psychologist or counselor you can convince you'd be better off in General Population and use that to influence the rest of the Staff. Smiles work better than screams on staff. Be patient.

Staff also respond to requests for everyone to be involved. Write the whole Unit team, plus doctors and Administration. Put "copies sent to" and list them all on each one so none can say that didn't know about your problem.

An influential person when dealing with psych blocks, RTUs, STRUs MHUs is Ms. Lynn Patrone in Mechanicsburg. She is the Mental Health Advocate for the PA DOC.

If you have people on the outside who will do it, have them call our counselor or email the SCI and Mechanicsburg. The more people inside and outside who know about your problem, conditions, health-care, psych-abuse, what ever the better. Be honest and don't lie to them, it can come back to bite you.

Hope this helps you and others with psych-unit problems.

EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS FROM THE MAIL

Letters and Love XXXXO

Dear Hearts on a Wire:

It is my hope that next time I write to hearts on a wire I am no longer incarcerated and am able to write freely. Shout out to all my brothers and sisters living with intention. Walk to the edge. Listen Hard. Practice wellness. Play with abandon. Laugh. Choose with no regret. Continue to learn. Live as if this is all there is. My hearts feels your incarcerated pain. To the one I love forever is my husband Aaron I will see you soon. Shout out to my real sisters Vanessa and Gemini, to my best friend Sion, and to Tonka, Jeff and Jesse and Cardi and J-Lo and all my trans sisters. To Violet Swan just keep fighting and you will get there 'cause I been there I wish I could do more. I am making this shout out Refiki thank you again and to DeDe, still in my heart.

Peace love and happiness. Stay strong, hope is always near and able to see you through.

~ Mrs. Sparkles Wilson
XO with love XO

HOAW:

What's Up? Listen Y'all It's Crazy Whenever I Got My Face Cut Open I Did My Hole Time & Went Back To Pop. But Them Me & My Lil Homie Got Caught Doing The Do And They Kick Me Out Of The Jail. First & Foremost Shout Out To My Wifey. I Promise To Be Honest, I Promise To Stay True, I Promise To Never Ever Stop Loving You. This Isn't A Goodbye, Just A See You Later. Butta Roc We Still Fam. I Know The Situation With P. Put A Distance Between Us. Indy What's Up, Where You At? Uncle Rico I Should Have Listened To You Now They Got Me All Booked Up. Tell Aunty I Said What's Up. I Touch Down In February, I'll G You When I G You. I'm Gone.

~ Y'all Know Who
@SCI Coal Township

Dear Hears on a Wire ...

I just got done reading Issue 23 and I must say I as touched by all the love everyone was giving to each other. I am a proud member of the LGBTQ community here at Benner and a proud member of the Hearts on a Wire family. I want to give a special shout out to my significant other Octévia. I'm so proud of you for standing tall through these rough times. "We" get through it together. A long shout out to my Bro Chop and the Wifey, Jessie and the Wifey, Hockey Puck, Skiddle Kid, Miley Fletcher, Miss Jossy, and Rampage. I love you all! Each one of you is my rock in your own unique way.

Nothing but love! Peace

~Spade @ SCI Benner

I would like to show love 2 the whole LGBTQ community around the world and in SCI Benner and 2 let everybody know that it's struggle in here so keep y'all's heads up and y'all's smiles bright no matter what and never let anybody steal your joy. Because it's a blessing 2 walk god's green earth so stay strong and positive and always know that the LGBTQ lives matters always and never let anyone tell you different facts!

~Blue Diamond
SCI Benner

To my new family at Hearts on a wire, I love all of you. I'm here for all of you. I want to get to know everyone! I want to give a special shout out to Gypsy in issue 23. I would love to connect somehow.

~T @Central Prison, Raleigh, NC

It has been amazing receiving these newsletters and hearing each king and queen's story. I have great news! I Max out on December 6! want to give some shout outs to my family at Coal Township. Penny and Nate, the mom and dad of us all. I wish you the best and hope your dreams come true. Shadow, Drew, Rico, Moose, Ms. Peaches, Biju, Pitbull, Ryan, J-J, Scotty, Auntie Erin, Heather, Whitney, and Tessa, Ms. Cheyenne, Dee-Dee, and last but not least Shizzy Grizzly Bear. Keep your head held high and always remember 30 more months and you'll be home safe in my arms again! I'll forever love you. Take care guys and be safe!

~ Ms. Kaleishia Chesney

Hey Everybody. I want to start off by saying I miss every single one of my LGBTQ Brothers and Sisters. I'm doing good here with my husband BR 6 years and plenty more to come, we're taking our relationship to the streets. I got 1 year left. Shoutout to my sis Mariah Lee Smith, Child catch up I'm past you (101) you see them. Frenchie my CO/D maxed out in September I'm right behind you sis (muah). Stay positive family, life is too short for all the Hate!!

