

feedback

inside & outside, voices from the jail struggle

Durham, NC ~ november 2015 ~ volume 12

‘The system’s motto: Treat the symptom, not the problem’

I’m in the D.C.J. and have some problems. They are listed in this letter!

The medical department is said to have a dentist, and medical claims there is a list for the dentist. I’ve yet to see a dentist. I went to medical, a self-declared emergency the first time for my tooth and was given 400 mg motrin 2x a day. Now over a month later I went back on sick call and had to beg the nurse to place me on an antibiotic. I requested for my motrin to be increased to 800 mg, I explained I didn’t want a narcotic because she kept saying over and over ‘I’m not giving you narcotic’ as if that was my reason for being there, regardless of how swollen my jaw was or how broke off and rotten my tooth is. The motrin was increased to 600 mg 2x a day, which is still not strong enough. I am in pain.

The jail staff acts gung-ho like they are on top of situations and are really concerned for the safety of inmates. Not so! There is no shower mat in the showers, no wet floor signs. There is mold on some of the mattresses that are given out. Trays still have old food in them from

previous meals. Tray tops are water logged and they use the excuse of condensation, but how could that be when tray tops have holes in them, and that’s how water from the dishwasher gets in them (etc.). You can hold the tray top and feel the weight of water in it/them. As well as hold it up and watch the water drain out and puddle up in the floor.

And as for supplies it’s hard to even get paper, pencils, toilet tissue. We are not allowed to keep a pencil in the cell, which makes it hard to do legal work or write notes to keep up with things. The jail uses too many lameduck excuses as to why they punish us. It also costs for loved ones to deposit money, if the money intake window is not open, which is most of the time. This is already a monopoly—our people are charged, then we are charged. We are only given the option I-Care package or jail canteen, both of which are coming from the same people. Don’t forget the Aramark Co. has a fee to bring it up to us. Aramark has lost a lot of contracts in United States jails and prisons. The company Aramark has been

continued on page 3

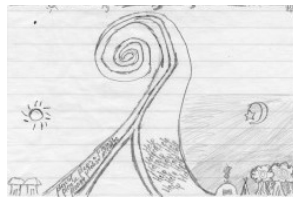
'I'm still being harassed'

Hello,

I hope that this letter finds you in good health. I must inform you that I'm still being harassed! Last week by Correctional Officer "Gathers." While on, that was supposed to have been 4 hours turn to 2 hours. C.O. Gathers wouldn't open my door for me to walk. Stated: "yesterday, you was at someone's door when you was out walking." Since I could remember when we can't talk to someone at their door downstairs. Sgt. even is the only officer doing that on her shift. Lt. Russle is advised of what she's doing but, yet, hasn't done nothing about it. Also, I'm being deprived of my rights here to a set court date. Here, I been in this jail since 9-2-14 and the kiosk (that I made a copy of) stated today 9-21-15 I supposedly went to court! I've been pending trial which now I'm being dragged!

Thank you for helping me get through the rough time by being supportive with these letters I've saved up! Please follow me next week to trial if Assistant District Attorney James P. Dornfried stop continuing it! Please post this on "Feedback Newsletter" with my whole name. One love!

Yours truly,
Sammy Morgan



What is feedback?

Feedback is a publication of Inside-Outside Alliance (IOA), a group of people trying to support the struggles of those inside (or formerly inside) the Durham jail, and their families and friends. We recognize that any of us can be outside one day, inside the next -- the revolving door of incarceration. We also participate in struggles against police harassment and brutality. IOA maintains a website called Amplify Voices Inside (amplifyvoices.com) that publishes the words of Durham jail inmates and former inmates talking about conditions inside and outside and how they see the world.

The name Amplify Voices Inside comes from something a brave and rebellious inmate wrote in the fall of 2012. This publication, Feedback, is a sampling of recent contents of the website. When something amplified is redirected at the source of the sound, the effect is called feedback. That is what this is: the voices that have been amplified to the outside world being re-broadcast inside the walls of the jail. Feedback is also distributed on the outside and sometimes includes 'outside' voices. Unless a person requests use of their real name, then writers' initials have been changed to protect identities and minimize repressive attacks and harassment.

