

## IOWA CITIZENS UNITED FOR THE REHABILITATION OF ERRANTS

*An Effort to Reduce Crime Through Criminal Justice Reform - 2014*

### MOVING DAY

#### IOWA CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN

After a number of years of planning, construction, and anticipation moving day for the staff and prisoners at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women has come and adjustments to the new facility are being made, problems are being found and addressed, although it will be some time before the remaining construction is completed and things will be operating at the level that is the goal of those who have experienced this transition. For the most part, reports from the residents have been positive. Most like the "dry cells" in the housing unit. This means that toilets are not in the cell. They also like the fact that they have their own keys. Probably the favorite area is the large visiting/meeting room with lots of natural light and a special area for the children which is well equipped with toys and books that have been donated. When the weather allows there is a picnic area.

We are concerned that the Sacred Place will be closed for two years and the badly needed classrooms will not be available until the remaining construction is completed. We are sorry that the "Steppin' Out" clothes closet, which provided badly needed clothing and other supplies for women leaving prison, has been shutdown.

Director of Corrections John Baldwin tells us that a number of nurses and mental health professionals, including a full-time psychiatrist have been added to the medical and mental health staff. He says that many of the nurses responded to advertising on Craig's list. He also shared that there is a waiting list of psychologists who would like to work for the IDOC. It is estimated that up to 60 per cent of women entering prison in Iowa have serious mental health problems and 57 percent have a history of severe substance abuse and need in-depth drug treatment. A very high per cent have also have suffer from major physical sexual and psychological abuse. ICIW hopes to become a national leader in treatment and rehabilitation of female prisoners.

Soon women coming into the system will go directly to a central reception center at ICIW for classification which will mean, with few exceptions all services for women will be located on one campus. The staff, department, and the women prisoners are to be congratulated for the hard work, planning, and cooperation that it has taken and will continue to take, to get all areas of the new prison up and running. A big thank you to all!

#### IOWA STATE PENITENTIARY

We are hearing that moving day at ISP has been indefinitely postponed due to a problem with the geothermal heating and cooling system which is apparently inadequate for the new facility. When this move occurs, it will certainly be the end of an era when, what began as a regional prison back in 1839 is vacated and the new campus about two miles north of the old facility. The new campus is on a 45 acre site and will have 300 surveillance cameras and three observation towers. It has a capacity of 800 prisoners. The old bunkhouse near the new prison is to be demolished and the John Bennett Center will be relocated in the current Critical Care Unit and will be converted to a minimum-security facility. This will be quite a project since the CCU was built in the style of a super-max and has at least 3 administrative seg units and there is currently no kitchen. Mentally ill prisoners who were formerly housed on the CCU were moved to the Clarinda Correctional Facility and to the Iowa Medical and Classification Center. There will be a small mental health unit on the new campus to house seriously mental ill prisoners.

In spite of its age and other drawbacks, many prisoners have preferred to be assigned to the old ISP because of the fact that all the cells were single cells. Having a space of your own is highly prized. They were alarmed when they learned that there would be double bunking in some areas of the new prison. According to prison administration adjusting to double-bunking is a sign that the prisoner is "pro-social." They say that "better-behaving" prisoners will be assigned to double bunk and will all be given additional privileges such as more freedom of movement within the institution. Prisoners accepting double bunking also where given the opportunity to ask for specific cellmates.

The prison will be much for cheerful than most due to extra windows to allow in the sunlight and even to see the horizon, the walls are painted in soothing colors. Iowa CURE is especially happy about these choices as we have received a number of letters from prisoners in ad seg begging us to try to convince those in charge to give them an opportunity to see outside and to smell fresh air. Such opportunities are good for all of us and especially should not be denied to those struggling with mental illness.

The new campus will have opportunities for sports activities, educational opportunities and IPI and furniture production and a non-denominational space for worship. It is a challenging and busy time for staff and prisoners and we hope that the move will be a smooth one and that everyone will adjust to the changes. A big thank you to all who have put their time and energy into bringing this new facility into being.