Love always,

~Mrs. Badd
AKA SJ @ SCI Forest

Dear HOAW

Hey, wassup to all my divas out there. This is your Chicago girl Maya at SCI Forest. I wanna say I love you Corey, you're my knight in shining armor. Diamond from PGH, I love you girl, you my ace. Masarati I'm glad you found love, Juicyyyyy, hey big booty, I'm a write you soon. Dawn I'm a write you too, sorry it's been a while. And last but not least to all the girls that got a lot a lot of time. Don't stress out and always be who you are. The days may seem long but always count your blessings. Cuz as queens we accomplish so much regardless of what anybody says we are loved and each and every one of us is precious. Just know no matter what, somebody is always there for you and cares for you. Love all ya,

~Maya Toyomi

MORE EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS FROM THE MAIL

OXXOX Letters and Love

Dear Hearts,

I hope everybody done well. French Fry I loved you way back then & I still love you now & I know that I always will. I know I made some mistakes along the way but I'm only human. You live & you learn & when it comes to us if I wasn't sure back then! I'm sure now ma. Indy what's up, I heard you up Smithfield now. Hold ya head I ain't forget about you. Love is love. I touch down in February. B.R. it's crazy how everything that happened between us we still homies. Johns & Johnson we still fam & don't you forget it bro it's all love. Niara I wish things could have been different between us. Tay I heard so much about you & every time I ask you about it you just say you'll always love me SMH yeah I love me too LOL ☐ Miss Prissy I know we don't know each other but I guess I'm a fan (not a groupie LOL) I always notice your articles in the newsletters & if you could stand out on paper I can only wonder what you are like in person.

~Matt Matt

Merry Christmas to all who celebrate. And the King who wears my crown Dink you're a breath of fresh air. I adore you. Twan, Bre, Jessa, E, Juicy, my boo boo Adrian, my boo Special, Nascar, Champ, Chaos, Fox, Slim, Skillz, Key. Love, love, love yous. Merry Christmas

~Prissy Morgan

I FEEL LIKE

Juicy Queen Bee

I feel like
You lie to me
Over and over again
Had me falling in love
Took a while to figure out
You was running game
Had me thinking
My mind was playing
Tricks on me
I feel like
I been played like a fool
Now I know you're the fool
Realize you had something real
Lost out now you're hurting
Wishing you had my love
Feel like if I wanted to
Give up on love
Found somebody that
Love me the way I should be loved

Dear HOAW Family:

I've been in the hole since September 2017. 14 months. I had an ... altercation involving a CO who was homophobic, racist, and harassing me at Coal Township. Good news, it seems that the criminal charges against me got dismissed, so I might be able to get a court order releasing me back to population. Also, my lawsuit is strong. Anyway, Shoutout to my brothers and sisters at Coal. K and Scottie at Frackville. And those I haven't met here at Smithfield.

I've been getting HOAW for 4 years and some of the frequent writers I feel like I know though we never met. Much love & respect to Miss Priss and Juicy Queen Bee. Luv y'all power. Mariah Smith and Miley, y'all always make me laugh. Hope the next community I'm around is full of power and laughs. DeDe @ Forest, congratulations on getting your 'mones. Mariah better be on point. LOL! Thanks to DeDe for the shoutout. I Will keep my head up. Stay true to you shorty. Last but not least Gypsy, stay strong. We as LGBT people are living examples of what it means to be an unstoppable force. It pisses me off knowing so many of my LGBT family have no one to love and protect them.

I love y'all.

With you always,

~Indy

MY MIND TODAY IN SOLITARY 5/11/16

Indy

Dear Hearts Family:

I love to hear the Positive things everyone has to say to one eachother. We need to stay more connected with eachother and don't stray from the positive. This is my first time writing, I want to let my Hearts family know that I really Understand the pain we have to put up with while incarcerated. I hate that we have to deal with people that's not into the lifestyle we live. But we all know the in-the-closet ones be the first to put us down for being who we are and they are too afraid to be them.

I want to give a shoutout to my love SJ, we been sticking it out for almost 6 years now and more to go. Yeah Dink I got the info you shared with my baby girl SJ. I'm not mad at you Bor, Keep ya head up no love lost. Shoutout to my Bro Munchy, much love old head. Shoutout to my youngin Allen and his wifey Mariah stick in there yall. You know your boy about to go home within the next 6 months, this 15 years have been hard. Get at me yall. Much love

~BR @ Forest

PREJUDICE comes from fear and a lack of understanding, as life takes a toll because it's truly demanding
DISCRIMINATION has been around since the beginning of time. We must stand string together in this great divide.
HATE is bred from envy and non-sexual lust. They wish to be us so bad the can't adjust.
OPPRESSION happens because we are all unique and different. We are BOLD & BEAUTIFUL, we must make a difference
HOPE is the potion that keeps us alive, believe to succeed and we will survive
LOVE by itself is potent & pure, the only thing in this world that is certain to cure.
HAPPINESS is a source within our SELF, put your worries and inhibitions away on a shelf
LIFE is what you make is at the end of the day. I choose to live my life OUT... HAPPY & GAY