To contribute words or art, write to: IOA, PO Box 1353, Durham, NC 27701.

Or, if you are not in jail and are able to, send an email: insideoutsidealliance@gmail.com

*** Se habla español. ***



‘They trying to play me with a plea’

Hey —,

How are you? I hope you doing good. It was great to hear from you, as it is good to hear from anyone outside. How did part of my letter get ripped in the mail? Did the jail do it? Yeah, I was going to take a plea, but they trying to play me, so I’m going to trial. But I don’t know when. They took my shoes on July 6, but gave no reason why. I would like to thank you for taking time out to write. I like the Inside-Outside News a lot. I just want you to know what y’all are doing is noticed. People are watching the movement even if you don’t know about it.

It’s crazy how I cry at night just looking at (a photo) of my son and family...Write me back. See you next time.

— T.C.

continued from page 1

in this jail for a long while and for a long time Aramark staff has been getting away with all kinds of violations.

Jails and prisons always find a way to get out of the trouble they cause. They are given notices as to when inspections are coming so that leaves them with enough time to cover up their stuff. I know first-hand, as I’ve had plenty of jobs in prison and in jail.

In conclusion to all this, some outside service needs to take over. The correctional system’s motto is this: Treat the symptom and not the problem. That is why we have all these problems now.

They make it look good for a little while, but never fix the damn problem. It’s hurry up and wait, and shift the blame. When are people gonna step in and help and trust our word.

Thank you for your help and time. — K.V.

REMEMBER GEORGE JACKSON



“But in my eyes this is where the revolution begins and ends, at this county jail. Try to think about what you could accomplish in numbers. A push for unity, money for impoverished families, community awareness of the political and social issues today, maybe even a real like preparing school. The possibilities are endless. All it takes is this one movement to expand and rally focus its forces on bigger issues. Giving your movement media coverage I mean a real! society is in nothing but arms reach, —. Can you feel it?

But me I’m just a seventeen year old about to spend his eighteenth birthday in jail, on lockback with little to no hope, what do I know?

I encourage you to read on major revolutionaries like Mao-Tse Tung, George Jackson, Geronimo Pratt, Che Guevara, Mumia, a few of many of those special individuals I mentioned earlier.” — *D.C.*

‘Less complaining and more rebel energy needed’

Ah, my buddy. Man, I ain’t forget about your ass man. This jail sent my letter back on some humbug shit. But I’ll give you evidence—I know how ya’ll like to do. [*Envelope marked “insufficient address” had correct P.O. box.*]

Anyway, in this past week i’ve seen the c.o.s beat two people up. An old man around his late 50s, and a young kid who I grew up with (17 years old). I’ve tried to get them to try me—they won’t fall for it. You see I’m very outspoken they gave me a new nickname: loudmouth, how you like that?

I’ve cussed them out, threatened them, they still won’t attempt to put their hands on me. They’re cow-

ards. You see — I’m a little buff to be 17, well might as well say 18, my birthday is —. ...

I want some feedback on what you think about this other letter I’m sending to you, don’t half-ass one page me neither. Oh yeah, so unthoughtful of me, thank you for my 5 min of fame, but please —, say my real name. I want them to know it’s me, fuck da police (I’ve seen y’all sign—lol) Oh yeah, nice touch with the feedback, man. But it needs less complaining and more rebel energy to show them we won’t fold until victory is bestowed. Aye I go to trial in —. It would be cool if you stop by, huh? Well, hit me back.

—The poet, Daquan Coleman

‘We ain’t taking the abuse no more’

Thank you for writing me back. From now on I want my name put on anything you print that I send/wrote to you all at I.O.A.

I want others to know I voice my opinion and speak facts when it comes to me/us as prisoners at the Durham County Jail.

