



# Hearts on a Wire



Issue # 33 - fall 2022

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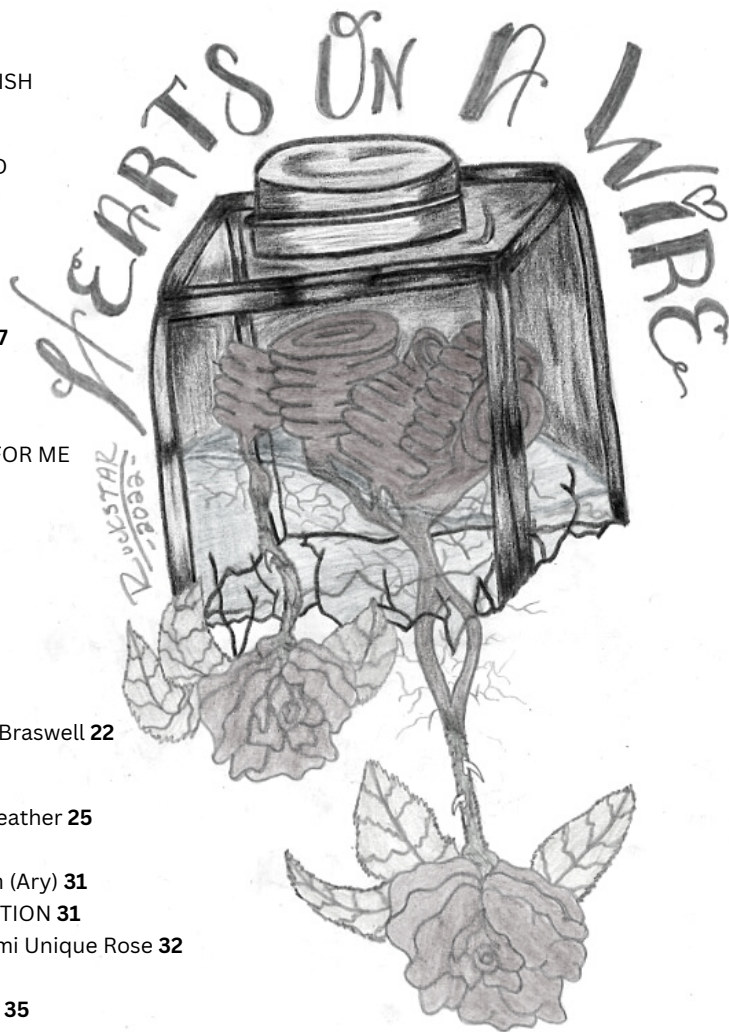
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affix PA DOC sticker here

♥ support incarcerated and detained trans and nonbinary people ♥

♥ build community through bars ♥

♥ organize for justice ♥

We are Pennsylvania-based trans and nonbinary 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.

Contact us for the virtual meeting information.

### THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

Abel | Adam Mallin | Adrian  
Ali'Se | Amber Richardson  
Anonymous | Arro | Bam Bam  
Brandi Marie | Brandon Austill  
Ceci | Cedliia Gentill  
Chocolate Drip  
Contessia | CrazyJ | Cree  
Demonlo | Devin | Dexter Kelly  
DiDi | Dorian | Drew Boy Cali  
Dylicia Alicia Snow | E  
EgyptLioness | ElizabethAlanna  
Elizabeth Lilly | Ellie Schwab  
Em | EricRudolph | GiaValentina  
Heather | Infinite Star  
Jacinda Lee  
Jacquan Blue Magic Richardson  
James | Jennifer Eymard  
Jessica Diane Garza | Joker  
Juicy Queen Bee | Justin Schwanke  
Kairi | Kaitlyn Mae Santos  
Kayla Lasahi | Kayla Shay } Kaylynn  
Keith Weber | Ket Peacock  
Knowledge | L.A. McKinney | Leah  
Lizzy | Lola | Lolo  
Major Griggin-Gracy | Marwin  
Maxine | Maya | Miley  
Minnie | Monica  
Ms. KeKe | Ms. Tay | Ms. Zoni  
Ms. Nichole M. Quiñones  
Munta | Najee | Nino | Nora  
Queen Malaysia | Rhen | Rich  
Rico GQ | Rockstar  
Royal Andrews  
Sage Nicole Braswell | Shadow  
Shaggy | Shugg Qu'ita Wagner  
Summer Breeze | Swing | T  
Tammi Unique Rose | Tex  
Tiffany Alissa Bradbury | Timber  
TinkTink | Tone | Twinky Bear  
Tyree | Tyreef | Vyrgynia Rose  
WF | Whittany Mallin  
Zachary Graham

Cover Art: Rockstar

## LETTER FROM THE OUTSIDE COLLECTIVE

Dear beloveds,

Happy fall! It's time for issue #33!

As always, this latest issue has gorgeous poetry and art, insightful articles, and lots of loving shout-outs. It's always a joy to see the brilliant talent so many of our inside collective members share through the newsletter. Thanks to everyone, whether you're writing in, sharing art, or just quietly reading. We're grateful that you're part of Hearts on a Wire!

The outside collective has seen new members join and old members return. Formerly inside members Najee and Brandi have worked hard from the outside to bring this issue to you, and we've received support from organizations like the Bread and Roses Community Fund and the Delaware Valley Legacy Fund. Meanwhile, Hearts is assisting in the ongoing fight to change the law and make it possible for trans people convicted of a felony to legally change names. More on this inside!

We're all feeling the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. Rising commissary prices are hitting our inside community hard, and respiratory illnesses are spreading widely. Politicians and hateful people continue to attack us with twisted new laws (with extra hate for the mid-term elections), and institutions are slow to revive old programs and services. But as this issue shows, trans people and trans communities are capable of loving each other, healing together, and building a better world.

Thanks again for being you, staying strong, and making Hearts what it is!

In loving solidarity,

~ The outside collective

# THOUGHTS ON SELF-CARE

In Issue 32, we asked for your thoughts on the following prompt:

When Audre Lorde first wrote about self-care in her 1988 essay collection *A Burst of Light*, the Black Queer activist and poet was battling cancer while doing work that continues to inform and inspire movements of resistance. "I had to examine, in my dreams as well as in my immune-function tests, the devastating effects of overextension. Overextending myself is not stretching myself. I had to accept how difficult it is to monitor the difference. Necessary for me was cutting down on sugar. Crucial. Physically. Psychically. Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare."

There are studies that show self care not only reduces stress - but also improves our quality of life and transform the way we see the world – no matter what our circumstances are.

What wellness practices and self care can you create for yourself? What does wellness look like inside prison? How can 'self care' support care for ourselves and our community? How do you resist isolation?

**Rhen:** These are just a few things to give myself a “spa” day, especially when I’m feeling down and don’t want to feel like I’m in prison. It’s hard sometimes to treat yourself with anything feminine, but I find magazines like Cosmo and Good Housekeeping have great ideas that can be modified to work for what you have.

**Self-care tip #1:** If you have access to Vitamin C tablets, scrape the pharmaceutical glazing off the tablet. Crush and mix into one ounce of water. Apply to face at night, before any other lotion. The Vitamin C has to be the ascorbic acid verity. Also, do not prepare too far in advance, because once the “protective glaze” is removed from the tablet, the ascorbic acid starts to lose potency.

**Self-care tip #2:** Mix ¼ cup of mayonnaise, 2 peeled ripe bananas, 2 to 3 tablespoons of honey, ½ a cup conditioner of your choice (preferably something that smells good to cover up the mayo smell!) and 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Mix all ingredients until pureed-like. Fully coat hair with the treatment, leave on for 20 to 30 minutes, then rinse with cool water.

**Twinky Bear:** My Wellness and Self Care Practice is waking up at 5:30AM (Before the 1st Bell of the Day is Rang), Taking my multivitamin and meds. I then turn on my Gospel Music And Sit Down on the toilet and take a #2. After Relieving myself I then Brush my teeth and fix my Dreads into some very “cunty” type style. Wash my face. After that the Bell Rings And I’m Standing, in Anticipation for the C.O.’s count. After they walk past my cell I turn my inspirational Music off and I get Down on my Knees and pray to God, Making sure I thank Him for waking Not only me, But my family and friends as well. After praying and Centering myself I then put on Black Eyeliner and Many coats of Black Mascara.

When I put on my Make Up it in a sense is my WAR PAINT and After I am Heavily Coated, I am Ready for Battle which is....the World.

In Prison, Hatred, Lust, Envy, Desperation and Hopelessness are a constant threat to our survival. Self care can support care for ourselves and our community by us leading by example. If we resist isolation (which is a constant battle of mine personally) and show up "Loud and Proud" we will represent for those who Don't Know How and inspire those who Have a “Mustard Seed” of Desire.

Continued on Next Page...

## SELF CARE

**Tiffany Alissa Bradbury:** Inside this institution, wellness for me looks like:

1. Staying in good shape - I go to the gym and work out with weights
2. Keeping up on current events - I watch the news daily
3. Keeping up my hygiene
4. Reading educational books that interest me
5. I try to eat healthy foods, to the extent possible given what is available from commissary
6. I try to resist isolation by coming out to block twice a day for two hours at a time

**Drew Boy Cali:** I recommend a few books to read. *The Four Agreements*, *We're All Doing Time*, *Sapiens*, *The Bagavad Gita*, and *Breaking the habit of Being Yourself*. Self-care that begins with the mind is the most important in my opinion. I understand and accept that I am my consciousness, not this body or feelings or emotions. Through this body I am able to observe and experience the world.

I treat thoughts and emotions like clouds passing in the sky. Some are dark and scary, others are cute and fluffy. In the end, they float away. This level of non-attachment takes practice, but the result of having mental wellness is bliss. I am not confused about who I am. My conscious mind resides in a man's body. My conscious mind is only that, a conscious mind.

## CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH

### Twinky Bear

Can't be bold  
Expressions placed on hold  
Uncross your legs.....your hands, unfold  
Take that twist out ya hips  
Strictly regular ChapStick on lips  
No brass container full of, watermelon  
(kiss•ah•me) gloss  
CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH.... boss  
Dinner parties in the 30's  
Red light special parties in the 70's  
Party lines  
Chat rooms

Bathroom lines, I will find....  
....U, "If Your Girl Only Knew".... Aaliyah  
R.Kelly was touched too  
way before "Me Too"  
As a boy, by a boy  
....this boy's been touched too  
we all blue

CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH  
I'm broken, she broken, he's broken -  
Mental health's coasting  
Glamour's power  
.... a smokey eyes smoking  
Beautiful armor of protection = war paint  
....we call it make up  
America's choking....  
....me, If my voice was muted,  
I'd be called "Trade"

CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH  
"The Queen", " Paris is Burning ", " Truth or  
Dare", rainbow documentaries....

Wake up girls!  
....get to learning  
Can you feel it in the air, police sirens scream....  
....its OK world, be mean

Everyday a sisters photo appears in an  
obituary, ominous reminders of danger  
....its reality

PRIDE  
....be heard! Don't stay silent, open ya mouth  
....CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH....  
....it must be abolished  
CLEAR FINGERNAIL POLISH!!!!!!

# THOUGHTS ON ABOLITION, PART 4

In Issue 30, we asked for your thoughts and feelings after reading the article on prison abolition. We asked if there was anything you felt excited about, anything that scared you, and what questions came up for you. The conversation has been going on for 3 issues.

**Kayla Shay @ SCI Greene:** I wanted to comment on Abolition of Prisons. I seriously agree we need to fund more programs to help rehabilitate people, and defund the (“C.C.A.”) Corporation Corrections of America. Institutions have become a warehouse for profit and are not serving its intended purpose to rehabilitate. America has more prisons than any other country in the world, and unfortunately Pennsylvania has more prisons than any other state in America. So what are we doing wrong? We do need to fight to change our justice system so we do more rehabilitation through programs and less incarceration. The only way we can succeed is by each one of us contacting our state representatives to circulate a petition to shift funds from the prison system to outpatient programming. The more you disable the prisons, the less they will incarcerate.