MORE EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS

Letters and Love XXXO

Wow HOAW I really like this issue (23). I love all the support and encouragement that our community is showing each other. I feel blessed to be able to get love and support. I want to give a shout out to my daughters Katrina, Chanel, and Ty'rel. I love you! Mommy is always here for you. Real recognize Real!! Allen baby... I love you... 6 years is a long time, we got a lot more years to go. Alicia you're a dime that's top of the line. CeCe, how you doing Baby? I hope you're OK – Say something honey! DeDe no matter what we went through we still hold together... stay sucka free. SJ you're my little sis. Always...

Love,

~Mrs. Mariah Smith

LOOKING FOR LOVE

JC

I'm looking for Love
But not yet had found
Whenever I call out
I never hear a sound
I no longer want to be lonely
So I'll be waiting
for you to make yourself known
So you can be my one and only
That's a day I can't wait to come.
Because that's my only wish under
the sun
So whoever reads this
And feel a little buzz
It's you who I'm looking for
This is just me sending you my love.

To my loving LGBTQ family:

I have been through a lot of pain & heartache the past 9 months losing my love over BS that I've done to keep me from him. I cried many days & nights over this. I begged & pleaded for him to come back to me. It hurts to lose your lover. I still love & care about him. I've stopped all my BS to prove my love for him so we can be together again one day. We're taking one day at a time. Love is a feeling of hope and belonging that comes with each hug that you give. It is a job we take care of each day that we live.

Love Forever,

~Pumpkin

To the Queen Ace Girl Nikki T. You know it! Whaazzz up girlie girl? Thinking about you. Stay in school, do your programs! Love you girl! Missing you lots! and Lots!

Skittle Kid - the real man in my life, Miss you, love you Baby Boo-Boo! Congratulations you completed TC. Go Home time. I love you. Love you Ms. DeDe (Smile).

To everybody all over, Love, Happiness, Joy and BIG hugs from Miley

En este ejemplar que acabo de recibir (Issue #23 – Fall 2018) leí algo que escribió Precious (p. 8). A esta gran persona quiero decirle que me pegó en el corazón lo que escribió. Te quiero muchísimo hermanita. Never give up. Sigue con tu frente en alto. Vive un día a la vez. Cuando menos te lo esperes, tu tiempo sera como una neblina que fue y que ya pusó.

~Ovis

Clallam Bay Corrections, Clallam Bay, WA

SINCE YOU BEEN GONE

Matt Matt

Girl I can't lie I don't think I can go on this way
I been missing you I think about you everyday
Girl I'm lost for words I don't know what to say
Since you nee gone the days go so slow
I can't wait 'til the day I get back with you

I still remember the day

When we went our separate ways

4.3.17 when they took you away

It really broke my heart. It hurt me to my soul
'Cuz the day I lost you I lost a part of me too

They done want to see us happy

They don't want to see us together

The rather see us apart but what we got is forever

I promise to be honest I promise to be true

I promise to never ever ever stop loving you

Frenchy I love you

CINDERELLA & CINDERFELLA

Prissy Morgan

royalty at its best

we aim high accepting nothing less

king and queen of the world

my x's wish i was still their girl

may have had him once but i've had him all the time.

sorry girls cinderfella is all me

we walk with the best and do so with ease

we handle us as we please

he & i the classier bonnie & clyde

yes when it gets real we're at each other's side

we both have fans but it's far too late

because we have found our soulmate

he has me religious i thank the lord above

for thinking enough of us to send this love

men tried to holla but i'm no bozo the clown

i love dink too much to dishonor my crown

cinderfella the epitome of fine

girls i'm not fool i know there is a long line

believe me this love won't dissipate

mad because you have no chance so now you hate

however, that's OK we're hateable we understand

but know that nothing will break me and my man

mirror mirror on life's wall

Who's the most fastidious of them all

prissy & dink (nemo) it's y'all because

this love is strong and will never fail

EVEN MORE FROM THE MAIL

OXXOX Letters and Love

WILL I REMAIN HERE

Special

Yes I'll remain a steadfast beacon for my clique
Never running away or ever leaving quick
I look to my girls to remain with me also
Trying to get everything intact before I go
On a journey to see that we
Remain always free
Maybe not from these bars as of yet
But from some of the scrutiny we get
It's as bad as a plague wrapped around our necks
And we have to remain strong trying to keep shit in check
We'll be a force to be reckoned with as time goes by
Holding each other's hands as we take this ride
'Cause to really know us is a blessing in disguise
And underneath of it all you'll see a big surprise
For one our hearts are pure, sharing love throughout
It's one of many things that we are about
Hatred towards our clique is not needed or wanted
Cause we stay to ourselves we truly don't flaunt it
If your down for our crown then roll with it freely
We're only looking for love & not being greedy
Companionship's a thing we look for and seek,
Not for the weary, not for the weak