The article I sent you about “No Use Complaining to the People That Are the Problem” (Volume 11, Oct. Issue), that is a very true statement. Without others such as I.O.A. we wouldn’t have made what progress we have made. By some of the detention officers’ expressions and actions you can tell they can’t stand it that we got just a couple hours more of so-called freedom. I often hear “It won’t last long.” Well, if it don’t it’s the county’s doing, not ours.

A friend of mine was pushed on the floor by force one morning last week. I called his family, gave them your website to post his situation on the blog. I know my friend’s have posted blogs, they read them to me when I call. The jail staff needs to realize we got people out there that will get involved. We ain’t taking the abuse no more. D.C.J. has gotten away with b.s. for way too long.

I am an advocate, a voice, not just a person held under ransom (a bond). According to them (justice system) I’m innocent until proven guilty. Bullshit—I’m treated as guilty until I prove my innocence.

Almost forgot: Over two months and I still haven’t been called to the dentist, plus there’s another person in the dorm with me, pod 5B that’s going through the same thing. There is no telling all the men and women at this place that need medical treatment and are just given half azz treatment most of the time. It’s no good.

Right is right/ wrong is wrong, whatever the case may be.

Love is love, be easy.

— *John Thomas Weaver*

When does the Sun come Up

I’ve done so much labor when do my faults bare
Through the rain it seems that the blue skies will
never appear.

The happiness gone, because there’s no life
coming from

The seeds in which I’ve sown.

God my question is, when does the sun come up?
When is it my time to shine?

My will of fire burns but it seems so dim
compared to the darkness outside!

I ask you one more time, when does the sun
come up?

— *M.M.S.*

‘Years without sun can wreak havoc on your insides and mind’

I am serving a D.U.I. sentence here in D.C.J. For those who do not know about the Misdemeanor Confinement Program, it is the newest torture device used in the criminal justice courts. It essentially means that misdemeanants serve their time in jail. The interesting part is that in A Citizen’s Guide to Structured Sentencing (Revised 2012), prepared by the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, it shows two punishment charts—one for felonies and one for misdemeanors. The maximum active punishment for a misdemeanor A1 level III is 1-150 days. It goes on to say verbatim, “a misdemeanor who receives an active punishment of 90 days or less serves the sentence in the local confinement facility. A misdemeanor who receives an active punishment of more than 90 days and up to 180 days is committed to the statewide misdemeanor confinement program and serves the sentence in a local confinement facility designated by the program.” I say all that to say this: Durham County Jail is one of these facilities that houses MCPs. D.U.I. sentences are or can be up to 3 years under misdemeanor guidelines. That chart exists in thin air I guess. I have never seen and don’t understand. I received 3 years though. Some say that is cut in half. My paid lawyer doesn’t know shit

about all these changes, and neither did several Orange County judges.

Durham County Jail is not set up to house inmates that long. Some sergeants and guards have said that. We are the test dummies. Jail is not prison. Prison allows for some similarities of natural human existence on this God-forsaken planet, or at least this country. Hostages taken by the state get room to move in the sun. Work for, and a sense of purpose. Class and functions to enlighten the mind. It is still horrible and wrong on every level.

My point is sanity can exist in prison confines because it was designed for people to live there. Jail was not. No dental floss, no contact visits, all this cruel shit. People have said it all before how fucked up it is in here. It is. It is meant as a holding tank. A middle man between prison or rehab or probation. Not to serve sentences.

This disgusts me about this new law and housing men here long term!! This is a humanitarian issue. My bowels and health are going to pot eating junk. No sunshine is absurd! Years without sun can wreak havoc on your insides and mind.

In allowing the mass incarceration of Americans we are sending a message to this capitalist democracy that warehousing and enslaving the addicted, the confused, the

continued on page 7

‘We are held responsible for our mistakes, so why aren’t they?’

I got your letter today and as always it is great to hear from you. There are a couple of issues I have and I hope that you will print them in the newsletter and yes you can use my name that is ok with me. Anyways, I have been trying since 8-25-15 to get my bottom denture plate fixed that was broken during a shakedown of our cells because (maybe some) inmates took the razor blades out of the razors the night before but it was not discovered until they changed shifts the next day. They took up the razors after we use them, which is about 30 minutes after they hand them out, but when they took them up they were not checked until the next morning, but none of the officers were ever reprimanded but yet we are held responsible for our mistakes, so why aren’t they?

