

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 47-D, No. 4

PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504

April 2022

In the Good Old Summertime

Air Conditioning: At least 14 states lack universal air conditioning in their prisons, including many in the South. Florida has air-conditioned housing in only 40% of its state-run correctional institutions. Texas provides it in only 30%. None of Louisiana's seven men's prisons provides air conditioning air conditioning universally where prisoners sleep, although its single women prison does. Prisoners have died during heatwaves, resulting in lawsuits against the states that held them. Some states, such as Texas allow prisoners a personal fan...

Arsenic: In California, Kern Valley State Prison had flyers posted in 2008 stating that their water contained arsenic levels above the maximum limit determined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Yet the arsenic treatment system was not constructed until December, 2012, despite lawsuits filed by prisoners since 2009. During that time, the correctional officers and staff drank bottled water only. Prisoners who requested bottled water were denied. it. Although arsenic is best known as a poison at large doses it also poses serious health risks at lower levels over long exposure periods.

A 2020 study of arsenic in public water systems throughout the U.S. showed that incarcerated people are at a disproportionate risk.

Asbestos: Johnson & Johnson, more than 50 years ago funded an experiment injecting dozens of mostly Black prisoners with asbestos, allegedly so the company had a point of comparison for the talc used in its baby powder. Hundreds of experiments over 20 years at Pennsylvania's Holmesburg Prison were funded by Dow Chemical and the U.S. government. Jurors in cases brought against them were not told that the asbestos study was performed on mostly Black prisoners "in order to avoid prejudicing the jury against Johnson & Johnson."

Johnson & Johns did not remove its talc based powder from store shelves until May of 2020.

BORDER CLOSURE TO BE LIFTED

Consistency and inconsistency are constants in our lives. And each can be both good and bad. One that is clearly good for all, although not universally supported, is some opening of the U.S. southern border to more immigration, currently scheduled for May 23.

It is difficult to be optimistic about how this change will actually be handled and how it will affect the people most involved. Those most knowledgeable predict "an explosion in the use of ICE detention."

Detention facilities can only hold so many people, so it is reliably predicted that there will likely be a lot of people held in border patrol custody and put through an expedited removal process or expedited asylum process. Many are going to have to be paroled into the country into the 1.7 million person immigration court backlog.

There are reliable predictions of 12,000 to 18,000 people entering U.S. custody daily with the end of Title 42 restrictions. Even though "experts" have repeatedly made clear that there has never actually been a public health justification for the Title 42 expulsion order.

ICE ("Immigration and Customs Enforcement") is to stop sending people to the dirty, dangerous immigration detention facilities in North Carolina and Louisiana. It will also stop using the Etowah County Detention Center in Gadsden Alabama "as soon as possible."

It will come as not surprise to our readers to learn that the U.S. has created the largest immigration detention system in the world... It should not result in punishment to seek protection from violence and persecution.

Seeking Information about Keefe.

by Massachusetts Lifer's Group Inc. including: canteen price lists, tablet programs, litigation and other services offered. To be posted on FACEBOOK page (@ lifersgroupmcinorfolk). Send to: Daniel Holland, W69561, MCI Norfolk, P.O.Box 43, Norfolk MA 02

Book Regs Vary Some

Connecticut has the longest list of banned books: over 2,000. It only allows books and magazines to be sent to those imprisoned if the books are in new condition and packaged and shipped by a book store, bookclub (that's what it says) or publisher, according to the state's website. Also, "the Unit Administrator may not reject publication solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political social or sexual, or because its content is unpopular or repugnant."

New Hampshire only allows books and magazines to be sent to people in custody from a book publishers or stores. A list of banned books obtained in 2019 includes 130 titles rejected between 2014 and 2019. Included is a pilot's guide for Cessna 150 airplanes.

Massachusetts reports that publications are reviewed individually, and that they "may not reject a publication solely because its content is religious, philosophical political, social or because its content is unpopular or repugnant." People in custody are said to have seven days to appeal a rejection. When asked for records of such appeals over the past five years, the reply was "this information is not tracked," (but) is placed directly into the appellant's property folder.

Rhode Island bans books and other material on a "case-by-case basis" and says that it does not maintain a list of banned books, although state policies outline 13 "prohibited categories, including ones than ban instructions on bomb making, alcohol brewing and escape techniques." Its policy statement includes: "written material shall not be rejected solely ...based upon an employee's personal views of the merit of such mail."

Vermont allows "inflammatory material" to be banned but no publication to be considered inflammatory solely based on its appeal to a particular ethnic racial, or religious audience. No material will be considered inflammatory solely because it criticizes the operation programs, or personnel of the Department of Corrections or any other government agency.

Maine only allows new books, magazines and newspapers sent by publishers or commercial distributors, with four prohibited categories: threats to safety, security and orderly management, sexually explicit, material facilitating criminal activity and materials considered substantially detrimental to rehabilitation.

COVID-19 La Subvariante de Omicron BA.2

En Estados Unidos, las recientes estadísticas relacionadas con el coronavirus han sido alentadoras. Ante un nuevo aumento de los casos en el país, se han extendido hasta el 3 de mayo la exigencia del uso obligatorio de mascarilla en aeropuertos y en el transporte público, incluidos los aviones. Asimismo, el Gobierno estadounidense también prorroga por 90 días más el estado de emergencia sanitaria por el coronavirus en Estados Unidos. Si bien la subvariante BA.2 genera incertidumbre con respecto al curso de la pandemia, es más claro que la COVID-19 ha expuesto tres veces más probabilidades en la población afroestadounidense.

THE LEAST READ PART OF THE NEWSLETTER

To receive the *CPR Newsletter* by postal mail monthly, send us a self-addressed stamped envelope for each month's issue you are requesting, up to 12 at onetime. Put the *CPR* return address in the upper left-hand corner of each envelope.

Five pages (= 1 ounce), can be sent for one Forever stamp. Ten pages (= 2 ounces) can be sent for a twenty-cent stamp more.

Please continue to send us address changes, including both your old and new addresses.

NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS Letters sent to us marked "Legal Mail" are **NOT** going to a lawyer. **DO NOT MARK YOU MAIL "LEGAL MAIL! NO MATTER HOW DESPERATELY YOU NEED LEGAL ADVICE/ ASSISTANCE, WE DO NOT HAVE ANY.**

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons project, which posts our *Newsletter* on-line, monthly, for free downloading and distribution. All issues since 2009 are on its great site: realcostofprisons.org

Recent Request & Response

From the CPR to Utah Mail Administrator "...We would like to continue to send out free books when requested by incarcerated people in your prison system and so we would like to know how we could be approved..."

"I have received your organization's request...and they have been placed on the list...the order must come from the inmate directly...The following are not allowed: sexually explicit, no books about gangs, weapons, drugs, self-defense, or computer how-to books...The CPR has a good objective and is a service to the inmate population. Thank you for your inquiry into being added to our free vendor list."