**Drew Boy Cali:** Anonymous wrote on pg. 4 of issue #32 that we humans commit morbid or evil actions. I agree, we absolutely do. Our actions can cause pain, sadness and suffering toward ourselves and others; yet within my heart and soul, I understand the individual person is neither evil nor good. This dualism, the division of right from wrong, evil from good, lives within our minds. Abolishing prisons would create a different society. Full of new opportunities and challenges. It is my belief that a country without prison can be a beautiful thing.

Fear is what prevents this idea from becoming reality. I do not fear releasing murderers, rapists, thieves, or any other description of an individual. True, abolition must have no bias. Hate does not live within my heart, even against those that cause me pain. In the LGBT community, we tell each other to love ourselves, I challenge the entire LGBT community to love adversity. To accept the people who bring you down. In life you were not promised continual happiness and pleasure. Appreciate that you get to experience suffering as much as you appreciate happiness.

**Kayla Lasahi (Florida):** DiDi @ SCI Forest, Jennifer Rose, Lexi Love, Michelle, Twinky Bear, Miley S, Mrs GeGe, Theodore, Shrek & Erik. Thank y’all for opening my eyes on abolition of prison. I think it’s a good and bad thing because some ppl deserve to be locked away and some don’t deserve to be. It’s a lot of messed up people in this world. Michelle, you had some good points about corrupt people being taken out of office. But one thing I can say about prisons, it’s helped a lot of us find ourselves but it’s still a hateful place that needs to be banned for good.

**Dexter Kelly QK3454 @ Rockview:** Issue #31 had a lot of just heart felt, emotional, and overall valid points. @Lunaiya well spoken I couldn’t agree with you more, the penal system currently in place is “Broken, as well as corrupt” @Twinky Bear (Round of Applause!) “Justice For All!” — “For me this is a touchy topic when you consider the Abolishment of prisons all together when you consider it is 2022 and all the TRUE Wackos that are in the world.” I think if we could eliminate the lengthy sentences for a number of the less felonious crimes the number of incarcerated people would reduce dramatically.

# THE RAINBOW COLORED LIGHT (EXCERPT)

Egypt Lioness

1: God is not the Author or Agent of Prejudice, Racism, Sexism, Discrimination, Ignorance, Evil, or Hatred. God is light, the author and agent of these is Darkness and that darkness is the shade! There was one sign sent to humankind, that was the sign and symbol of the Rainbow which represents God's promise to humanity that (S-he) would never destroy the entire Earth again, and underneath that sign was included every wake and walk of life, both rich and poor, black and white, and Gay and straight. For all humanity is equal in the all seeing Eye of God who created us all. This is the true light, the Rainbow Colored light that appears to all humanity in the bow of the sky, for this truth relates to all humanity. Amen

## MEDICAL ISSUES FOR TRANS FOLKS IN THE COUNTY

Juicy Queen Bee Ford

The county should have a committee made up of one deputy, warden, major or captain, a doctor a counselor and social worker to meet with all new inmates who identify as transgender. This committee would address medications the inmate is taking and any special concerns. Medical is not treating Transgenders right: neglecting medications, tampering with meds, and not submitting proper referrals to doctors.

On 7-10-22 when I arrived here at CFCF I told the Nurse that I get estradiol shots and spironolactone. I didn't get my medication until 7-19-22 when I was supposed to get my injection on the 15th. I only got it then because I forced their hand by going through the administration. My social worker and Lts and Sgts told me make sure I file a grievance. I was already documenting everything.

On 7-19-22 I received my KOP for spironolactone and then on 8-1-22 when I asked to get my shot they said 8-3-22 then on 8-3-22 a nurse took it upon herself to say I wasn't getting my shot until August 8th don't send me down. One nurse who work at medical told me they delayed because a doctor here didn't see me to enforce the date I'm supposed to take it, but my doctor order is a physician order last time I check. I'm waiting for my complaint to get answered and the public defender is helping me.

To all my sisters in the Philadelphia County Prisons who been affected by this type of harassment and discrimination by medical staff, speak up! Let's be heard and help me fight by changing Philadelphia policy when dealing with transgender inmates. Though I don't have much time or you might not have much time, what they are doing is violation to the 8th Amendment - Deliberate Indifference no lie. Well hold yall heads up and stay strong love all my kings and queens.

## WHY JUDGE

Lizzy

We are Transes  
We are not loved  
Or accepted  
By many people  
Tell us we don't matter  
Why Judge Transes  
We don't hide it  
We are Transes  
We are sistas  
That love and respect  
People  
We don't hide it  
Why Judge?

We are Transes  
See us Transes  
Show you love  
We are here  
Do you see us?  
We want to be seen

# ABUSE CHECKLIST

Reprinted from Issue #4

Here is a checklist you can use to help determine if you are in an abusive relationship. This list was adapted from a list developed by Anonymous at SCI Dallas.

## Does your partner...

- isolate you from your family and friends?
- grab, push, pinch, shove or hit you?
- call you "it" or other pronouns not preferred by you?
- touch where you do not want to be touched?
- negate your personal decisions?
- force you to engage in sexual acts you don't want?
- intimidate or threaten you to gain compliance?
- sabotage your medical treatment, or coerce you into treatment you don't want?
- threaten to "out" you to others?
- demand detailed explanations of where you were and how you spent your money?
- ridicule how your body looks?
- tell you that nobody would love you?
- tell you that you are not a real man/woman?
- blame you for how they feel or act?
- tell you that nobody would believe you?
- break or hide things that are important to you?
- force you to engage in sex work, or force you not to?
- eroticize/fetishize your body against your will?

## Do you...

- have a gut feeling that something is not right?
- feel like you are walking on eggshells, trying not to upset your partner?
- feel that you must change yourself in order to help your partner change?
- almost always do what your partner wants you to do rather than what you really want to do?
- stay with your partner because you are afraid of what your partner would do if you leave?
- feel like all these abuses are somehow your own fault?

# THE MAN FOR ME

DiDi@ Forest

The Man for me is Humble  
That don't mean  
he won't Rumble  
The Man for me is my King  
And he knows how to treat me as  
his Queen.  
The Man for Me is Great  
He is someone  
I could never Hate.  
The Man for Me is Strong  
& He Never Steers Me Wrong  
The Man For me is  
Calm and Cool  
Under pressure  
That's why Chicks  
Dig his swagger  
The Man for Me  
Tells it how it is  
Not afraid to  
Hurt my Feelings  
But ain't afraid  
To say he's sorry  
The Man for Me  
I know his Name  
And I wrote this poem to say  
I love you Dwayne!

*I love you Baby and I don't know  
honestly where I'd be without you*

# THINKING ABOUT SILICONE?

Adrian Lowe, with substantial input from Miss Major Griffin-Gracy  
(updates with help from Cecilia Gentili)

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.

## What you inject

People inject many things that are not actually silicone, but still call it sil. Industrial oils and medical-grade polymer are two examples. Results and health risks vary widely depending on what is used.

## 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.

## 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?

## 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, shea butter, vitamin e or aloe.
- Drinking lots of water increases skin health and elasticity.

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

## 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 that you 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



## Things to consider:

### 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.

### Migration and discoloration

Silicone will often move to different locations beneath the skin. You can expect this to happen in the short-term after injection, and silicone can also migrate over time. It is also common to see skin discoloration from sil.

### Regulation

Silicone injection is not legal – therefore it is unregulated.

That means there is no government 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. This can provide a positive boost to mental health.

### Risks

Some 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.

**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

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

In recent years, studies show that sil injections and the migration of silicone can cause additional health problems, including ongoing infection and pain. Silicone injections can also lead to stroke and death if silicone enters blood vessels, which is more likely to happen at the buttocks than other locations. Health problems might emerge immediately after injection or many years later.

# GETTING OUT/BACK IN FOR PROTECTING SELF

## Juicy Queen Bee

To all my brothers and sisters when you first come home if you don't have your ID Birth Certificate or Social Security Card you can get help one organization is Broad Street Ministry located at 315 S. Broad Street by going in between the hours 11 am til 3 pm you can get your mail sent there though if they get your ID you have to use their address but they paid for it.

On 12-22-21 I got out first thing chilled with family and met friends from Hearts on a Wire got the things I needed cell phone, clothes, cosmetics, ate food. Went to Gaudenzia DRC was place on the woman side had to take outpatient AOD again because Gaudenzia required it for 3 months with my mental health support group. I celebrated my mother 1 year being put to rest and enjoyed her birth day.

I hear people say that it's hard to get a job. If you don't mind working at a temp service Trinity Staffing (2340 South Broad St.) give you a chance if you just came home or got a record and most of their jobs start over \$15/hour. I work with them 5 ½ months and still got a job when this false case is dismissed. First at Rainbows Warehouse making \$15/hour and then Citizen Bank Phillies Stadium cleaning after games making \$16/hour and at the Lincoln Financial field cleaning after concerts

I met this man who is sweet kind and accepts me and loves me.

The simple assault I'm dealing with could've been aggravated but the person never went to the hospital. But the messed up part is how the police add so many charges knowing none of them had anything to do with the case. Then if you're on state parole like me, you get a DOC warrant put on you and can't go nowhere stuck in the county but that isn't the reason I'm writing this letter this letter is a update about me and sorry I never forget about y'all.

The Hearts on a Wire team met in-person at the William Way LGBT Community Center on October 31st and wanted to include a group photo in this edition so everyone can see some of the faces behind HOAW's work on the outside. Pictured left to right: Marwin, Brandi Marie, Dorian, Lola, Devin, Adrian, Najee



# A LIFE LONG DILEMMA FOR ME, HOW ABOUT YOU?

Monica

With less than 2 years left on my 10 to 20, I find myself facing an urgent dilemma in life. A dilemma some of you may understand. You might be on either side of this conundrum. See I've met a wonderful friend in prison, someone I'd like to spend the rest of my life with (outside). He's the real deal for me. Unfortunately he's serving a life sentence.

Life sentences in PA are just that, LIFE, with no chance of parole. That's death by incarceration. With the lack of adequate health care inside it can be inhumane and dehumanizing. Tax dollars get pocketed instead of going toward proper medical treatment. Inmates are expendable because they'll be replaced by the next one. If they are a lifer, prolonging that life just means more medical expenses that won't line a pocket.

In my 18 years plus in prison I've met a lot of lifers who you'd think "Why is this person still here?" They're people I'd trust to live next door to my family. Usually lifers are the most mature, honest, and sincere people you'll ever meet. Especially if they have 25 or more years of experience in prison.

Think about this... are you the same person that you were in 1997? How about '92? Or maybe back during the Reagan Administration? People grow and change inside and out.

I'm sure there are queens, or kings, or those who love us who are doing life. Maybe you have empathy for my situation. I have a max out date to be separated from a friend I love. A warm, gentle and caring human being with lots of time in prison for something he did at age 18. Their only chance at freedom is clemency, unless statutes change.

Some legislators have parole for PA's lifers on the agenda, but not enough to get it off the shelf yet. We as LGBTQ+ command attention! whenever we gather for a cause. Maybe 'we' can bring a more colorful reason to Harrisburg for this cause. Get lawmakers to look at the plight of lifers in PA's prisons. If not for my friend, then for our brothers and sisters and their people who may be doing life. Maybe you empathize?

Let's face it, the fascist correctional system is corrupt to the core. It preys on the poor and minority classes and feeds on the taxpayers and inmates' families.

Should an 18 kid go to prison for killing another human being? Yes. But does that kid deserve to grow old and die in prison? If the correctional system worked then when is that kid "Rehabilitated" enough to see parole? What are all those tax dollars for if that kid can't be considered for parole? After 25 or 30 years shouldn't the parole board determine if they're fit to re-enter society?