I also have a medical problem with my foot. It was operated on when I was out about 10 years ago. Not that I have been locked up that long, I have only been here about 2.5 months, but anyways I have been having problems with the bone in it. It feels to me like a piece of the bone is coming through the skin and I have been trying for about a month now to get something done and I have been to medical about 4 times with it already at \$20.00 every time I go, but they look at it and try to tell me it is a bunion. But I keep telling them it is not that it is where I almost cut it off and now my big toe on my left foot is growing sideways under my other toes and it is because the bone has broken loose again. All they have to do is take a x-ray and it will show them what is going on, but they do

not want to do that. All they want to do is keep taking my money. Well, I am going to close for now, so please write back soon.

— Charles Kendall



Even a hurricane didn't stop the protests.

continued from page 6

malnourished, undereducated, manipulated, scared, 9 to 5 man, will be tolerated...Long live the Guerilla!

Don't hide my name. I have been chewed on by these dogs. Not scared. I speak the truth.

— David "Eli" Davis

'I feel like I am in P.O.W. camp'

Hi, How are you? Thanks for the letter, and thanks for your support with Inside-Outside Alliance. Please tell everyone that comes out on Fridays and protest that I said thanks very, very much. I'm in decent spirits but am not doing well at all.

I can speak for myself that medical will and do neglect people. I had put in a sick call telling them that I can't eat bologna or salami. Their response was we have no control of what food they put on trays, and we do not have special diet trays. So I tried to eat the bologna, and the salami but every time I would vomit, so I sent another sick call to medical and this time their response was 'get around it.' So, now I just eat breakfast and lunch. I do not receive canteen, so I just go hungry. I feel like I am in a P.O.W. camp.

July 16, 2015 I had a falling down the stairs. When medical arrived they asked me do I hurt anywhere. I told them my back and my knees. They told the c.o. to sit me against the wall. I asked them not to move me because I was in so much pain, but medical told them to move me anyway. They dragged me across the floor and sat me against the wall. They did not try to support my neck or legs, they just picked me up, put me in a wheelchair with no feet support and all the way down to medical with my feet dragging on the floor. They can not lie about this because it is on video.

In medical they took me to a room

picked me up out of the wheelchair, not caring about how much pain I was in, and sat me on a stretcher. A sergeant came in the room yelling at me like it was my fault for falling down the stairs. They all walked out of the room and locked the door. The nurse was very disrespectful and had a very nasty attitude. They would not help me on the table, so they could take x-rays of my knees. I tried to tell them it was not so much my knees, it was my back, that is where most of the pain is coming from. They never did check my back out. They just gave me tylenol for pain. After the x-ray they sent me back to my room and put me on bed rest.

At night I would be in so much pain I would just lay in bed and cry myself to sleep. An inmate suggested for me to ask medical for a warm or a cold pack for my back. I sent a request to medical and their response was they do not provide warm or cold packs. I know they lied to me because the inmate that told me to suggest it he had one and he got it from medical.

I'm still having so much pain in my back. Some nights I have a hard time sleeping. I do have other health problems but I feel there is no need for me to go to medical because they have showed me that they are not going to help me.

P.S. I need help. Thank you.

—U.A.

VOICES OUTSIDE

'It is not costing Durham for my son to get these pills he needs'

The following was sent by an inmate's mother to sheriff's department staff and the chair of the board of county commissioners, Michael Page. Chairman Page's response follows.

Before coming to Durham County Detention....(my son had been prescribed) something for Reflux/heartburn called Omeprazole.

When he came to Durham County Detention (Facility).they began giving him something different. It wasn't helping him like the Omperazole did. But they told me I could bring the Omeprazole to him. He had an order for it. Then he was taken to Guilford County. He has continued to take them and said they helped.

He told me Saturday he needed some more so I took him some Monday evening when I came to see him and talked to the officer about it and she spoke with Mrs Jones (head of medical) and she said he did not have an order for it, which he has it in his cell.