To my girls Prissy, Nascar, Griff, Dior, and Pearl

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Tosha Gutierrez Vance | Lobita-Blanca
CSP-Sacramento

I'm a woman that was born in the body of a man
This is something that a lot tranny's can't understand.
They glance in their pants and they say "Ewww gross,"
While I take what God gave me, and give her the most!
I'm a Dyke, my name is Tosha, and I'm married to a tranny;
Her name is Delta, my wife, and she truly understands me.
The way we were born is a gift from above,
We are women with the gifts of men... in lesbian love!

First I would like to say hello to my Hearts on a Wire family because I know that I am not the only lost soul that can understand where I am coming from. I find myself asking if god hates me for who I am and the things I have done in life. I don't understand why people hate me so much that they rape me or beat on me and I find myself questioning is this my fault or maybe I could have been better or say I was sorry. I found love and he gave me hope for a better life and all I do is push him away because I feel like I'm not good enough. I have become a nasty person and people are afraid of me because of the way I come off but deep down I am crying out for help. I look at myself in the mirror and I hate myself because all I can see is a person that let people they love treat me like trash. I act like I love myself when I really don't at all. I know that I am far from ugly but I don't feel like it and hate life. I will be up one day and the next I want to die. Now I have to find ways to fix my lost soul so I can walk with my head up and be the best me for myself.

Love,

~Bre <3

Hearts family

Peace, love, and solidarity to all my brothers and sisters! Family my mind is heavy and my soul and spirit is troubled as well as mourning over the loss of not only a great long term friend but a brother as well! Thank you Slim for letting the brothers and sisters know about Gunna! Me and Gunna go back to the days of SCI Dallas. Together we went from not liking each other to becoming good friends! I can't even find words to describe how I feel right now, because that was literally my "Big Bro"! I watched my homie go home from Houtzdale! Just know big bro we love you and you will be sadly and greatly missed! He was one of our own.

Shout out to my homies Marv, Skillz. Aaron what up youngen, Slim, Kev, and Q down Houtzdale. Shout out to ms. special, ms. innocent, ms. sparkle. To ms. miley seleena we were in the old ECP together 1993 did you get my email? Also shout out to the princess of Houtzdale, the finest white chocolate Nikki Thompson, I didn't forget about you lil-sis I got you as soon as I touch you and Miley!

Pounds 4 the kingz and kisses for the queens

~King Chaos

To give an update on my hunger strike, it ended when the jail had a psych eval done after 13 days. Unfortunately, the evaluator claimed that even though I display many symptoms of GD he was uncomfortable diagnosing me as such due to his inexperience with GD patients. Right now the jail staff are saying the doctors won't approve it and the doctors are saying the jail won't approve it. This is very frustrating especially since in VA it is common to spend up to 3 years in a jail before being transferred to a prison.

~Violet Swann (Virginia)

What's up Hearts on the Wire. Peace be upon you.

I'm saying hello through to the LGBTQI Family. Shout out to BR, SJ, Mariah, Rich, CR, Ira AKA Maya, Tayomi, to everybody at Forest.

~Jeremy Savage

MORE EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS

Letters and Love XXXXO



Juicy Queen Bee

Dear HOAW,

On December 3 I am going to trial. The trial is something that I never imagined ever having. But when you're innocent you need to keep fighting. We all know how the Courts are to us every chance they can. But I have physical proof an reliable witnesses. So if I don't get acquitted it's because they are afraid to own up to their mistake and we have a Corrupt System.

Hope you all stay safe and strong Please keep me in your prayers

Love Always,

~ Casper (Zack Kizer @ SCI Fayette)

BLACK MATTER RISING

Karen

Dark lives matter
We are not here as
Fodder for police to slaughter

From the Arab spring
The phone rings
Saying "Coke it the real thing,"
To take away the sting
From the flatulence
Of fat political asses.

Dark matter is not:
A wild ass hypothesis.
It's a fact.

Check out Henrietta Lacks:
Who broke out of a
Scientific jail,
With her amazing cells.

From the Petri dishes;
Of social experiment – like Ferguson
We all have some global,
From our mobiles.

We text the death knell.
It's no longer about bling,
Our winter of discontent is over,
The American spring has arrived,
We're so alive...

We will no longer,
Stand by and be slaughtered
Nor will we watch others
Become fodder for the machine,
To slaughter – 'Cause
All life matters!

Hey guys and perfect Queens! I have been on HRT for 2 years and I am loving the results! To all my girls going through it, just remember that we got this! We have a resilience that makes us shine bright. Here at my prison I am constantly advocating to get policies changed! I love you all and I have your backs here in Indiana! Stay fierce!