Right now that 18 year old kid would be just another box with a number in a huge warehouse. Eventually that box expires and gets replaced with a new box with a number. These are human beings housed in this warehouse, people with feelings.

Hopefully you can feel for my dilemma, but moreover I need you and your people outside who feel for my friend. He came into prison in 1970 at age 18! When is enough going to be enough!!!!

# TRANSGENDER-WOMAN/BLOOMING-SUNFLOWER

Jessica Diane Garza



Mirror Image of herself –  
The past, that's shadowed, and then Now...  
She sees herself in the mirror;  
when she came into the Light,  
and sighed at her pretty sight,  
In the light of a full length mirror,  
A Beautiful Woman.

## LETTERS & LOVE

Just wanted to say Hello to all the Trans Sisters & Brothers out there. Thanks for the support. We all need to stand together to be strong.

~ Ms. Tay | LT0387

Shout out to Miley S. Fletcher and Juicy Queen Bee. I miss the both of you. Juicy please stay out of trouble. God Bless, and be safe.

~ Tiffany Alissa Bradbury

How is everyone doin'? I'm doing great at my new jail, made friends and this cute guy. Have a blessed day,

~ Abel

Hope all my Kings & Queens are standin' tall & holding on. I'm no longer at Coal Township, I got shipped to Benner after only 2 months! I miss Forest. Here's to the royalty: Keke; Twin & Zoey; JB; Dilly; Miley; R.J.; Knowledge; Stasia; 5¢, Papi (Mad respect for ya intellect); Savage; T-Cup (never met but my sis KeKe speaks highly of you); CR (you know we gonna mix if you do my lil sis wrong); Indy (never got ya letter); Nir-Nir I miss ya crazy ass; PooPoo keep ya head up & stay true; Abbey... I miss my friend; Whitney, be safe and never let people shame you or feel obligated to please & respect those who won't do the same for you; Ms. J, Ms. Juicy, Ms. Dior... Y'all keep shining like diamonds; Ty get at me! JP, wherever you are, I miss you cuz. I love all y'all.

With love, pride & faith in "US"!

Your Zodiac Prince,

~ Shadow aka Promise aka Snuggles (but only to my lil sis KeKe) aka the Poet aka Steven Woodson

To my Shaggy, I wish I was there to care for you. I have written to your sister, I hope you're getting my letters. To Ms. Whittany, you disappeared to the hole. I hope you're in a better place now. Shaggy and Ms. Whittany helped me be my true self. All my love to Shaggy and Ms. Whittany and the whole HOAW family.

~ Rich, SCI Forest

Sending my love, thoughts & care to my sisters & brothers here at SCI Forest like Smith, JB, ED, Puck, Meech, & Savage. And my sisters Didi, Tye, Syd, Diamond, KeKe, T-Cup. But I especially want to give love to my wife the "shewolf" of Forest Anistasia Angel McKinney. We been thru so much our 2 yrs together, I seen her go through all her changes and how she has overcame as a beautiful Transgender woman. I am very proud to be married to her and finally found the piece of my puzzle that's been missing all these years. I never knew I would find my true love/wife in prison but I did. I love you always my love, wife, heart & soul. And I would like to give a shout out to my sister Mariah this is your bro at Forest who works at commissary sending his love.

Love always.

~ L. A. McKinney



## LETTERS & LOVE

I never entertained these “LGBTQ” newsletters... but I read issue #32 and I smiled and laughed the whole time. I’m in! I’m an original “give ‘em hell” girl! Many of ya’ll kno me thru out the st8 for puttin in work physically & civilly on ‘em. I’m so proud to see the resistance! Even tho some of Us girls been around since strip searches @ Smithfield’s hub amongst other atrocities! To Summer Breeze... :) “I won’t tell” tho! I love you for it! yaaas! It’s the best way to move nowadays. All ya’ll married gurls, I love you too. To Juicy, you still got these Albion fools traumatized! I heard more stories about you so I feel I know you. CTFU! Give ‘em hell baby. Nasty (Mr. Holloman) Get @ me bro. My bad, but life gets in the way. Exactly why I don’t do the “marriage” thing no more. You know I play for keeps wit friends & lovers and you was a friend. Bro find me a friend (the other kind) LOL to kick it wit. :) U know my type... Tall, chocolate wit a clean or small track record! To all of ya’ll, much love. Stay safe! Stay healthy! But most of all... stay you! Not for the last time,

~ Ms. Nichole M. Quiñones

AKA Nikki Sin AKA Nikk Nasty AKA Nikki Versace AKA Nichole Koran, North Philly Certified

Shawn Shannon Quinones | DL1755 | SCI Albion :(



artwork by Dylicia Alicia Snow

## LETTERS & LOVE

HOAW,

Reading letters from others has inspired me to come out in my own way. I'm a Bigender, Bisexual NB. From the age of 14 I knew I was different from other people. While incarcerated I have come to realize I've got to be me no matter if in the world or behind these walls. That's the only way I'm going to be happy.

Currently I am at SCI Forest but nobody knows me as Swing. So I want to let everyone in on it. Shoutout to T-Cup, Keep your head up boo. Anastasia + 5¢ stay strong, and Whitney good luck wherever you are. Love to all the brothers and sistas of the LGBTQ nation.

Peace,

~ Swing | Frank Piccolo

Hope all is well with your souls on this day. I am struggling, I'm down, but don't count me out, I REFUSE to let anybody "Break My Soul." I am ready for my new foundation, new salvation, cause I got new vibrations. I know my next days will be my best days. Holla if ya hear me! Family we got to build it up brick by brick, step by step, day by day. Remember these words from Mama Jee: Propose today that you will live your life with a purpose and with a sense of pride. Pride allows us to be solid, to have a strong foundation, soothing vibes, new salvation and motivation. No one can break your soul. Stay focused on your purpose once you propose it. Anything or anyone that is in conflict with your purpose in life should not even have any consideration in your daily thoughts. Move on. Life only moves in one direction and that direction is forward. Love ya'll all, especially my dawg "KJ" at JCCC.

~ From the heart and soul of Summer Breeze, AKA Mama Jee

Dear H.O.A.W. Family

I have the best, amazing, supportive hubby. I am so happy that he took me back. My world isn't the same without him. I'm fighting to get started on hormone therapy. We LGBTQ Community members need to come together and stand up for our rights. So for every time you see a member for being harassed, stop it, stick up for them. But I would like to give a shout out to Adam, T-Cup, Miley, Diamond, Twin, Zoey, Keke, Emie and other trans people around the world.

~ Whittany Mallin SCI-Forest

Hey H.O.A.W. Family

How are you all doing? I just got off a 4 day lockdown here. My birthday just past, I turned 31. My husband pretty much dumped me for someone else. I am single once again. I've been 7 months misconduct free. I'm working on getting an incentive based transfer to SCI Phoenix. Miley S.Fletcher, I miss our conversations. Caitlyn at SCI Houtzdale and Alexis Mitchell at SCI Albion I miss you. To all that is a big part of HOAW: Peace, keep your head held high and please stay out of trouble. Sincerely

~ Tiffany Alissa Bradbury | MM2990 | SCI Albion

## NOW HOME

Kairi

Sometimes it's like fading away.  
Gone is the times when others wondered  
where we as people, have gone.  
To those with eyes, they still see us.  
To those with ears, they still hear us.  
And those with a sense of touch, can still feel  
us.  
But they will never know us.

We are the people of a movement  
We are the people of a statement  
We are the people of a nation, inside a  
nation.  
We are hated by some, disliked by a lot and  
feared by all.  
Mainly because we are everywhere and  
nowhere at once.

To those who understand, enough said.  
To those who don't understand, more soul  
searching is needed.  
And to those that hear, see, and feel me and  
my words, welcome home.  
No one can tell us that we aren't no one  
special or not important,  
That's when you should say, "I am me and I  
am now!"

## LETTERS & LOVE

To all my brothers and sisters keep your head up. I've been struggling with depression. I haven't gone to no extremes or fell back into my old habits and hurt myself. It's just rough some days, I've done my time alone. I have one friend that I consider family and I don't see her anymore. Haven't spoke to my mother in seven years. The one person I could call hasn't been picking up. I feel completely alone. I haven't no companionship either. When will the sun shine on me and these clouds go away? I hope soon. If anyone got any positive advice for me, I'd highly appreciate it. Shout out to Skills, Joe, Caitlin, Nikki J, Nayara, Blue Magic, Bre, Slim, alexis, Sandman. love yall, those who don't know me, it's a pleasure and love y'all too. Someone get at me with some advice with what to do with my sis. God Bless all my bros and sis in the LGBTQ+ community.

~ Nino

Robert Perez | LB0500 | SCI Houtzdale

Hey, This is my first time writing yinz. I'm a bisexual Puerto Rican/Italian/black male. I just want to say what's poppin to the community. Hello to my bros; Knowledge, Savage, Daniir "Prince" Malloy, My Aunt Tea cup, Miley "Miles Money" Fletcher, Diamond, Shaggy, Royal, Trina, Kels and everybody else. I don't have much time left but I'll write to y'all and send money and pics. You know how I roll #100. Life is AMAZING. Hope everyone is doing good. What's up everybody? I'll be in Pittsburgh soon. Get in touch. I don't ghost people, just a good friend.

Stay Blessed,

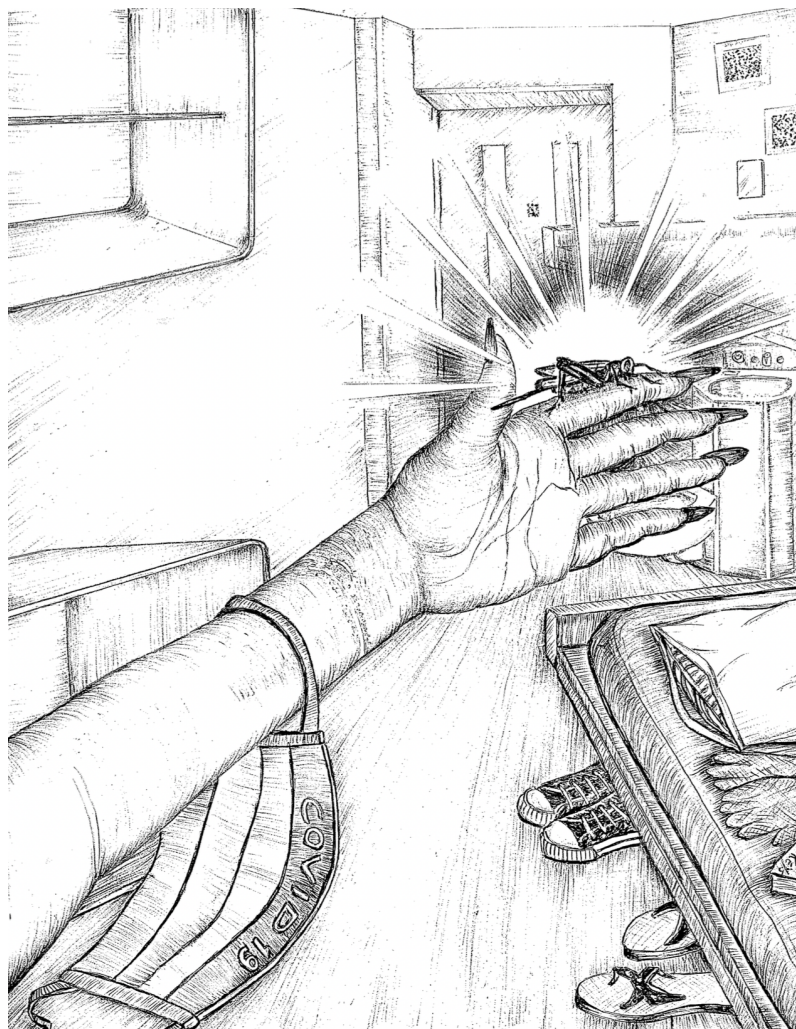
~ Rico GQ | SCI Forest

Dear Hearts on a Wire,

I give a special shoutout to Anistasia thank you so much for being here for me. I do miss you very much. I hope you are doing okay. Anistasia keep your head up and stay strong.