Reflux medicine you have to take daily and if you do not....it can cause problems....pain.

Again, I do not get why my son cannot get the medical help he needs. They have told him they will not help him and he has to get his lawyer involved to get any help. It is not costing Durham for my son to get these pills he NEEDS. They are brand new in package. I should not have to keep going through this.

I am on disability and do what I can to see him twice a week and now this will cost me a trip back because my son will be in bad pain without these pills. Could somebody help us here? He needs this med ASAP!

Thank you, DVD

Email response from Michael Page:

Deborah,

I am going to send this letter to appropriate people again but they are NOT finding any of your claims to be the case with your son, I am not sure what kind of message you are getting. Mr. Martin is a very committed law enforcement professional and he is copied on this email and also Colonel Perkins has read several of my letters from you that I have sent them and there is NO claim to substantiate what is being said. Deborah, there are some people who just dont do their jobs but let me tell you these people I am requesting to look into your sons case are so COMMITTED to insuring that all inmates are taken care of that I don't understand why you don't have the confidence of our staff. We will request this again!

Michael Page

'It is not enough. We need and want a complete end to the lockback.'

How's it going? I hope that as this letter reaches you, that it finds you and everyone else within the IOA community in the best of health, both physically and mentally.

First of all I can't thank the men and women of the IOA enough, for their persistent protest over the last 6 months. It is because of you all that we can claim this small victory over a lockback regime for nearly seven months. So once again, thanks from the bottom of my heart.

As for Durham County Concentration Camp, hasn't nothing changed around here but the NEAR END LOCKBACK. Other than that Lt. Col Perkins and her unprofessional, unethical henchmen are still assaulting inmates, subjecting us to inhuman living conditions and monopolizing (something by law that they are not supposed to do) through canteen, globaltel, medical, etc. Sheriff Andrews stands behind all of this 100%, with telling lies to cover more lies.

Also let me be the first to say that all of the detention officers are not unprofessional/ unethical henchmen/women. Nor do they condone the way that their co-workers carry themselves. But I will say that 80% of the staff here at Durham County Concentration Camp (D.C.C.C.) are very unprofessional/unethical henchmen and women.

They have an officer here named Perry. They knowingly and willingly allow this boy to assault inmates. Just a couple weeks ago he assaulted an inmate by walking up on him and

violently shoving him to the ground, when the inmate was not coming at him in any kind of combative form. I witnessed all this personally. This same officer Perry, I witnessed a couple of months back in pod 3D get in a verbal confrontation with an inmate in his cell, and open his cell door and go in the inmate's cell and assault him. Now that is not policy, nor procedure, I know for sure.

The crazy part about it, we, the inmates are in a catch-22 situation. If they assault us, and we defend ourselves...Then we get written up, assaulted by numerous staff, and most likely taken before the magistrate and assault charges taken out on us. Then if they assault us, and we don't defend ourselves, then we still get written up, because they have to tell a lie to justify why they assaulted us. What are we to do? Catch-22.

Also, they have this Sgt. Mimms (there are 2 of them. They are twins, and both Sgts.) that they allow to keep on tazing inmates unjustly. About 3 or so months ago, he tazed a juvenile inmate in the back. Him and the juvenile inmate got into a verbal confrontation because the inmate was using profanity while talking to another inmate in a joking manner (keep in mind that he wasn't even talking to this Sgt. Mimms. Also, he's a juvenile, so 9 times out of 10 he's going to conduct himself as one, hence use profanity. Should that subject him to being electrocuted???) Well, this Sgt. Mimms took great offense because he is one of those fake-

ass hypocrite, bible thumpers, that allegedly takes offense to profanity. But uses it whenever he gets mad. If that ain't a hypocrite...Then what do you call that??? But yeah, he took offense, and told the juvenile inmate to go to his room (in order to be locked back. Which I didn't know using profane language in a sergeant's presence constitutes grounds for lockback). The juvenile inmate and the sergeant got into a verbal confrontation about the inmate going to his room. During the time of the confrontation other inmates joined in verbally and told the juvenile to "just go in his room." Sgt. Mimms then unholstered his taser and pointed it at the juvenile. Sgt. Mimms then told him to go to his room. The juvenile noticed he had the taser and was about to shock him, and he started to comply. The juvenile turned and started walking toward his room and Sgt. Mimms shot him in the back. IN THE BACK!!! Now there is no way that he could have been combative, or have been doing anything deemed worthy of being tased, if he got tased IN THE BACK!!!