~ Bree

Joseph Jones #267741 | One Park Row | Michigan City, IN 46360

Hearts on a Wire:

I am being jerked around about my trans classification. I've been sexually assaulted and receiving extreme retaliation. I feel lost and hopeless. I've been thinking about suicide a lot and self-surgery. Special love to Juicy Queen Bee: I've been called Queen Bee since grade school I love your name!

Love,

~ Quinby

Bradley Cheetah W. Quinby #AV0665
PO Box 2000 | Vacaville, CA 95696

All:

I'm a TGF in SCI Rockview and have run into a problem with the sports bras they are providing us and selling on commissary. Im a 42 A which the store doesn't go past 38-40 B-C. The smaller bands are A-B so my 2XL bras have cups that are too big. My question is what do they issue at SCI Muncy and Cambridge Springs? And what, if any, bras do they issue at the other designated "male" facilities? Me, I'm ready to grievance the ___ out of this. Thanks for any info or advice on this.

Peace & Love,

~ Monica

I want to say hello to the Communities and other jails and on the streets. I'm glad we are growing in numbers and staying by eachother's side. I'd like to give a special shout out to my younger brother Kareem, who pushed me to start my own newsletter. I want you all to know that I love every one of you deeply. Peace , Love, and Solidarity to all my Strong Brothers and Beautiful Sisters across this nation.

~ S. Jordan
Rockview

For a copy of **Shawn Jordan Friends** newsletter, request a Subscription Form from:

Shawn Jordan
383 E. 162 #5P
Bronx, NY 10451

MORE EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS

Letters and Love XXXX

Hey y'all, this is your sister Tamara Angelique. Some of you know me as Rah-Rah (Maserati, Frenchy), but I've stopped using that name due to backlash. Listen up, Family! It's time we all set our differences aside and really stick together. I've noticed that there is a lot of bickering and fighting amongst us and that needs to STOP! There is power in numbers. The only reason why these haters get away with their hate and discrimination is because we let them. We all need to stick together and fight the hate and oppression that we face every day. How can we be focused on combating the hate and oppression that we face on a constant basis if we are so focused on gossiping about each other and tearing each other down? Why is it so hard to set aside our differences and fight?

Now that I've gotten that out of the way, congrats to DeDe at Forest and all the brothers and sisters who have won their right to hormones! For those who are still having issues, Never Give Up! Keep Fighting!

To Anonymous at Cambridge Springs – It truly breaks my heart to learn that you are facing discrimination. A thing you can do is write to US Department of Justice and request an official Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complaint form. Another resource you can utilize is IWOC Complaint. They will pressure the DOC

to provide treatment and to stop discriminating against you.

Shout outs:

- To my sisters Frenchy and Maserati who I met in the hole at Coal Township. I miss you both, as you two were such good friends to me. Luv ya both!
- To Penny: I don't know you, but Buckshot speaks highly of you and he says hello.
- To Jaina: Keep your head up sis! Know that I'm here for you if you ever need to talk. Luv ya sis!
- To Ms. GeGe: I know I fucked up with Buckshot. I regret making that mistake and was hoping since he forgave me, you could do the same. I just hope we can learn to cohabitate here peacefully.
- To all who have had their submissions printed in HoawW: Know that each of your words inspires me and helps me to be a better person. Because of ya'll I now carry my trans identity loud and proud (Hello makeup!) Thank you for encouraging me to be all that I can be.

~Tamara Angelique

Dear Family

Here's an update on my grievance I discussed in Issue 23: my grievance was remanded and upheld, so I started my estrogen shots on 8/1/18. Here is the information from the jailhouse lawyers manual I used in my grievance:

The Supreme Court established in *Estelle v. Gamble* that deliberate indifference to a serious medical need violates the Prisoner's Eighth Amendment right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment. Circuit courts have regularly found that gender identity disorder is a serious medical need that meets the *Estelle* standard. Many federal courts have held that transgender prisoners are constitutionally entitled to some type of medical treatment, though not necessarily any particular type of treatment so long as we receive some kind of psychological counseling. However recent decisions suggest that courts are recognizing that prisons are required to provide hormone therapy. For example in *Phillips v. Michigan DOC* a federal court granted a preliminary injunction directing prison officials to provide estrogen therapy; Other useful cases: *Cuoco v. Moritsugu*, 222 F 3d 99 (2nd Cir 2000); *Kosilek v. Maloney*, 221 F. Supp 2d 156 (D. Mass 2002); *White v. Farrier*, 849 F. 2d 322 (8th Cir 1988); *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 US 825 (1994).