~ Adam Mallin | SCI Forest





## PRISON CRICKET

Jessica Diane Garza

Prison Cricket woke up this quiet cell, now an insomniac cell. He arrived last night, got himself comfortable, and decided to stay. The crack at the bottom of my door is a welcome-mat to any creature small enough to slip in for a friendly visit, come say hello in a small creature language and chit-chat a while with a lonely prison inmate.

I was sitting alone in the quiet, when I noticed I had a visitor, and my melancholic face sprang to life with a smile.

As the cricket sat there looking up at me, I understood his questions: “Are you a friendly human monster? Will you allow me to stay a while, while I pitch my cricket pick-up line into the airwaves, searching for a date with a pretty cricket-girl of my own cricket kind?”

I said in response: “Yes, you can stay! What do you and your cricket-girl want to eat on your first date? I can be your chef and waiter, and you can impress your date with the fine establishment you’ve invited her to.”

“First I have to call my cricket-girl,” Prison Cricket said. So he found a cozy corner underneath a towel and proceeded to chirp. At first I didn’t mind at all. But then I began to get tired and turned off the light. Prison Cricket just kept chirping away as happily as ever.

As you might guess, I didn’t get much sleep that night. But I so much wanted to meet his cricket-girl that I stayed awake and waited up with him. Both of us happily chirping away throughout the prison night. Just me and Prison Cricket.

## LETTERS & LOVE

How is everyone? Me, I'm doing good. Just staying outta the way. I'd like to give a shout out to Brittney Lynn @ Albion, I miss you too. Please don't give up when it comes to things such as starting HRT. Brittney, it takes time. For me it was 6 months on the damn waiting list to get everything started. Please remain strong! Shout out to Monica @Rockview I wish too that we can chat more about "Life" & the "Boys" LOL. Should I say the "Men." Tink Tink, I'm sorry to hear what you had to go through with the sergeant. It's never gonna be right on how staff treat us. Please know you got people in your corner that love you. I'm 1 of them. I don't know you, but we're family. I have a few staff members here who wanna use the "Faggot" word when addressing me. Part of me wants to cuss @ them, but where will that get me? I let it go & act like it doesn't bother me but deep down it does. It's been 7 months since I started HRT. I'm feeling pretty good being on them. I also wanna say I loved everyone's stories in this issue "#32." I can relate to mostly everyone. I'll never let others bring me down. I just keep a smile & move forward. Well that's all for now, can't wait to get my next issue. Until then, everyone @ HOAW stay strong & I send my love to each & everyone. Just know you'll always be loved by HOAW.

~ Cree

Dear HOAW family,

The fam can call me Chocolate Drip @ SCI-Forest, I just came out and fully committed to my bae Royal! I love him with every bone in my body. I'm glad that I finally came out cause now I'm more comfortable within myself. And I'm glad that even though it's not that many of the family, up here with the ones who I do deal with, it's been nothing but love. To the gang gang, much love. First is to Royal! I love you Babe; Knowledge; Tah; DiDi; KiKi AKA Goldy; Dillie; Jersey Sav; JB; Armani; Fidelity even though we don't know each other yet, & I can't forget my man Shadow AKA 6. Also I want to give a special thanks to Jersey Sav, Mal & Tan who embraced me from day one!

~ Chocolate Drip AKA Kaleem Shelton #MD-1448 @ SCI-Forest

Hello HOAW family,

A shoutout to my husband Jacquan Richardson AKA Mr. Blue Magic. Baby Boy I love you and miss you so much. I love you with all my heart and soul to the fullest. You make me happy baby. I want you to know that I am Z coded now and you don't have to worry about these others trying to get what's yours. I told them already that I am married to you. You're my world, my heart and soul. Most of all you're my husband. Love, your wife Amber Autumn Richardson Snow Bunny.

Now I want to do a shoutout to all of my Brothers and Sisters @ Benner Township and other SCIs around PA. Keep y'all heads up and be strong. As for the community in Benner we need to stop the H8. We need to help each other and not be against each other. We can't have a community without unity. Please everyone let's help each other starting now and show that we are strong and that we matter and that we are equal. #BlackLivesMatter #TransLivesMatter #LGBTQLivesMatter

~ Infinite Star JP AKA Mrs. Blue Magic Richardson

## LETTERS & LOVE

Dear Hearts On A Wire,

Our prison has been promising us tablets since June 1st, how they say we'll receive them in the fall sometime. Just another way to siphon money from our accounts. The commissary prices are getting exponentially higher and they just announced a ten dollar increase in our spending limit. Trust me, they'll find a way to get every penny of that ten dollars.

We've been suffering under triple-digit heat although I do live on an A/C Unit. But having to walk from one building to another is quite uncomfortable.

It is my sincerest hope that everyone enjoying your latest issue is Healthy, Happy, and at Peace. I'm down to six months before my first parole review and am excited at the possibility of release. If for any reason I'm denied I've got two more years to serve in the cellblock before I can return to general population. Either outcome is a step-up from my current situation.

I would be interested in hearing the condition of meals in other prisons. Here, our food is getting progressively less edible and smaller in portions. Texas prisons have money, for-profit industries run off the free inmate labor we provide. Last year dollars in just commissary sales, about 40 million of which was pure profit. Meanwhile, we steadily have issues with the plumbing, electricity, and air conditioning. The streets are so raggedy it's a safety hazard just to walk on them.

In closing, allow me to send love and positive energy to all my LGBTQIA+ community. Be safe, keep it real, and keep loving yourselves.

In Solidarity,

~ Leah

Shout out to my baby/heart (Love). Bae you know how much I love you and nothing comes between us. Stay strong baby it's almost over, I love you and believe in you.

Your husband,

~ Tyree | SCI Camphill

## DROP IT ON 'EM

Dylicia Alicia Snow

I ain't dancin fo No dollas,  
Jus be makin fellas holla  
An jus stackin up Muh chips  
while he grabbin on da Collar  
They call Me De-Lich-ous  
Even when I get Me-lich-ous  
An if you talkin wit my man  
then you know I'm getting Vicious  
Tryna sneak a peek an if you Actin like a Creep  
Then I'm gon tax ya Ass  
An that's Neva gon be Cheap  
Let my hair down  
An' put my stilettos on da ground  
Let me get a shout out for the Baddest Bitch Around  
Eatin me up (yum yum) while I chew the (gum gum)  
Only da Right Man can make this Girl (cum cum)  
Mamma-Mia Electria, He go crazy inside me-uh  
Not mixin business an pleasure  
But always pleased on a Regular  
Now I know I got him Twisted how he lickin at my lipstick  
Bet not beat it when you in there Careful not to Rip it,  
I don't do frenchie when we Kissin  
it's too Nasty for the streets  
But jus wait till the Lights out  
I get freaky in da sheets



artwork by Najee Gibson

## LETTERS & LOVE

I came out (for the first time) early 2022 to the Prison. This was the most scary, but also the most liberating thing I have ever done. I have endured the expected prejudices from some staff and inmates. I also have experienced some acceptance and love from the rest. My hopes and goals was to procure the Gender Dysphoria diagnosis, and be on my way toward Gender Affirmation Surgery (being only a few years away from Maxing).

On the Friday before Christmas, I get a tele-session with the DOC psychiatrist. He tells me that he intends to deny me the diagnosis I sought, and that I would not expect to receive HRT as well.

I feel betrayed and extremely saddened by this. I was told by him that I will have to wait for my release in order to get diagnosed and receive HRT. Is there any way I could challenge this? I still can present as transgender, but I desperately would like to at least be diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria before I get out. This would make it easier to obtain HRT (if I can't get them here) when I get out. The diagnosis would also help me manage the depression he brought on me.

Yours truly,

~ Nora

Norman Slater | NU5138 | SCI Rockview

Hello Hearts Fam!!!

I just want to let you ALL know how important you all are to me. I love reading all your letters, poetry, insights, artwork, and everything creative you each present. Trans Unity and the whole LGBTQIA+ Family is a presentation on just how strong people can be :) We go through torture, harrasment, abuse, neglect from people from all walks of life and yet we still stand!! I just tell you to stand strong, change is on the way.

Thank you Ary for your shout-out in issue #32, it made my week to know someone had taken the time to recognize me. Stay strong! Also shout out to Harley Quinn, your writing iz amazing girl. Hang in there DeeDee. Shout out to Rachel, keep ya chess game up. And Summer Breeze love your rap game girl. And Twinky Bear with your kinky self LOL. And all the abolition writers Didi, Shrek, GeGe, Miley, Michelle, Lexi Love, Jennifer Rose, Anastasia, Eric, and also to Ceci Ransome about your collective minds input. Also Brittany, I feel your letter in #32 the most, you right we need to stick together girl or pretty soon a lot of us gonna be gone. They killing us, raping us, and treating us like we ain't humans too, but where there's unity, we will win.

I love all ya'll, stay strong, we WILL win. Trans Power!!

~ Dylicia Alicia Snow | U39504 | Dillon Gresham | Florida

Thank you all for your encouraging personal stories. I was greatly inspired by them because being behind these prison walls is hard on a trans-woman. This FSP Prison is rejecting a lot of reading. Shoutout to all of my FM family sisters/brothers. We sometimes feel like we are the forgotten ones and I like to give a shoutout to my FM sisters & brothers Lindsey, Quiesha, lil' D, Dutchess, Contessia, Ceno, Shorty-Low, Meisha, Kay Kay, Gotti, Money, Deanna, Nikki, Marvelous, Pink, Gucci, Berta, Facedown, DeDe, Benji, Mya and to the whole FM family 6.13.12. I love ya'll,

Love,

~ Contessia

## LETTERS & LOVE

Shout out to Harley Quinn Jacinda Lee. You are the only one for me. I want to love and care for you and grow old together with happiness. Please never give up on me. You are my world, my everything, the reason my heart started beating again. I love you and I miss you!

Your Husband,

~ Joker

Hey hearts fam: After reading Issue #32 I just have to say, I'm impressed the conversation about prison abolition was productive. I learned a lot. So please let's keep the conversation going. HOAW thank you, thank you, thank you for doing so much good for this community & giving us this platform to express ourselves & to give back to. So thank you & love you. Shout out to my Handsome Sexy Fiance Smith-Bey I am in such awe and gratitude to you and so so in love with you & I just love you babe. To my ED and my sister Sydney. I love you girl and I am here for you. Keep taking care of her ED. Indy: keep your head up don't let them break you. To Ms. Ceci: sorry about your husband. We all feel your pain. Munta: I read Redefining Realness too and it really changed my perspective for the better and encouraged me to live my life for me and do my best to not be so hard on myself. I feel your pain girl I too was a victim of sexual abuse in prison & it takes a while to heal & feel comfortable in your own skin again. I hear you & definitely relate to your story and your pain.

Love to you all & solidarity everyone.

~ DiDi @ Forest

### UNTITLED

Sage Nicole Braswell

I was born into obscurity  
Raised by the Minority  
White Trash all the same

Why Am I weak  
Why can't I seek  
Life that was meant to be?

Skin of Another  
Hated by Mother  
Call me Ms. if you please

No need to show me  
You'll never know me  
I'm the daughter you call son

Shout out to my sister DeeDee - I loved your poem, girl.  
Keep your head up!