## **TRINITY UMC PRISON VAN MINISTRY EXPANDING**

Over 20 years ago the members of Trinity UMC Church in inner city Des Moines conducted a survey to determine unmet needs in the community near the church. This survey revealed that many people in the community had loved ones in Iowa prisons and had no reliable transportation available so that they could make visits. The church council voted to begin transporting people for monthly visits at a very nominal charge.

When their old van gave up the ghost, members of the congregation kept the program going by transporting people in their personal vehicles. In recent years, a supporter of the program has made sure that they had a van and a member of the congregation has taken charge of seeing that the van is serviced and cleaned up after each trip. The church administrative secretary handles the sign-up list for drivers and riders.

Recently they began having more people needing this service than would fit in the church's van so they have been borrowing a larger van from the local Salvation Army. The van has been going to prisons at Mt. Pleasant, Fort Madison, Oakdale, and Anamosa, but they realize that there is a need for trips to other Iowa prisons. Plans are underway to make that happen. The trips are not only a special service to the riders, but the drivers speak about the joy of getting to know the riders, and hearing their stories and expressions of gratitude for the opportunity to visit their loved ones. We have had riders who had not seen their family member for several years.

Rides to prisons in Mt. Pleasant and Fort Madison are available on the 4th Saturday of each month. The van leaves the McDonald's parking lot on the corner of 6th and University at 7:30. Rides to prisons in Oakdale and Anamosa are on the 2nd Saturday of each month and the van leaves from McDonald's at 8:30.

To arrange for a ride or to volunteer as a driver, contact Trinity Administrative Secretary at [515-288-4056](tel:515-288-4056) ([office@trinityumcdm.org](mailto:office@trinityumcdm.org)) or Did Schrier: [515-210-5394](tel:515-210-5394) ([didischrier@aol.com](mailto:didischrier@aol.com))

## **FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS**

Drug courts and mental health courts have become known as an alternative to incarceration in many states and a number of Iowa counties are offering family treatment courts as a way to keep troubled families together while parents receive the treatment that they desperately need. Such courts work with a community treatment team of human service workers, substance abuse counselors, mental health providers and others to help parents get into recovery from their addictions, and at the same time, take responsibility for their lives. The family treatment court offers a very intensive and demanding program. It is much more cost effective than terminating parental rights and it keeps the family together while the parents learn how to accept their responsibilities as parents and as citizens.

## **TIME TO RECONSIDER VISITING RULES**

It is time that the Iowa DOC recognized that prisoners do not all have the same support systems and the current visiting rules regarding the composition of their visiting lists needs to be reconsidered. Each person's list should permit the prisoner to have the visitors who are most likely to be supportive of them and who are able to visit frequently. It makes much more sense for each person to be allowed a certain number of visitors without designating whether those visitors must be relatives or friends.

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The 2014 session of the Iowa Legislature has adjourned and several important pieces of legislation passed. Whether the Governor will sign them remains to be seen.

A very limited bill approving the legalizing of the possession and use of marijuana oil for the treatment of epilepsy was passed in the final hours of the session. A prescription will have to be obtained from a neurologist licensed to practice in Iowa, as well as a state-issued ID card. Production and sale of the oil is not legal in Iowa so they will have to obtain it in another state. Possession will be limited to 32 ounces: a 6-months supply. Advocates of medical marijuana hope that the time will come when medical cannabis is legal for Iowans who suffer from diseases like cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV/AIDS, spinal cord injuries, glaucoma, severe chronic and PTSD.

A law dealing with the criminalization of the transmission of HIV was expanded to include other contagious and infectious diseases including TB, hepatitis, etc and requires that the transmission BE KNOWN for criminal charges to be filed. According to Senator Robert Hogg, Chr. Of the Senate Judiciary Committee, It's intended to revise a badly outdated and draconian law regarding the transmission of HIV. Transmitting one of the diseases could be one of three classes of crimes depending on whether the diseased person passed the infection to another person intentionally, with reckless disregard, or without informing the person of his or her status.