Then when they do these unprofessional things, they get praises, instead of disciplined, by ranking officers. That makes them continue to subject us to these violent, inhuman, oppressive living conditions. Also, it causes us to be accused of falsified

assault charges.

As far as the "new phase of the detainee walk schedule..." (Sheriff Andrews' quote) it's cool or whatever. Of course more hours out of your room (when you are already in your room more hours than you are out) is always going to be a plus. I can also tell you that I, as well as every other detainee, are very thankful for the near-end of the lockback situation.

But it is not enough. We need and want a complete end to the lockback. The same schedule that we were on 6 ½ months ago, before the lockback. We wish to be placed

back on it. The hour and a half or so (from 9 pm – 10:45 pm) that Durham County Concentration Camp has taken from us, for no other reason than because they feel that they simply can. WE WANT IT BACK!!!

I am in full agreement with you all. An independent community team(s) needs to investigate this place and hold the right personnel accountable. But I doubt if they'd do that, because they'd have to shut this place down...Because they'd have to fire too many people.

Well, I'm about end this letter.
Your brother in the struggle,
Gregory Wilson

P.S. You can use my real whole name in the newsletter. And as the d.o. like to say...Make sure you spell it right!! :) :) :) :)

"An independent community team(s) needs to investigate this place and hold the right personnel accountable. But I doubt if they'd do that, because they'd have to shut this place down...Because they'd have to fire too many people."

'How many Mike Browns will it take?'

The following letter was postmarked three times: Sept 9, Sept. 23, and one other time (illegible).

What's been up?... I'm very thankful to you and all those involved, each one of you who don't just show concern but carry the burden. Thank you for placing yourselves in our shoes. As I read over your letters I see so much but I don't know where to start.... It seems as though this age that we live in (I like to call it the age of Information Tech-IT), because there are so many ways to instantly transmit and send pictures, video and text. And you can't really control who sees or reads them. Which I believe has become our government's problem as well as others. 10 or 20 years ago law enforcement could control what got out and influence the course of events to marginalize and contain things that others might want reassessed. But it seems as though in recent years information is distributed instantly and at the click of a button. So here we are faced with this new trend among officers of shooting unarmed men and women. Well? maybe not new but a broader view of the nation's events as a whole. At least some, do I believe that half of these type incidents make it to light? No, if I had to pick a number I'd say less than 20% of these cases make headlines. And the ones that do make it to light, I'm pretty sure that those in charge did not intend on the publicity. People are constantly bombarded with things, problems, etc. Some just turn the chan-

nel or turn the radio off. 100 people gassed in Syria-click; Children starving-click (I don't see starving children on my street so it must not be a problem-click); animal cruelty-click. But then you have people that have lost loved ones to war or cancer or abuse, bombings, autism. Those who have directly witnessed these events tend to be more understanding. And generally more supportive. I know I'm walking on a touchy subject. But the truth of the matter is, How many Mike Browns will it take? What does it take to convince someone that what they are doing is wrong? How do you convince someone that won't listen to sound reasoning, at what point does Mike Brown become real to police?

How do we convince Andrews that this lock-back is inhumane, or the council that things need to be changed. How do you sway someone who is knowingly blocking progress? It's a gift to be willing to understand others' problems to grieve or to smile with one another. Where you excel others fail.

Do I want change? (Yes) But for some change will cost, some will pay for their own change and hate every minute of it. Others will change at the expense of someone else. I guess what I'm saying is circumstances and change can be a nasty business.

Until next time.

May your road be safe
And your thoughts clear

— S.A.

And your freedom truly free.