~ TinkTink

Dear Hearts on a Wire:

Since I came out as Trans I started to learn how to love again, I love myself more and more. I am happy now, a free bitch and proud. Shout out to Ary at SCI Greene, I knew you in the York County Prison. Homegirl keep your head up, I miss talking to you!

Sincerely,

~ Ali'Se

Ronald Weaver | QJ1172 | SCI Houtzdale

Shower Shoes what up bro, I landed at the City of Coal. Hope everything is good up at the Set. Let all know I send my love to all the queens. I know I set it up so you can write my lil bro, get at me, love you bro. Your brother Snake.

~ Royal Andrews

## LETTERS & LOVE

All my Brothers and Sisters:

I am currently in the IMU where we are being treated with such disrespected, assaulted, threatened, etc. We are on a hunger strike starting June 8, 2022 - we are asking for all the help we can get.

~ Tone

Issue #32 is great, especially the cover art, props to Marcelino. Twinky Bear's poem *Pants... That Keep No Secrets* was my absolute favorite. I genuinely love when men are confident with their manhood. Big or small means little and less to me.

There is a question I have regarding surgery. Is there a medical procedure where men can have a pussy added in the perineum—the anatomical area between the ball sack and anus? I love my cock and my balls, sexual reassignment surgery isn't for me. If I could have surgery to create a pussy behind my balls, would be amazing! Being a gay boy takes so much prep to enjoy bottoming, so if there is a surgery like this would love to know about it! On the topic of surgery, I believe all trans people should have access to sex changes.

To X Marcelino@SCI Greene, I would like to hear what you have to say on Megan's law.

I am non-binary, though I use masculine pronouns—he,him,his.

Sincerely,

~ Drew Boy Cali

Dear Hearts on a Wire,

I am a trans woman on a mission in the BOP to make it better for my sisters who come after me! I filed to get us a different set of uniforms then the cisgender men wear in here. Well girls, it has worked for us now here in the USP as we have the option to choose jumper dresses or the regular uniform. It is now our choice! The dresses are 100% better than the regular uniforms. I'd like to give a shoutout to my sisters in the BOP to keep their heads up and keep it moving girls.

~ Jennifer Eymard / USP Allenwood

We are all a family in this world. You're to never judge others for the only one who judges us is Jesus. Remember that. When I lost my love due to covid 19, I am hurt.

For Tink Tink, It makes me sad what happened to you. I will pray for you. There is a place you can write to. Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund. I will pray for you. Stay strong my sister I send my love. Stay beautiful.

To everyone in SCI Benner I pray for you all. If you really need a friend I am there for you always. Yes together we are strong. Light to all of my sisters.

~ W.F. Rockview

### **TLDEF**

520 8th Ave, Suite 2204  
New York, NY 10018

# WHAT HAVE I DONE

Kaitlyn Mae Santos

What have I done  
I broke your heart  
When I cheated on you  
I broke your heart  
When I hid my True Feelings  
You couldn't trust me anymore.  
I'm always in pain since that day  
I can't change what I've done.  
When I cheated on you, that wasn't fun.  
Thought you were my number 1.  
I have destroyed your heart  
Lost your trust  
I kept lying to you  
Without any change.  
I've lost respect for myself  
Ever since that day  
You'll never forgive me  
I forgave myself  
Ever since that day  
You'll never forgive me  
I forgave myself  
I could never forget  
The pain I've caused you  
Is not something I could forget  
Having too much regret.  
Watching you cry  
Broke something inside of me.  
Having sadness  
Has taken its toll  
Nothing could replace you.  
Nothing could love me  
But you  
What have i done  
Make things easier  
Make things harder.  
Separated myself farther.  
I've walked through hell  
Nothing is swell.  
You put me first  
I put you last  
What have I done  
Cannot last.  
What's left in the past.

# LETTERS & LOVE

First and foremost, shout out 2 the LGBTQIA+ in all the DOC around the world, keep y'all head up and stand strong.... I am at Houtzdale now.... And shout out 2 my babygirl, Fidelity. I love you and miss you. And to my homegirl Miley S. Fletcher, keep your head up @ Forest. And shoutout 2 Bigfoot, Spade, Egypt Ily Moore, Angel, Rosie, Dee'Dee, Nice, Jesse, Max, Foxy, Ms. Linda Mai Li and Amber Autumn Pratt. I hope y'all @ Benner holding it down and keeping it real and keeping y'all head up there. Love y'all and miss y'all and shout out 2 Brittany, Nikki, Skillz, Twinky Bear @ Houtzdale. Y'all have an amazing loyal and real brother in me and I am the one and only Jacquan Blue Magic Richardson. I just got here from SCI Benner and I hope 2 meet y'all soon. Until then, stay strong and focus on getting out of this world we in....

~ Jacquan Blue Magic Richardson

MB3776 | SCI Houtzdale

My boyfriend & I were separated by the DOC in retaliation for a lawsuit. Their excuse was you both are gay & they don't like that & it could be a conflict of interest. In June 2022, me & L. were together for 4 years so shout out to you, I love you my beautiful ANGEL. Shout out to Taz, a friend of mine since our time at SMST unit. To all others in the LGBT community, don't get discouraged. If we let negative people who judge us win, then we already lost. We are all worth it. We continue to fight for our right to be happy & accepted as people. Hang in there. I love you all.

~ Jordan Saekics aka Crazy J

NF9401 | SCI Albion,

I'd like to give a shoutout to GiGi @ Somerset, I really miss all the fun we had @ Fayette. I'm here at HuntingDON, but my lawsuit is going to allow me to pick a jail. What would be the best one to go to? Shadow and skillz if you were at Greene with me (what's up!). Special, Grif, and Jessica much love to y'all and I miss ya

~ Your boy Slez!!

Eric Rudolph | EK0358



## THEY CALL ME MOM

Heather

I did not bear them nor did I wean them but in our world of abandonment and denial from our own families we form families of our choice. We come together as both family and support. We call each other, Brother, Sister, Cousin, Nephew, Mom but never father or Dad.

We did not choose to be who we are, we came into this world as we are and Life dictates whether we hide or be as open and honest as to who we are. In communities such as ours we choose who we call mom and why and for me I am both honored and humbled to be the one they call Mom.

## LETTERS & LOVE

I'd like to shout to girls and LGBTQ community at SCI Forest, SCI Mahanoy, SCI Albion. Hey Mariah, you can write my sister and tell me about Mahanoy. Love and miss you. Love you all!, PEACE!

~ Bam Bam | SCI Frackville

To my trans bros & sisters & the LGBT Community,

In my 55 yrs of life, I never thought I would ever find anyone that would accept & truly care & love me. I have truly found my soulmate. He has made me proud & honored to acknowledge him as my husband. We were married on June 1, 2021. He means the world to me. Mikey, I am yours for all eternity keep strong in this time of forced separation by NV Dept. of Corrections. Thank you for coming into my life in 2019. With lots of love to my darling loving husband,

~ Vyrghynia Rose

Dear HOAW Family,

I have been doing really good in my personal life. By the time this is printed I will have been with my new partner for over 4 months. I finally got off razor restriction. I'm still fighting to get my Z code lifted. I'm also trying to figure out how to get the HRT, because the Dr. refuses to do the eval. If anyone has any advice to get a different doctor, I'm all ears. The area coordinator said I'm not allowed to pick my Dr.. I still look forward to my visits with Adrian from HOAW. The biggest thing he has helped me with recently is help me come up with my chosen name (Timber) I also get a visit from family in person once a month and my sister is always rocking some kind of LGBT+ shirts. It makes me so jealous. It's nice to be able to enjoy food and board games with them. Shout to Dawn, Shappee, Ash, Mark, my Baby Gator, and everyone else I know. I hope to see everyone at church when they mix the zones in September. Sending love to all ♥♥♥

~ Timber, FKA Taz | Tyler Trewitz | NM4043

I have a best friend here who I love to death, Alexis. She is the best woman that I ever met and I am so glad I have her in my life. She helps me love who I am.

Brittany in Houtzdale, I'm sorry to hear about you and your mom's situation. This is new for both of you and you have different ways of dealing with it. I am hopeful that if you give her some time she will come to accept you. No matter what, never hate or be ashamed of who you become; if you love who you become and show people that I promise they will love you too.

To all of the hearts on a wire community, together we are strong and can make it through anything.

~ Tex AKA Christian Leach | SCI Fayette

# LETTERS & LOVE

## content warning:

We included the letters on these pages because they touch on important topics. However they are potentially upsetting. Please be gentle with yourself.

If you missed issue #32 I am “Twisted” from issue #31. I never thought anyone would comment on someone who just popped up in a HOAW issue and was too pussy to give up her real name or info. I was wrong. I cried. Y’all heard me.

Sage Nicole: Thank you. I live your advice. I’ve never stopped. I’m able to write this due to divine intervention. As long as I breathe, I fight for what’s right. Unfortunately, instead of “falling together,” it has gotten much worse. Ary I hear ya. And I did just that. I have 3 lawsuits myself. I’m trying. I’m so damn ALONE. Ms. Linda Mai Li: I struggle to write these words cuz I can’t see. My tears are on this page I’m writing on. Girl, you have no idea... Prettyboi Jay: How can you help me? I’m not sure, but I accept any form of help. Holla @ you? Possible. Boy, I’m a HOT MESS right now. Dom@Muncy; I actually petitioned OPM (Office of Population Management) for you to come and be my cellmate in a male facility. I haven’t had a cellmate in 2 ½ years and I need someone with whom I’d feel safe. I could teach you the nuances of “male” society in prison. Monica @ Crotchview, I mean, Rockbottom, I mean Rockview - LOL - I know your situation. BE careful dealing with security. It’s crazy that you are in the same place as me, but we can’t see each other. If you ever come to the RHU, ask to cell up w me. They tend to use transgirls as unknowing weapons against these transphobic inmates. I think you had this happen to you as well. Am I right? Ree-Rockiew- you the one on D block? Front? I heard of you. What’s up? Finally, Dawn @Manahoy: we have the same judge. Many of us have the same struggle and documentation of what you need. We need to network all of this info so you can paint a clearer picture in your briefs.

I’ve been staring at the 2 beautiful girls’ pictures that have passed away (Na’Tia and Gemini). I don’t know them, but they have an effect on me. I feel so selfish for trying to kill myself. Next time I make my rope, these girls are gonna help me chill. It just makes me SO ANGRY... we have a right to live!

As I’ve said, I am a victim of sexual violence. Rape is not just the violent *taking*, it encompasses much more. It boils down to someone using you for sexual gratification against your will. Some people use commissary, financial gain, or hold past deeds over your head to coerce you. This is rape. Sometimes it’s disguised as a business transaction. Like, “I’ll make it all stop if you ‘be mine’...” or, “I’ll make sure you eat and no one will bother you...” I’m sure you know what I’m talking about.

Without getting into too much detail, my abuse was All of the above. My religion and my previous stance against the LGBTQ+ community enabled an influential person to have me in his cell. It kept going on for YEARS. When I did try to leave, he has homies on every block so that when I landed on another block; I was ambushed and forced to go back, “or else.”

I reported the abuse and sought protection. I was issued a misconduct for “threats” because I told them I’d defend myself against another attack. I was already in solitary confinement and in a single cell. Who did I threaten? I have repeatedly asked for protective custody. Denied by the superintendent, PRC and security. I filed a S1983 lawsuit on this and several other issues, as well as a preliminary injunction. I was again repeatedly ordered to remain to the same population as my rapists with an addition.

~ Munta

# LETTERS & LOVE

## **content warning:**

We included the letters on these pages because they touch on important topics. However they are potentially upsetting. Please be gentle with yourself.