The old bill was said to discourage people from being tested. A bill which would have made kidnapping penalties tougher in response to the abduction and killing of minors did not pass due to a disagreement as to whether earned time credits should be maintained for inmates as an incentive for good behavior. The Senate felt that they should remain while the House leadership wanted it eliminated. No agreement could be reached.

There was no new legislation regarding the re-sentencing of Iowa prisoners who received a sentence of life without parole as juveniles. Recent decisions by the US and Iowa Supreme courts require that these prisoners be re-sentenced, taking into consideration the individual circumstances of the juvenile and recognizing that "children are constitutionally different from adults., and ordinarily cannot be held to the same standard of culpability as adults in criminal sentencing." (State v. Null)

## **PRISONERS FACE EGREGIOUS DEBIT FEES**

According to research by the "Des Moines Register" the fees paid by former inmates of Iowa's prisons to collect or spend their own money, which they have saved in their inmate accounts, is the most egregious they have seen. According to an agreement between the U.S. Bank and IDOC, made in 2010, charges include 30 cents for any purchase, \$15 to receive a paper check, \$2 to speak to live agent, well you get the picture. Shortly after the IDOC went from issuing checks to prisoners being discharged to issuing bank cards, former Senator Johnie Hammond, who was then serving on the Iowa Board of Corrections, brought this issue to the Board. The Board was assured by General Legal Counsel Michael Savala, "The prisoners just love them." referring to the cards. He said that each prisoner receives training in how to use the cards before they leave the prison, so they understand how they work.

When the "Register" contacted the US Bank a spokesperson said that the contract had been changed several months ago. The IDOC said that they had been notified only a few days ago, after the "Register" began asking questions. Other state agencies use cards to provide clients with funds, but they all have a responsibility to be proactive in protecting consumers and prisoners are especially vulnerable because they haven't been out of touch with how society operates and often feel overwhelmed by trying to re-integrate successfully.

## **PRISON TERMINAL**

The Last Days of Private Jack Hall, a documentary filmed at the Iowa State Penitentiary, tells the story of the hospice located in the prison medical center and staffed by inmate volunteers. It was nominated for an Academy Award in the category of Documentary Short Subject. It documents the moving story of Private Jack Hall, a terminally ill World War II veteran who served a life sentence for murder, and demonstrates how the hospice experience, especially within a prison setting, can profoundly touch the lives of the dying patients and those who care for them.

This unique hospice program was funded by private donations and prisoner contributions. Six prisoners, all serving life sentences, were especially trained to care for the sick and dying by Director of Nursing Marilyn Sales. PRISON TERMINAL was directed and produced by Edgar Barnes who was allowed unrestricted access to the hospice for 6 months. The film was shown on HBO and although, it did not receive an Oscar, it was certainly an honor for it to receive a nomination.

## **TELEPHONE UPDATE**

For decades one of the major concerns of International CURE and state chapters of CURE has been the high cost of inmate phone calls and the large profits made by the Departments of Corrections across the country due to signing bonuses and excessive charges for calls. Phone calls are one of the major ways that families can connect and play an important role in helping prisoners re-integrate back into society.

In 2012 a coalition of groups under the name of "Campaign for Prison Phone Justice" joined together to work to advocate for

Federal Communication Commission action on the excessive cost of inmate phone calls. CURE was a part of that coalition. People were urged to write to the FCC and share their experiences on an internet website. A group called "Right on Crime" made up of conservative politicians joined in the cause.

Finally in August of 2013 the FCC announced a ruling that established per minute rate caps of 21 cents for prepaid and debit interstate calls. The commission also announced that they will begin looking at interstate rates in the near future.