~Miss Juicy

HOW DO I Juicy Queen Bee

How Do I say
I love you
When You don't
Deserve my Love

How Do I say
I need you
When You're no where
To be found

How do I say
Goodbye
Without hurting you
Even though you
Lie to me
Hurt me bad

How do I say
I need you
In my life
Cause I'm hurting
For your love

How do I say
I need you
More than ever

I would like 4 tha HOAW fam 2 know I'm around and I'm happy that you still got some brothers/sisters who really care 'bout tha nex person. I love how the LGBTQ respond 2 each other but I don't have a real good friend here or tha streets. My family ain't like the fact I'm gay so I've been in tha dark ever since. Shout out 2: Prissy Morgan, love the poem "Drunk in Love." Juicy Queen Bee, you go gurl. Miss Lisa, I respect you. Love all y'all with all my heart. This prison keeps us locked but our love shows beyond the wires.

~ Pretty Boy Jay
Jonathan Torres LQ0162
SCI Phoenix

Thank you Hearts on a Wire. To my Boo Boo Ms. Prissy, you make me feel things I've never felt, you are a true inspiration to me and I'm blessed to have you in my life. We don't have a long to go BOO! Soon as we get out will you marry me?? Love you

~ "Dink"
Braheem Morgan

MORE EXCERPTS AND SHOUTOUTS

Letters and Love XXXXO

Dear HOAW Family:

I just read the Fall 2018 issue and it filled my heart with smiles! Mike @ Somerset I hope you're doing well you sweet man. My girls at Forest, Dee & Mya, lot of love and hugs from your sister. On 8/20/2018 I was issued a new PA Certificate of Birth, finally corrected to female, yay! Persistence, family. My brothers at Muncy and Cambridge Springs I love you bunches and I'm looking for answers to try to help. The DOC has to follow the WPATH standard of care. Lastly my Rob, I love you! Everyone be safe,

~ Dawn Guthrie
PO Box 225 | Jersey Shore PA 17740

Dear HOAW & Fam:

I've been busy in a lot of legal fights. As of November 14, I spanked my criminal charges. I should be able to get back to general pop. My lawsuit is looking good too. Quick shout outs: Dade, thank you for your head up too sweetie. Ms. Juicy & Miss Prissy, I don't know y'all but I like the fight I see in y'all letters. Would love to meet, politic & debate with y'all. Drew, Forget about me? You too Frenchy? Cool. Still love though. Matt-Matt, ain't no question, if I love you I'll give you my last. Miss you Bro. I tried to call you. Send Shadow my love. Aliyah Maz, Love you sis. DOC filled me with so much hate. They don't want to help rehabilitate nobody. We're just numbers on a check. "Can't touch my three daughters 'cause the shackle prevent me/ the penitentiary only put a cold heart in me." *C-Murder. Love everybody.

~ Indy | Antione Walker KG7791 | SCI Smithfield

To all of my children: I love you all and I want you to know that I'm only hard on you because I want everyone of you to be the best person you can be and to learn from your mistakes and to be nobody's fool. To my sisters Pearl, Twan, Griff, and Nascar and last but not least Miss Special thank you for all your help. Words cannot truly express how much I truly appreciate you. You helped me when I got sick and couldn't walk. You held me up. I truly love you my sister thank you and for the rest of yawl I love and miss you guys a lot. Frenchie my child you better not come back here. Nate my Boo I truly love you. I just want the whole world to know my joy. I can't wait to be your legal wife. My sister Markia I miss your crazy little butt, sure do love you. To all the rest of my loving family please stand tall and stay strong at all time. Keep those gorgeous smiles on your faces even when things get hard never let the enemy see you down always encourage each other. Thanks HOAW for not giving up we will really do appreciate you for the work you all do and the help. May God bless you all.

Love,
~ Pennie Coulson

Hey Family:

I'm sitting here crying my eyes out alone. Yesterday my babe got sent to the hole for nothing. He and a CO got into an incident and the CO made a verbal comment about homosexuals. My babe asked 2 COs and a Sergeant to make a PREA complaint. All said OK but nothing happened. Next thing we know a Sergeant came and put my babe in handcuffs and took him to the hole. In the PA Inmate Handbook, Page 7 Section 4 Paragraph 2 it states "You will NOT be retaliated for reporting an incident of sexual harassment." Yet this CO did was the opposite. The CO retaliated against my babe with a false misconduct report that got him sent to the hole. Are we supposed to be scared to make a PREA complaint against staff? When by doing so we might end up with a false misconduct that can jeopardize one from making parole and going home? This is a major issue that I have noticed mostly towards us LGBTQ. If others are having this issue please speak up! We've taken so much shit in the past and we will be damned if we let that past come back again. This is the time I need Mrs. Sparkles Wilson to talk to. Girl I miss you! Baby, my boo, I miss you and I'm doing everything I can to get you out of that damn hole! I'm not gunna give up fighting! Goodnight my love and Goodnight to my LGBTQ family and also Goodnight to you Mrs. Sparkles. Sweet dreams everyone.