I want to speak on something that doesn't necessarily deal directly with our struggles as gay, non-binary, queens or the beauty that you are. There was a suicide at my spot on 5-11-22. The c.o. did his rounds 3 times. That's an hour & a half. That left a dude hanging because a c.o. didn't want to do his job & check the cell. He tried reaching out, moving away from his cellie, talking to psych – the end was the gag. The struggles we face are infinite, I know & I write this with tears right now because this comes from a deep place, but hold on to something, someone before you take that step. I've done that. I've had to be brought back, I've cut so many times I have to cover my arms, so I know. The pains we feel are fleeting & will pass. They will always exist, but they are battle scars to remind us of the strength that we possess. Don't let this world steal your strength & expose your weakness. I have come to terms with being alone & my head may be bowed from time to time. But I'm never broken. Hold on to what you love people & keep your heads up. Whether it's a rope or a razor, the comfort of the darkness is cold when the light shines on this side. No matter how brightly.

~ Brandon Austill

Attention LGBTQ+ captives; the Phoenix is a hostile environment, over the previous 18 months I've witnessed a guard sexually grope a transgender person on surveillance video. Myself and two others filed a P.R.E.A., the lieutenant indicated the guard has been removed off units previously. Nothing was done. A unit sergeant verbally abused a transgender guard ultimately having her reassigned. The same sergeant mistreats those associating with LGBTQ+ peers, and P.R.E.A. is not a remedy here! Multiple rapes have been committed as the prisoncrats do little to cease criminal conduct. You'll have no recourse or preventive measures if warehoused here. The very fortitude, courage, uniqueness you have will make you a target! If you do come here, remain mindful that the majority here are hiding in plain sight! Those pretending to hate you most likely are similar.

~ "James"

## **PRETEND**

### No One Special (SNG)

Do You ever Pretend;  
That you, as a person, matter?  
Do You ever Pretend;  
That your Thoughts and Ideas are as unique as you are?  
Do you ever pretend;  
That You have so much To offer another?  
Do you ever pretend;  
You're Worth Loving?  
Do you ever Pretend;  
Like everyone else, You want To love someone?  
It's Just Pretend

## LETTERS & LOVE

Hello my Kings + Queens:

I'm Just Thankful To be AWARE, Alive And healthy!! I'm 29 years young with a life Sentence, but I Never Say I'm Never going home Cause I AM!! Everyday the laws are changing and I refuse to let the system keep me as their next car notice or house mortgage.

I'm too loyal, humble + Blessed. God will never put more on us than we can bear, #Period. Keep yalls head up, Forreal. I miss you Buckwild, you're still my #one. I'll leave ANY "Hitta" for you ♥ To SANTANA, you're on the floor, on your mat, drawing making money for "us" Thank you for being the best MAN you can be for me. You make me so mad, yet so happy. I love you my lil White Thug ♥ God Bless you all

~ Queen Malaysia | Hartsville, TN

To: Hearts on a Wire – Family and Friends

Let's get everyone in the LGBTQ community together and make something positive of this, talk about unity in the community, not hate. Let's love each other as a whole.

~ Justin Schwanke | MB2157 | SCI Forest

Baby girl I LOVE YOU so very much. You are so smart, beautiful, funny, energetic, determined, and focused. There's days where life is so hard, there's so much going on and you're drowning in doubt, worry, stress or whatever. Be strong and brave and everything will be okay. And you're reading this in this newsletter because these are my people, who need you to stand up for them and their rights because everyone deserves equality and acceptance so please read their pain, struggles, fears and more and help them for daddy. Always know I LOVE YOU.

♥ Daddy, Zachary Graham (Ary)

To all at Benner

I know how it feels to be judged by others. It happens all the time. All we can do is move on in life. If we all stay positive we are one. We are family. I wish I knew you all a little better. I feel all alone. I need you all to help me. I lost my love.

~ W.F.

Dear HOAW Family

I enjoy reading what everyone writes, sometimes it puts a smile on my face. I read the letters whenever I'm feeling down. Rich, I really do miss you here at Smithfield. I hope you're doing well. If you find a way, write me. Here at Smithfield, I see how they still mistreat the transgender inmates. It truly hurts to see it happening. Always remember that we have to stick together. Not to put each other down, if we do they win. I always pray for you all out there.

With Love always

~ Shaggy | Terry L. Shay | DW5134 | Smithfield

## LETTERS & LOVE

This yo girl Summer Breeze blowing on through. I am catching hell, but I am still living my best life. I knew you probably wonder how the hell she living well and catching hell. Well honey it's called PRIDE! A Deeper love inside. The power of living, the strength to survive. See pressure creates diamonds, and I feel the pressure. I am daily oppressed by the evil policies and policy makers at WMCC and MODOC. I am being told that I cannot have a separate shower period, so that I may conceal my lovely lady lumps. That my look, behavior and trans/intersex status denies me access to the honor dorm and incentive programs. I am misused and abused by staff. But I got PRIDE! I am SOMEBODY. They can write me down in history with their bitter twisted lies, they may throw me in the very dirt, but still like dust, I rise above the hate. Let's rise together from DOC to DOC, from BOP to BOP, let's use our pens and voices and make our world a better place to live. We deserve fair and equal treatment. Mother Summer Breeze knows that she ain't the only one catching hell. I AM SOMEBODY and so are you. Sending you all my love.

~ Summer Breeze

#1290182 | CMCC Cameron Mo.

Hey yall I have reached my one year mark. I have 12 months till my minimum date and I am a bit nervous. Up until now I've been write-up free for the last 3 years so my fingers (and legs) are crossed. Here at Houtzdale is much different than Frackville where I was transferred from. It's much bigger and many more .... Well, let's just say distractions. And as an old hoe, who is now trying to be more "self-reflective," and self-aware, I know how frisky "Mrs. Kitty" can get, I must keep her in check and not "spraying her spray" all over the place.

~ Twinky Bear AKA The Real Jail House Wife of PA

JB, Savage and Leem, keep ya'll head up and stay sucker ducking. Mom I love you and will miss you. Keke I love you too sis, go home and stay sucker ducking. Shewolf we had our good and bad time. I not mad, I just want the best for you. Mark I'm out this camp. Keep your head up and get out to your love ones. Twin and Zoey go home and win. Mal Run take care and safe. I would like to say sorry to anyone who may have lost someone dear to them. Ms. Ceci, you are strong and I'm here for you and anyone in the community. I send out Big-Big-Big hugs and love. Summer Breeze that rap was lit. Nir calm down, I will be in touch with you soon. Yes I still think about you. I will be in touch Anistasia, you just have to get right and know what you really want in life. Ed and Syd, much love. Savage stay up and keep sucker Duckin JB. The same for you Kayla. Keep in touch mom.

~ Da Real Knowledge | SCI Forest RHU



Artwork by Miley Selena

## LETTERS & LOVE

Dear HOAW family,

I am doing time in South Dakota. I recently read through issue #32 and again found myself completely engrossed in the letters. It is fascinating to read so many people's thoughts, either from the nightmares they have been through or the dreams that are slowly becoming truth. I am transgender and spent most of my life only sharing my identity with people who needed to know because of shame and confusion. I have been inside for over ten years now and even after connecting with proud community members here, maintained privacy over my identity. Over the last several years, one of my closest friends here has been involved in a similar lawsuit as Ms. Guthrie from PA DOC. Her strength to stand up for her needs has given me the strength to completely open up and be myself. One day I woke up, admired my sisters' strength and realized I am not a princess, I am a queen and I don't need anyone to save me, I am Lizzy and proud of it! A few months ago, I started hormones and I am more happy today than I have been in 14 years. We have a pretty large LGBTQ community here and it gives my "inside" life meaning. To be a pillar and a voice in and for this community. Community means hope, love means hope, and having the strength and courage to be who we are in the highest form of self care, pride!

Keep up the fight Dawn, I admire your strength and all of our other sisters and brothers who fight legal battles, stay strong and know you have made all of our lives better. Sending respect and love.

Stay safe

~ Elizabeth Alanna | SDSP

H.O.A.W. Family,

I received the Issue #32! It's so good to read all the love! So, I wanna say, R.I.P. Ms. Gemini & Ms. Na'Tia, you will be missed! I will be maxin' out in March 30, 2023 & I can't wait! Just know it don't stop here! HOAW for life! Indy, hit ya girl up, love ya bro, SCI-Coal Township: Shadow (Snuggles), Dee-Dee & Drew, etc. SCI-Forest: Ms. Fidelity, T-Cup, Sydney, Dilly, Stasia, Knowledge, Black, Twinky-Bear (SAVAGE) & Frenchie Poo-(JB), Meech, Shadow, Gio, Puck, Dee-Dee & Smith-Bey, O-Zone, Diamond & Tone, Z-Live, Ty & Run, and everyone else I didn't mention, just know you're not forgotten.... SCI-Phoenix: C.R., Uncle Wendall! Stay strong, there's a light at the end of the tunnel! I love y'all & remember together we're unstoppable!

Unity is a must!

~ Ms. KeKe x

As an extremely loud & proud prison queen who's been down almost 8 years, I'll soon be ending my incarceration & beginning 10 years on probation. This is my first time on felony probation. I'm nervous AF about leaving. Upon my release in 2022, I'll receive clothes, \$25, a bus ticket & maybe a goodluck Ms. Peacock, you're sure gonna need it. With no place to stay, no money to speak of & a felony conviction hanging over me, what's an old queen & hardheaded ex-con supposed to do?

~ Ket Peacock | 1001298101 | Rutledge State Prison | Columbus, Georgia

Smile, God loves you & so do I! John 3:16 Jesus died for sissies too! Real talk!

## LETTERS & LOVE

Hello family,

I'm an African American trans woman here in Colorado! I would like to share some great news! One of the transgender sisters here became the first to get surgery in Colorado. I've put in for my operation. I've been on hormone therapy for over 7 ½ years already.

I love your magazine and the letters. I would like to say hello to Dawn Guthrie. Keep on sister. Our cause is worth all the obstacles that we come across. We are strong, sister. I love you for your dedication to fight our cause and push on.

Love your sister in CDOC,

~Shugg Qu'ita Wagner

#178905 | CTCF | Canon City, CO

## KAYLA

By Zachary Graham (Ary)

Don't let no one take you off your square  
Don't stress over your hair  
That's right laugh I love the sound  
I'll always want you around  
I'm missing you like case  
Let no one take my place  
I can see us settling down  
With kids running around  
I'm working on that divorce  
So let us take this course  
To get one step closer to you and me  
To my heart you have the key  
Oh dear Kayla  
How I miss our hugs  
And Tim making you scream over bugs  
Our talks through the fences  
You shattered my defenses  
And I love you oh so dear  
My hearts is with you  
when we're not near

I got out in 2020 and I'm here to tell you that you're always in my heart and you have my love and support. To Gigi and all the girls at Rockview I want to say hi. I miss you all and think about you all the time. To the girls in the other prisons same goes for you. Y'all became part of my family through our video time and I got to know you and I think about you often. Just know that I'll always be there for you and you can get me through hearts on a wire if you need support.

Love you always

~ Brandi Shaffer

## LOOKING FOR INFORMATION

**Kaylynn**, one of our inside members, has been organizing with other girls at Coal Township to get access to gender-affirming clothing and cosmetic items from the commissary catalog. She wants to know the following:

1. Can folks in male-designated SCIs in Pennsylvania order women's clothes off their commissary catalog? (Currently people at Coal Township are forbidden to do so)
2. Is anyone in Hearts filing grievances or knows someone who has filed grievances against the DOC to remedy this? What was the result?

♥ Please write to us if you have information! ♥

## \*I'M THAT BITCH\*

By Tammi Unique Rose

Hello. Is it me you're looking for? C. O. D. cash only. Yes sir I do accept food stamps. Snapper Pussy. Good Head. My office hours are from now til I'm dead. Check it. I absolutely love my walk as a Trans Woman. I'm serving life in prison and I wouldn't even exchange it for a freedom ticket. Miss Marilyn Monroe. Big Diamonds and Pearls. Keep it moving I don't gossip about other girls. What's popping and dropping. Where the money at? South Memphis Chick. Born and raised. I move in silence like mice. I love smoking on that good gas and tooting on crystal ice. I'm in the game. Put me in coach. No feelings. No fears. No tears. Girl... I wasn't turned out this way. I been doing this shit. I was born like this. I'm that Bitch. All I ever dream about is \$\$\$\$\$\$. Lord I wish those dreams would come to reality.