At first Deputy Director of IDOC, Fred Scaletta said that Iowa wouldn't comply because we operate our own phone system via the ICN. He now says that Iowa will comply. Out of state calls are now \$3.15 for the basic call with a charge of 21 cents per minute after that. It is our understanding that this is the maximum that can be charged under the new ruling. The ICN carries the calls, but the phone contract is with IC Solutions. In the future, they may charge a flat rate for all calls within the state. There was a major problem when the switch was made and some prisoners were overcharged and others had their phone accounts drained. If you had such a problem and it has not been corrected, you need to file a request to be reimbursed with your counselor.

## **SHACKLING BILL FAILS**

For several years a coalition of organizations have been working together in an effort to get a law passed that would ban the shackling of pregnant prisoners who are incarcerated in Iowa's jails and prisons. Such a bill would limit the use of restraints on pregnant inmates after 22 months and during labor and delivery unless there was a known security risk. The Department of Corrections denied the need for such a law stating they had a policy against shackling so there was no need for a law. They denied that they had shackled pregnant women in the past; however staff of the Iowa ACLU was able to locate several women who had personally been shackled. Furthermore it was discovered that the actual IDOC policy was one of the Department's 80 some confidential policies which are not revealed to the public.

The nation's experts on fetal, maternal, and child health care have strongly stated opposition to the practice of shackling, as has the American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association. Last year the Iowa Board of Corrections unanimously voted in support of a bill which would have banned shackling, however the members of the board have now changed and the new board voted to follow the Department of Corrections in working against the bill.

The bill passed the Senate unanimously with bi-partisan support, but was not assigned to a sub-committee in the House. We are very thankful for the hard work of Senator Janet Petersen, well-known for her strong support of the health of women and children, for her hard work in working to get this bill passed. Also to staff of the Iowa ACLU in providing research and documentation.

## **PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT RENEWAL**

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was established by the U.S. Department of Justice to set the National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape pertaining to persons in lockup facilities. In 2012 the final rules were established and now state prisons, jails, and detention centers are working to come into compliance. It is about ending the sexual misconduct that has devastated the lives of countless men, women and children in U.S. facilities for decades. It's about making sure that people are not raped while in government custody.

When the Act was originally established, the IDOC made an all out effort to see that all prisoners and staff were trained to understand their rights and how to report sexual assault. Signage was posted and hotlines were established. A state investigator was hired. The Director of Corrections John Baldwin has said that the new rules are "just good corrections."

The Governor must send a letter to the Feds by May 14, 2014 certifying either that a) Iowa will be in full compliance, b.) we are working on becoming compliant: or c) we will not be compliant at all. Correctional facilities must be audited by certified auditors from another state. Iowa needs to have 12 audits done. We will probably certify that Iowa is working toward being compliant. There is confusion over whether states will lose funding if they are not in full compliance by the cutoff date. Some of the directors have asked for changes in the more difficult rules and an extension of the date to comply as some of the regulations are hard to meet. For example: when a staff person of the opposite gender enters the living quarters of prisoners they need to announce themselves. This is difficult at night. Also juvenile prisoners must be housed out of sight and hearing of adult prisoners. Such a unit is available for the male juveniles at Anamosa, but no place has been found to house female juveniles.

It is good that our state officials see this Act as an opportunity to improve corrections in Iowa.

## **CHANGES IN STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS IOWA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS AND IOWA BOARD OF PAROLE**

There has been and in the near future will be a number of changes in staff and board membership for the IDOC and the IBOC. Director of Corrections John Baldwin has announced that he will be retiring in January of 2015. He says that he plans to stay in Iowa and would like to spend some of his time in retirement working for positive change in the area of mental health services.

Paul Stageberg who has been heading up the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Planning will be retiring this summer. Jerry Burt retired as Deputy Director of Correctional Operations Eastern Region and Jerry Bartruff is now serving in that position. Dot Faust is now serving as Deputy Director of Offender Services. Mark Lund, Superintendent of the Clarinda Correctional Facility and Mental Health Institution has retired and Kris Weitsell has been appointed to that position. Sheryl

Griffith, of Fort Dodge served on the Board of Corrections for 8 years, but was not reappointed. Dr. Mary Chapman, an educator who recently retired from the staff of the Des Moines Area Community College, has been appointed to fill this vacancy. Rev. Michael Coleman is the current Chairperson.