Much Love,
~ Jess <3

I would like to give a shout out to a few sisters! First to my DL sister Nyia, your big bro is good! Make sure you take care of my bro, your husband! Precious, Nikki, Zane, Tara, Pearl, Mariah! And a special shout out to Christina, who taught me a lot about the LGBT. Things played out the way they did, it is what it is. You got a year left, get home and stay out of prison!

~Duke (Huntingdon)

Dear HOAW:

What's up to all the Queens and Kings? I wanted to shout out to Chip, Knowledge & Nir, BR. Champ & Tyree I should have listened to you both. I've grown into a man. I wanted to thank both of you for not giving up on me. Dawn – I ain't forget about you sis. Juicy up Somerset, I need your info so I can write to you. You too Pumpkin. I miss you all. To Reek and Tey, thank you both for all your help. KK I ain't forget you I'm just BUSY. Knowledge, I thought we was cool. Holla at me. Starts shine, we don't fade!

~ LI – Big Star
SCI Greene

MARRIAGE

Hearts on a Wire Outside Collective

An inside member requested that we explain the PA DOC's rules on inmate marriages

To get married while you are locked up, you will need the DOC's approval.

- To begin the process, you must submit a request for marriage to your counselor.
- Then the DOC gets to decide whether to grant your request under policy DC-ADM 821.
 - Basically, the policy is the DOC won't allow a marriage if they think it presents a risk of escape, or if there is some reason to doubt the sincerity of the relationship.
 - The DOC hasn't updated this policy to comply with changes to state and federal law allowing marriage regardless of gender, but we've heard from a few people who have gotten permission from the DOC for marriages the DOC thinks are same-sex marriage.
- If your fiancé(e) is also locked up, they will also need to make a request.
 - This will present a dilemma for the prison that they have a lot of latitude on how to handle - literally all their policies assume one partner is outside the prison.
 - Hearts on a Wire has not heard directly from anyone who has been successful at this, only rumors.
 - Our best guess is that you would have to file grievances for it, but that it is a winnable fight.
 - Some people have expressed hope that PREA would provide some support for marriage within a prison but PREA is silent on this issue.
- Then you will need to get a license from the county clerk of the county where the prison is.
 - Paying for the marriage license is up to you and your fiancé(e) (how much depends on the county).
 - The marriage license will issue 3 days after application and is valid for 60 days.
- Each facility has its own rules for how marriages get conducted within the facility.
 - The chaplain can officiate but doesn't have to.
 - If the chaplain won't do it, you will have to get a visit from someone who can perform weddings.

THE TRUTH NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Juicy Queen Bee

CONTENT WARNING: This article is going to go deep on powerful subjects so full warning it is going to talk about physical and sexual abuse.

I know first hand about sexual abuse and this is for the victim and the abuser.

Whether you've been abused as a child or adult.

Whether it's physical, verbal, mental or sexual don't allow it to build up. Don't allow yourself to stress, get depressed, or anything else that will send you down the road to exploding, wanting to hurt yourself or others 'cause it won't take away your pain.

Get medical attention. It's important to get checked for STDs and other issues.

Speak out, try to talk about it. Talk to a counselor not just once but until you feel OK and know you're stronger. Talk to a rape crisis counselor. Tell your family. Talk to a counselor. Tell somebody you trust. Letting it out is the main part of healing.

Seek information on these topics. Ask for information from psychology.

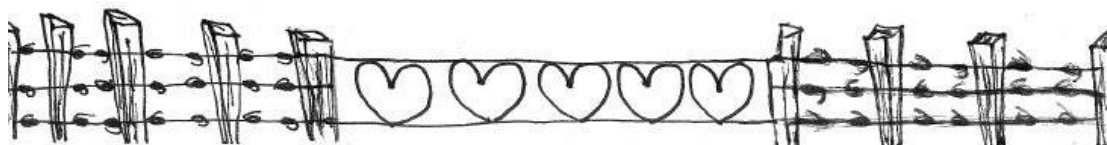
Some of us think abuse is how the person expresses their love. Let me tell you being abused doesn't mean love.

If you're a homosexual in jail it don't give no one the right to sexually or physically abuse you and it's best to get help before it's too late. If you are gay and you've been abused sexually that don't mean you asked for it.

Being abused sexually doesn't make you a homosexual. Them are excuses. I was born this way. And being abused didn't make me this way. God didn't make no mistakes or tell no lies. It made me stronger and now I know I can survive.

Sexual abuse isn't easy to heal from especially when the attacker makes you feel dirty or like it's your fault or threatens you. You might freeze and not realize what happened, and if you're a child it's worse. And for men or boys they might think oh the perpetrator was a woman so it's OK, or the perpetrator was a man people might think I'm gay.