I hate smoking on mid. I'm one of the original Stick Up Kids. Real talk. Head first when it comes down to a money vault. I roll solo dolo with a heavy piece. May Miss NaTia and Miss Gemini Bitch in Peace. I do my own thang. I'm so fucking unique it's sickening. Broke boys will never sniff my Rose. I got my dad's strength and quickness. I got my mom's gin gone kiss your ass and fuck you attitude...I'm I'm that bitch.

NECX, Mountain City, TN

## LETTERS & LOVE

Hello, family! How is everybody doing? I was recently moved to the Veteran's Service Unit at SCI Houtzdale. I am making some drastic changes in my life. I just found out my lung was worse than my last jail said to me so the VA Medical is now involved.

This VSU block is good for going home, yet it is very anti-LGBTQ. I have felt alone and unaccepted since being here.

Hello to Brittany. We met at Medical and she made me smile by just talking to me. If you have a way to write, please do!!

Megan I got love for you, stay safe and see you soon. Riley, I love your being my celly and I am sorry that they moved me like they did. I am filing paperwork now to get the ball rolling.

Love

~ Keith Weber | QD7237 | Houtzdale

THIS IS MY FIRST TIME WRITING. SOME OF YOU READING THIS MIGHT KNOW ME, WHAT'S UP? TO THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW ME I'M A BI BLACK MAN STRUGGLING TO KEEP MY SANITY IN HOUTZDALE. I TRY TO FIND SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT EVERY DAY. IT CAN BE HARD WHEN YOU'RE SURROUNDED BY

STAFF AND INMATES WHO WANT TO SEE YOU FAIL. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE US AGAINST THEM, BUT SOMEHOW WE AS A PRISON POPULATION CAN'T SEEM TO REALIZE THAT WE ARE ALL WE HAVE. WE ALL ARE THE ONES ON LOCK DOWN AND THEY ARE THE ONES IN CHARGE. I HAVE 20+ YEARS IN AND I HAVE SEEN THEM TAKE SO MUCH FROM US. WE ARE LOSING OUR MINDS AS A PRISON COMMUNITY. AND WE SUFFER MORE BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE EACH OTHERS BACKS AND THE INSTITUTIONS WE'RE IN DON'T CARE ENOUGH ABOUT US TO OFFER THE ASSISTANCE WE NEED TO FLOURISH. LORD KNOWS I'VE DONE SOME THINGS TO PUSH PEOPLE OUT OF MY LIFE.....( SHOUT OUT SLIM & LITE AT HOUTZDALE). WE HAVE TO BE STRONG. 5 FINGERS INDIVIDUALLY ARE JUST FINGERS, BUT TOGETHER THEY CAN FORM A MIGHTY FIST. IN SOLIDARITY I REMAIN

~E~



## LETTERS & LOVE

Lady She Wolf, I'm so in love with your name. Ceci Ransome: Yes! We as a part of the LGBTQIA+ Community must stop worrying about who looks the best or what I don't got or do got. We're all under the same rainbow and if we stick together as a family we could overcome a lot of oppression, hate etc. Mrs. GeGe I totally agree with you about suicide prevention I've ben down that road a few times because of hate that was shown to me for wanting to be me, and Juicy Queen Bee thank you for the poem *When*. Right now I am sitting at Wakulla Institution on (CSU) Crisis Stability Unit For wanting and trying to commit suicide. Just being able to read the poems, love letters, they all help me to look at life different. I don't care what the world thinks of me, all that matters is what I think of me. Shoutout to my homegirl DeeDee in Florida, Lindsey, Cherry, Snowbunny, Big Baby, my ex Storm I still love ya girl. Ms. Reina Williams thank you for the poem love it really touched my heart, DeeDee in Florida and DoubleStance I truly feel the same way, and Summer Breeze I promise I wont tell either, ma. Tink Tink I'm sorry for that but that's a lawsuit if you had to walk out of the shower in ya bra & can't say nothing about the off camera situation. Reach out to LGBTQIA Lawyers out there that help with this situation. I hope you get the help you need. To Erie, PA my last home love y'all very much & to all my skittles much love and peace and you all are in my prayers.

Love and respect to the LGBTQIA Community & HOAW

~ Day one AKA Kayla Lasahi | Florida Wakulla CI

Dear Hearts On A Wire:

Thank you fam for all your love and support! @Tink Tink I am a non-binary Queer and your letter in issue #32 has my anger boiling. I know that no words can clean your wounds or ease your hurt, just know that I am here. There is a lot of abuse and mistreatment in my facility against our trans brothers. I have gotten into it with officers because of their ignorance and stupidity... but Tink Tink I SEE YOU, I HEAR YOU. If you don't mean something to anyone else, you mean the world to me. Stay strong... @Munta, it shows your character to admit your wrongs. Playas fuck up, none of us are perfect. I'm just glad you are finally being who you are. And to Dom @ SCI-Muncy, you will never know the depth of my hurt, but I want you to know I understand.

~ Demonlo | SCI CBS

Dear HOAW community,

I recently purchased a great book titled *The Queens' English* by Chloe O. Davis which is a LGBTQIA+ dictionary containing LGBTQ+ colloquial terms and phrases. It's rich with history, identity, and pride. The author is a Black bisexual woman with ties to Philly and NYC. I highly encourage everyone to pick up a copy, learn a lot, and apply it to your daily vocabulary.

I wanted to take this time to send hugs and kisses to all the many friends and LGBTQ family that I have met throughout my detainment and incarceration. I could send a major shout-out to all the supporters who have held my arm, had my back, and comforted me but the list is endless. Inmates and LGBTQ staff regardless of being abigail (discrete) or prideful, you will be remembered by me.

~ Anonymous

## LETTERS & LOVE

Dear family HOAW:

I am absolutely thankful—especially today. Two decades ago, I honestly had ~6 months to live. The possibility that I would never smile, that I would never bring a smile on someone else's face, the thought of never being seen again, just the thought of never being loved, or the thought of me never being able to love someone. I am still in the living and long to keep a smile on my face. Death is a moment away and to live is a moment away. To my sisters Na'Tia & Gemini, even in death may both be at rest, and in life you both was Stars. Now god will look after my sisters. To Ms. Keke: sisterhood. To Ms. T-Cup: understanding. Always remember that we are winners.

“That-Part” Big Sister Ms. Zoni

To all my hearts family and friends Torie, Mariah, Miley, Maxine: hold your head high! Eddie, Bre and those I forgot when you do something from the heart and don't expect nothing back God Allah or whoever your higher power may be will send blessings around you all day long no matter what may come your way! So be blessed and stand tall! I send my love to all of you. Nia- hey baby girl long time no see I hope you're doing ok. be strong. your time is coming.

~ Juicy Queen Bee Ford

## QUESTIONS ABOUT MONKEYPOX

**What is monkeypox?** Monkeypox is a disease that has spread among humans since at least the 1950s. It is a virus. Usually, monkeypox occurs in Africa. This summer, it spread among communities of gay/bi men, transgender people, and their sexual partners in the United States and other parts of the world.

**What are the symptoms?** Monkeypox often begins with a fever. It then causes a rash. The rash appears as lesions, like pimples or blisters. The lesions first look flat, then raised, then painful and fluid-filled, and finally inflamed before turning into a scab and falling off. This can last for weeks. Body aches, headaches, tiredness, and swollen lymph nodes might also occur.

**Is monkeypox sexually transmitted?** Monkeypox spreads by skin-to-skin contact or by touching fluids from rashes. Skin-to-skin contact often occurs during sex and has allowed monkeypox to spread in gay sexual communities, but it can spread through any skin contact, including contact with clothes or sheets that have fluid on them.

**What if I get monkeypox?** There is no treatment for the disease, so you will have to wait for monkeypox to pass on its own. Avoid popping blisters. Cover lesions with bandages or cloth. Touching a lesion and then touching yourself can spread the rash across your skin. Wear a mask around others. Wash your hands often. Over the counter pain relief pills and anti-itching creams can help with discomfort.

**Monkeypox has declined quite a bit after a vaccination campaign this summer, but the outbreak is expected to continue at least through the fall.**

# PA LEGAL NAME CHANGE UPDATE



As many of you are aware, Pennsylvania has a law that prevents many people with felony convictions from legally changing their names. The Trans Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF) challenged this law as unconstitutional last year and won in lower courts in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Since then, a handful of people with felonies have been able to follow suit and change their names.

A trans man, representing himself *pro se* in Butler county, was denied a name change because of his criminal record. His case is on appeal to the Superior Court, and TLDEF is representing him in his appeal. If successful, this will have statewide effects. Hearts on a Wire is involved in Amicus (friend of the court) support of his appeal, and will provide updates as we have them.



## RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

These researchers reached out to Hearts on a Wire, and one of our members who recently came home had a good experience being interviewed by them. Hearts on a Wire is keenly aware that trans individuals and communities are all too often exploited as the subjects of research that does not benefit us as individuals or as communities. Participate at your own risk.

Brandon Lang is a sociologist at Bloomsburg University who is studying the challenges that trans people face on the inside with a student, Lauren Gimbor. They hope this research will promote justice for trans people in PA prisons.

You can send them a note for more information:

Brandon Lang  
Bloomsburg University  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
email: [klang@bloomu.edu](mailto:klang@bloomu.edu)

## I LOVE HIM ANYWAY

Amber Richardson

They tell me don't bother,  
But I don't listen,  
I love him anyway.  
They tell me not to ask for him,  
But I don't listen,  
I love him anyway,  
I love him.  
He's helped me,  
led me through the rough times,  
Always trying to make me laugh,  
Forget my troubles and my fears,  
And it works.  
He let's my dreams and my hopes,  
Seem possible,  
He tells me to make them a reality,  
And most of all,  
I love him simply because,  
He loves me and isn't afraid to show it,  
We are joined by something  
that is ever so special,  
So I am writing this to him,  
To let him know no matter where he is,  
I'll always be there to tell him,  
I love you Baby Boy,  
I love him.

# OUR SYMBOL OF PRIDE

Gia Valentina

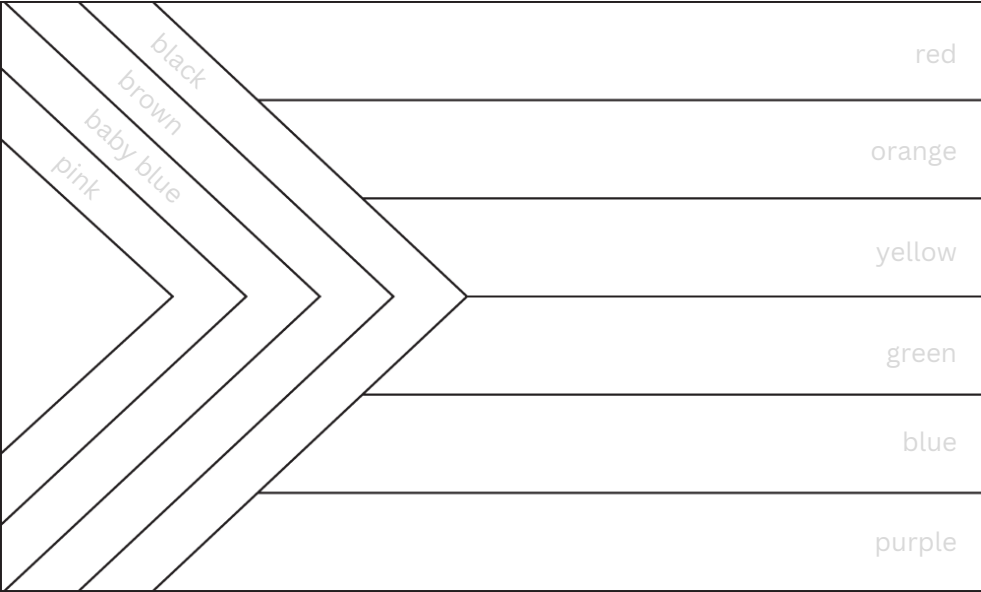
Harvey Milk the American gay rights activist and Community leader who become California's first openly gay elected official to the San Francisco Supervisors in 1977 (later assassinated in office on November 27, 1978) was close friends with American Artist Gilbert Baker, who was inspired to create the Pride Flag for the use as a Symbol of peace and also as "the flag of the human race," partly inspired by gay activist and poet Allen Ginsberg.