In December three members of the Board of Corrections resigned. All three had been appointed by Governor Branstad in 2011 when he dismissed three members who had been appointed by Governor Culver. They were Doris Kelley of Waterloo who had been serving at vice chairwomen of the board, James Felker, a former IDOC employee and W. Thomas Phillips from Waukegan. Felker resigned due to health concerns. Phillips and Kelley said they felt that they had served "long enough" and although Board Chairperson Jason Carlstrom denied any problems in relationships when he was questioned by the joint justice appropriations committee, many believe that there were conflicts with Carlstrom whose term expired April 14. The Governor has not introduced his name to the Senate for a second term. John Hodges, Sheila Wilson, Charles Larson, Sr., and Susan Lerdal are currently serving on the Board. Larry Johnson is Deputy Legal Counsel for the Governor.

## **IOWA CURE PRESENTS QUARTERLY PROGRAMS**

The Board of Iowa CURE has decided to offer quarterly programs to members and the public in order to provide education regarding issues related to criminal justice reform, build membership and involve more citizens in action which will bring about legislation which reflects our efforts to get smart on crime.

This programs have included a legislative training session led by our legislative advocates, Marty Ryan and Stephanie Fawkes-Lee, a panel on the services available to incarcerated veterans, a 4 day visit of the communication director of International CURE who spoke, and gave interviews on the need to rethink the practice of Civil Commitment of Sex Offenders. In January we had a program featuring Gordon Allen, former Associate Attorney General who spoke about litigation related to the sentencing of juveniles to life without parole and Marty Ryan who brought us up to day on legislation related to this issue. We also had a training on how to form a circle of support for a person coming out of prison.

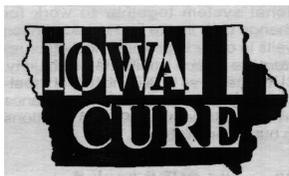
Our most recent program was April 27. Ruth Walker of the Undoing Racism Task Force and War on Drugs group from the Waterloo/Cedar Rapids area presented their program on the need for a new approach to the drug problem in our society and the impact the current program has had on the over-representation of African-Americans in the Iowa system.

In the Fall we plan to have an update on litigation on the re-sentencing of those who received life without parole as juveniles and look at the possible impact of the election on criminal justice policies. If you have ideas for program, PLEASE let us know. We want to know what would bring you to a meeting!

## CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>IOWA CURE</b>  Jean Basinger, Chair/Newletter Editor  P. O. Box 41005  Des Moines, IA 50311  Phone: 515-277-6296  <a href="mailto:jabwab@msn.com">jabwab@msn.com</a>  <a href="http://www.iowacure.org">www.iowacure.org</a>  Board Members: Anne Bickell, Mary Kay Dial, Eddie Bloomer, Jackie Robinson, Sue Royse, Carolyn Uhlehake Walker and Larry Smith</p>	<p><b>Voices To Be Heard / Des Moines CURE</b>  Support group for persons who have a love one in prison, parole or probation and those concerned about people in the criminal justice system. Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues – Union Park UMC.  Support group for adults and special program for children from 6 to 7:30 p.m.  Contacts: Jean Basinger 515-277-6296 or <a href="mailto:jeanbasinger@gmail.com">jeanbasinger@gmail.com</a>, Melissa Nelson 515-280-9027</p>
<p><b>Henry County CURE</b>  Susie Snyder  skizer@iowatelecom.net</p>	<p><b>Life Long CURE</b>  P. O. Box 2093  Englewood, CO 80150  Self-stamped, self-addressed envelope for brochure  <a href="mailto:everyonesmom4@comcast.net">everyonesmom4@comcast.net</a></p>
<p><b>Federal CURE</b>  P. O. Box 15667  Plantation, FL 33318-5657  <a href="mailto:FedCure@FedCURE.org">FedCure@FedCURE.org</a></p>	<p><b>CURE International</b>  Charlie and Pauline Sullivan  P. O. Box 2310  Washington, D. C. 20013  <a href="mailto:cure@curenational.org">cure@curenational.org</a></p>
<p><b>CURE for Vets</b>  535 Queen St  Philadelphia, PA 19147  <a href="mailto:Jcautilli2003@yahoo.com">Jcautilli2003@yahoo.com</a>  <a href="http://www.vets-cure.com">www.vets-cure.com</a></p>	<p><b>Iowa Coalition 4 Juvenile Justice</b>  (now a focus group for Iowa CURE)  Website: <a href="http://ia4juvenilejustice.org">ia4juvenilejustice.org</a>  Sr. JoAnn Talarico, Facilitator  P. O. Box 41005  Des Moines, IA 50311</p>
<p><b>Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners</b>  Website: <a href="http://friendsofiowawomenprisoners.org">friendsofiowawomenprisoners.org</a>  Facilitator: Vi Darsee  <a href="mailto:vddarsee@q.com">vddarsee@q.com</a>  Phone: 515-225-8349  Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of each month at noon at Wesley UMC  800 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St, Des Moines, IA  <a href="http://www.iowacure.org">www.iowacure.org</a></p>	<p><b>Justice Reform Consortium</b>  Marty Ryan and Stephanie Fawkes-Lee, Staff Contract Employees  <a href="mailto:mrtyrn@gmail.com">mrtyrn@gmail.com</a>  Legislative update sent out every 2 weeks during session  Contact Marty to receive it. Phone: 515-681-8076</p>
<p><b>Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans Program</b>  Brian Brooks: VA Medical Center, 3600 30<sup>th</sup> St,  Des Moines, IA 50310, 515-577-8068  <a href="mailto:Brian.brooks@va.com">Brian.brooks@va.com</a>; website: <a href="http://i.va.gov/homelesspage.cfm?pg_38">i.va.gov/homelesspage.cfm?pg_38</a>.  Eligible: Those who are currently incarcerated by the DOC-Fort Des Moines and prisons (not in jail or released from prison)</p>	<p><b>CURE Sort – Sex Offenders Restored Through Treatment</b>  P. O. Box 761  Milwaukee, WI 53201-0761  <a href="mailto:sata@satasort.org">sata@satasort.org</a></p>
<p><b>Help for Veterans</b>  Will visit incarcerated veterans in need in central Iowa  Jennifer Miner, 515-577-8892 or 699-5999 ext. 4875  <a href="mailto:Jennifer.miner@va.gov">Jennifer.miner@va.gov</a>  Covers eastern Iowa: Sherri Koob, Veterans Justice Outreach, cell: 563-320-9887; <a href="mailto:sherri.koob@va.gov">sherri.koob@va.gov</a></p>	<p><b>A note about Iowa CURE:</b> We are an organization with members in and out of the prison system. We cannot offer legal services. Do not send us your legal documents. In joining CURE, you are <b>NOT</b> entering into a contract for services</p>

**IOWA CURE**  
**P. O. BOX 41005**  
**Des Moines, IA 50311**



**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**  
**2014 DUES NOTICE**

*Please remember to pay your 2014 Iowa CURE dues*

Fill out the application form below and mail it with your membership fee to the Iowa CURE office address below

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Membership Fees**

Prisoner	\$2
Individual	\$10
Family	\$20
Sustaining	\$50
Life	\$100

**IOWA CURE**  
**P. O. BOX 41005**  
**Des Moines, IA**  
**50311**

Please remove me from this mailing list

**Why should I join CURE?**

Being a CURE member gives you access to experienced staff, reputable research, political action, community organizing, leadership and strategy development as well as informative fact sheets, action alerts, legislative and issue updates. **Please feel free to photocopy this newsletter/application to pass along to interested friends, family, associates or loved ones in prison.**