Let me say this: It's not your fault. You didn't ask for it. And some people take their hurt and switch it around hurting others. Those people are sick and need help.



Dennis Ray Bullens

LEGAL RESOURCES

Hearts on a Wire Outside Collective

An inside member requested that we print a list of LGBTQ legal help resources

Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project provides assistance to incarcerated or institutionalized people whose constitutional rights have been violated within the institution. Their main address:



PA Institutional Law Project
The Cast Iron Building
718 Arch Street, Suite 304 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Mazzoni Center has legal services for LGBT people in Pennsylvania, including discrimination cases:



Mazzoni Center Legal Services
1348 Bainbridge Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147

The **ACLU** sometimes takes prison conditions cases, but they are selective in which cases they take because they do “impact litigation.” (Impact litigation is strategic cases that have the potential to change the situation for other people in similar situations to the plaintiff):



ACLU Pittsburgh Office
313 Atwood St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
ACLU Philadelphia
PO Box 40008
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Lambda Legal is a national organization that takes on impact litigation related to LGBT/HIV rights:



Lambda Legal
120 Wall Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10005-3904

The **National Center for Lesbian Rights** is another national impact litigation firm that takes on impact litigation related to LGBT:



NCLR National Office
870 Market Street Suite 370
San Francisco CA 94102

GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) is a national organization that takes on impact litigation related to LGBT/HIV rights:



GLAD
18 Tremont, Suite 950
Boston, MA 02108

PROJECT FOR TRANSGENDER SURVIVORS

The project assists transgender and gender non conforming individuals who have been sexually assaulted with PREA grievance process. Our first line of assistance is analyzing facility policies and making them into a document that explains the process, a checklist of what needs to happen and a timeline of when. The second way we help is by assisting folks to draft grievances based on what the facility policy requires. The final way we assist people is a bit more abstract—I have drafted a survey that collects data around sexual assault in prisons. My aim is to compare what we’re hearing from the inside to what the PREA audits are reporting. The goal is to create a report that I can send to legislators with the hope that they address the issues in the law. Although the project cannot help with litigation, we hope to one day be able to pair individuals with attorneys who can assist.

Sincerely,

Whitney Washington
Equal Justice Works Fellow

Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law
American University Washington College of Law
4300 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

MY HOMIES

Gary Worthington

My homies are there when I need them
Cause at times life in here feels grim
I lean on my homies to get me through at times
Seeing and being around them helps keep me in line
They’re there for support and a shoulder to lean on
Apart we’re weak but together we’re strong
When you’re gay in jail it’s hell enough
The stuff we endure is truly rough
Talk down, leered at, and truly despised
And we know it comes as no surprise
That we look to each other for moral support
It helps us to hold down our own court
But best believe without my homies I’d be a mess
Tried and tested and feeling a whole lot of stress
I look forward to seeing y’all in group every week
For what I get from y’all is what I seek
I know we all go through it from cops and jokers alike
But the strong ones tell where to go and drop the mic
But for the few that don’t have a voice we’re there for you
Know you’re part of the circle and you have a crew
So in closing my homies you’ll keep holding it down
Never ever let nobody take your crown

To my girls Prissy, Nascar, Griff, Dior, and Pearl

SUBMISSIONS

Rules & Guidelines

If you contribute make sure you tell us...

1. Exactly how you want to be credited [anonymous? ID number? Chosen name?]
we will only use your government name if you explicitly tell us to do so
2. Whether it's OK to say the facility you are/were in
3. Please respect other people's privacy; only make disclosures about yourself.
4. No shade

You can send us...

- Letters
- Original Artwork (black and white)
- Interviews
- Articles responding to current events, prison policies, and this newsletter
- How-to articles
- Original Poetry
- Ideas
- Contribuciones en español son muy bienvenidos!

NEXT ISSUE: We are hoping to focus on Pride (and publish to coincide with June's Pride events, like we did in 2013). We are looking for articles from you addressing topics related to Pride. Here are some questions to get you started thinking about this:

- How do you see trans/gay/lesbian/queer pride happening in prison?
- How is this different from outside?
- Do you feel that mainstream Pride movements ever discuss prison issues and should they?
- How is Pride related to resistance? What does that mean in a prison setting?
- What role do Pride movements play in your understanding of your trans/lesbian/gay/queer identity?
- Does your prison have any kind of LGBTQ organizing? Does it draw on a history of Pride movements?
- How is Pride related to solidarity?
- How important is being out and what emphasis is put on visibility?

We get lots submissions and cannot possibly print everything we receive. We reserve the right to publish excerpts, as well as to make light edits.

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Hearts on a Wire
1315 Spruce St
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Subscriptions are FREE for Trans people and allies who are locked up. Please write us a note that briefly touches on your relationship to the trans community to be added to our mailing list.

heartsonawire@gmail.com or find us on facebook

Back issues of the newsletter are available to download at **heartsonawire.org**