For the first time in the revolution of the LGBT community, our victory flag would be raised in 1978 at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day celebration. The original eight-color Pride Flag would be the symbol of diversity. The eight-color version represented the diversity of our community and also had specific meanings, according to Baker Pink Stood for sexuality, Red for life, Orange for Healing, Yellow for Sunlight, Green for Nature, Turquoise for Art, Indigo for Harmony, Purple for Spirit.

Our flag his been modified and today only has six colors as the Original Pride flag, having lost the Pink and Turquoise. We see even more change to our flag today as we grow worldwide.

In 2017, the More Color, More Pride Flag was introduced with Black and Brown colors to represent queer people of color by the Philadelphia Office of LGBT affairs Amber Hikes.

The Progress flag by designer Daniel Quasar debuted in 2019 to make it more inclusive by adding a five-color chevron to represent queer people of color and the trans community. No matter how many colors are added, let us never forget the meaning of each-other who make up our LGBTQ+ family.



# RIGHT TO TRANSITION WHILE INCARCERATED?

Ellie Schwab (University of Pennsylvania Law '24) and Elizabeth Lilly (Temple Law '24)

The Eighth Amendment protects against “cruel and unusual punishment.” This amendment gives incarcerated people a right to receive medical treatment. To claim that this right was violated, you must show that a prison official was:

1. “Deliberately indifferent”
2. To a serious medical need (1)

## Deliberately Indifferent

“Deliberate indifference” occurs when a prison official is purposely not responding to your medical needs. This can be shown in the following ways:

- You made a reasonable request for treatment and were denied, and that denial then caused pain or further injury;
- You are refused treatment that the medical official knows you need;
- Medical treatment is delayed for non-medical reasons;
- You are prevented from receiving needed or recommended medical treatment; or
- The care that you are given causes pain or further injury (2)

**Be aware:** Courts favor the opinion of prison medical officials over that of incarcerated people. Disagreeing with prison medical staff about your diagnosis or treatment does not violate your rights. Even if their opinion differs from other doctors, this does not automatically violate your rights. (3)

## Serious Medical Need

Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is considered a “serious medical need.” You need to be diagnosed with GID either before entering the prison or be diagnosed by a prison medical official. If you do not receive a diagnosis, even if you think you should be diagnosed, you will probably not be considered to have a “serious medical need.” (4)

## If you...

- Were diagnosed with GID before entering prison and received hormone treatment, you are entitled to continue receiving hormone treatment. (5)
- Were diagnosed with GID by a prison medical official, you are entitled to hormone treatment and/or counseling. (6)
- Were diagnosed with GID by a medical professional outside of the prison (like your personal doctor), but the prison medical official refuses to diagnose or treat you, there is not a clear rule on whether this violates your rights.
  - BUT, you could legally argue that this violates your rights, arguing that your GID diagnosis and recommended treatment are ignored or delayed by prison officials for a non-medical reason.

**REMEMBER:** PLRA requires you to exhaust administrative remedies

1. *Thomas v. Cerullo*, No. 1:99-CV-1312, 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 44842 at 12 (M.D. Pa. May 2, 2005)
2. *Turner v. Kirsch*, No. 08-2005, 2011 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 40517 at 16 (E.D. Pa. Apr. 12, 2011)
3. *Welter v. Correct Care Sols.*, 2020 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 430 at \*11 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2020)
4. *Smith v. Hayman*, Civil Action No. 09-2602 (FLW), 2010 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15612 (D.N.J. Feb. 19, 2010); *Cuoco v. Moritsugu*, 222 F.3d 99, 106 (2d Cir. 2000); *White v. Farrier*, 849 F.2d 322, 325 (8th Cir. 1988)
5. *Pearson*, 850 F.3d at 534 (quoting *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. at 104-05)
6. *Welter v. Correct Care Sols.*, 2020 Pa. Commw. Unpub. LEXIS 430 at \*9-10 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2020).

## BOOKS & PENPAL RESOURCES

**Books Through Bars** provides small packages of free books to individuals incarcerated in PA, NJ, DE, NY, MD, and VA. Due to the pandemic they are currently prioritizing requests from PA. **Ithaca College Books Thru Bars** and **Providence Books Thru Bars** send free books nationwide. **Book 'Em** sends free educational books and quality reading material to prisoners and prison libraries in PA. **Books For Prisoners at UCSD** and **East Bay Prisoner Support** send socially conscious reading materials nationwide. **Tranzmission Prison Project** sends books to incarcerated LGBTQ folks nationwide. **Prisoners Literature Project** ships free books to every state except TX. **Prison Library Project** ships free books to all states except HI, ME, and MI.

Send a letter that includes your name, ID number, full address, 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, it may take a while.

**Black & Pink**, and **Montreal Prisoner Correspondence Project**, are organizations that match incarcerated members of the LGBT community anywhere in the country (and in Canada) with pen pals

Additionally, there are several state organizations. The **Sylvia Rivera Law Project** corresponds with transgender people incarcerated in New York state, and the **Transgender, Gender Variant & Intersex Justice Project** supports trans and intersex people incarcerated in CA - their resource guide *A Transgender/Gender Nonconforming Guide to Parole Preparation* may be available beyond California.

Hearts on a Wire appears on several resource lists as a pen pal organization. While we are aware how valuable it can be to have contact with people, this has never been a service we have provided, nor is it something we have the capacity to take on. Hearts has worked to correct these wishful-thinking resource guides as we become aware of them, but we continue to get frequent requests for pen pal matching.

### **Books Through Bars**

4722 Baltimore Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19143

### **Ithaca College Books Thru Bars**

PO Box 113  
Brooktondale NY 14817

### **Providence Books thru Bars**

42 Lenox Ave  
Providence RI 02907

### **Book'Em - Pittsburgh**

PO Box 71357  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

### **Books For Prisoners at UCSD**

w/Groundwork Bookstore  
0323 Student Center  
La Jolla, CA 92037

### **East Bay Prisoner Support**

PO Box 22449  
Oakland CA 94609

### **Tranzmission Prison Project**

P.O. Box 1874  
Asheville NC 28806

### **Prisoners Literature Project**

% Bound Together Books  
1369 Haight St.  
SFCA 94117

### **Prison Library Project**

915C W. Foothill Blvd PMB128  
Claremont CA 91711

### **Black and Pink**

2406 Fowler Ave Suite 316,  
Omaha, NE 68111

### **Prisoner Correspondence Project**

QPIRG Concordia  
c/o Concordia University  
1455 de Maisonneuve Ouest  
Montreal QC H3G 1M8  
CANADA

### **Sylvia Rivera Law Project**

147 W. 24th St., 5th floor  
New York, NY 10001

### **Transgender, Gender Variant & Intersex Justice Project**

370 Turk St #370  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## LEGAL RESOURCES

### **PA Institutional Law Project Philadelphia**

718 Arch St., Suite 304 South  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

### **PA Institutional Law Project Lewisburg**

P.O. Box 128  
Lewisburg, PA 17837

### **PA Institutional Law Project Pittsburgh**

247 Fort Pitt Blvd, 4th Floor,  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

### **Mazzoni Center Legal Services**

1348 Bainbridge Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19147

### **PA Innocence Project**

1515 Market Street, Suite 300  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

### **ACLU Pittsburgh Office**

313 Atwood St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

### **ACLU Philadelphia**

PO Box 40008  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

### **Transgender Law Center**

PO Box 70976  
Oakland, CA 94612-0976

### **Lambda Legal**

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

### **NCLR National Office**

870 Market Street Suite 370  
San Francisco CA 94102

### **GLAD**

18 Tremont, Suite 950  
Boston, MA 02108

### **TLDEF**

520 8th Avenue, Suite 2204  
New York, New York 10018

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

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

**Pennsylvania Innocence Project** only takes on direct appeal and PCRA cases from factually innocent individuals incarcerated in PA who have been wrongfully convicted.

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 legal cases that have the potential to change the situation for other people in similar situations to the plaintiff.*

**Transgender Law Center** is a national organization that takes on impact litigation related to trans rights.

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

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

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

**Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (TLDEF)** is a national impact litigation firm that takes cases related to trans discrimination.

**Incarcerated Writers Initiative at Columbia** is currently accepting submission for Journal publication.

- Fiction (5,000 words)
- Poetry (5 pages)
- Nonfiction (5,000 words)
- Visual Art (5 pages)

more information at <http://columbiajournal.org/iwi/>

Heather Gluck  
**Incarcerated Writers Initiative**  
Columbia Artists/Teachers  
415 Dodge Hall  
Mail Code 1804  
2960 Broadway  
New York, NY 10027

## SUBSCRIBE

Subscriptions are **FREE** for Trans people & allies who are locked up.

If you want our newsletters, please **ask to be added to our mailing list** and **let us know how you are connected to the Trans community.**

We will **not** add people to our mailing list who have not reached out to us directly.

Back issues of the newsletter are available to view or download at [heartsonawire.org](http://heartsonawire.org)

## GETTING OUT IN PENNSYLVANIA?

Get in touch!

We do our best to support our inside members in reentry. Let us know when you expect to get out, where you are going, and what you need.

## PILOT PROGRAM

Our experiment with virtual visits between inside and outside Hearts on a Wire community members is going well. We currently have more requests than we have capacity for! If you are **Transgender** in the **PA DOC** and you want to try out a visit with an outside member, please write to us and let us know so we can add you to the waitlist.

**Hearts on a Wire**  
**1315 Spruce St**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19107**

## WRITE TO US! SUBMISSIONS

### You can send us...

Letters | Shoutouts (keep it short and sweet) | Original Artwork  
Recipes | Interviews | How-to articles | Ideas | Articles  
responding to current events, prison policies, and this  
newsletter | Original Poetry | Book Reviews | Contribuciones  
en español son muy bienvenidos!

### Next Issue:

Our relationships with ourselves and those around us are the foundation of our communities. We want to shed light on the role mentors play in shaping queer and trans communities.

- Who has been a significant role model for you and why?
- How have people in your life helped you imagine a future for yourself?
- What has influenced/inspired your personal desires?
- What role do trans elders play in creating safe spaces inside? What can you learn from those who've come before you?
- How do you define family for yourself? How has family shaped the way you feel about yourself?

### Guidelines:

- If you contribute make sure you tell us **exactly** how you want to be credited [Anonymous? ID number? Chosen name? Facility?]. **We will only use your location and/or government name if you explicitly tell us to do so.**
- We will no longer publish full addresses as this leads to the newsletter being barred in some institutions.
- Please respect other people's privacy; only make disclosures about yourself.
- **No shade.**
- Your original work only. **We will not publish work that has previously been published elsewhere.**
- We get more submissions than we can possibly print.
- We are trying to get a lot of voices into the conversation.
- **We prioritize writing by trans and non-binary authors.**
- **We reserve the right to publish excerpts and to make light edits for length and clarity.**