



Newsletter October, 2018

Please share this newsletter with others who did not receive one. Unfortunately many newsletters were returned in July because of the Trivia and Art Contest we had included as they are considered "sweepstakes". Sorry about that! Our next newsletter will be due around February, 2019.

Of Information:

- **Medical** - The DOC's prison healthcare contract continues with Centurion of Florida LLC. If you want FDRAG to contact Medical on your behalf please sign a medical release form (DC4-711B Consent and Authorization for Use and Disclosure Inspection and Release of Confidential Information (HIPAA Form) giving medical permission to discuss your care. You can sign the form to Geesje de Jong & Diane Thornton (addresses at bottom)
- **Inmate Food & Property Packages** - The contract with Access and Union was not renewed and FDOC is currently evaluating service providers for a new package program. Sorry, no packages for now.
- **Disability Rights Florida**, the state's federally-funded Protection and Advocacy organization that advocates for disabled individuals, settled a historic lawsuit against the Florida Department of Corrections over the FDOC's systematic failure to comply with federal measures intended to protect prisoners with physical disabilities. The lawsuit was filed by the Florida Justice Institute on behalf of Disability Rights Florida. The Florida Justice Institute is in the process of verifying whether or not the settlement is being adhered to by the D.O.C. and they will refile the suit if necessary.
- **Prison Legal News** - September 2019 - Prison Legal News filed a petition asking the US Supreme Court to take up a challenge to Florida Department of Corrections decisions that have prevented inmates from receiving the publication since 2009. The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in May sided with the department, which argues that advertisements in Prison Legal News pose security risks. Attorneys for the publication argued in the petition that "censorship" by the department violates First Amendment rights to free speech and a free press. The Prison Legal News petition to the Supreme Court is the latest move in a dispute that has flared for about 15 years. The petition said Prison Legal News was distributed to Florida inmates from 1990 to 2003, when the Department of Corrections blocked it. Prison Legal News is allowed to be distributed to inmates in other states.
- **Pope Declares Death Penalty Inadmissible** - Pope Francis has formally changed the official Catholic Church teaching on the death penalty, calling capital punishment "an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person" and deeming it "inadmissible" in all cases. The Vatican's August 2, 2018 announcement that it had revised its Catechism to unambiguously oppose capital punishment also committed the Church to work "with determination" to abolish the death penalty worldwide.
- **Fans** - If you are without a fan or your fan has broken down, and you are without the means to buy one, please let us know and we will try and help you. We do need to check whether you have already a working fan in your possession. Please note, we can not help you buy things like a TV etc, we don't have the funds for that!
- **Cell lights** or things in your cell not working - please inform the assistant warden during rounds before you contact us.

- **Thank you** to the guys who have been sending us cards, and stamps to Tammy & Kari to help out with postage and to use for guys who don't have funds to include stamps. Very generous of you and it's much appreciated!

Issues addressed by FDRAG

(Some issues are ongoing and we are still working on them, please keep us updated from your side)

- **Kiosks FSP** - we received letters from some of you about there not being a seat in front of the kiosk and no protection from the sun - bad visibility of the screen. We inquired about this and JPay replied: JPay will only supply the Kiosk and addition furnishing will be provided by the DOC facility. The reply from assistant warden McClellan was that they are working on improving the kiosks.
- **WiFi UCI** - Wi-Fi system not functioning well. We contacted JPay about it, and as far as we know WIFI seems to be ok now but let us know if it is not.
- **Kiosks UCI** - All kiosks were down at UCI, causing a lot of problems. The reason why repairs were delayed appeared to be inventory shortages of kiosk components of some JPay suppliers and JPay said it was unclear when sufficient stocks would become available for JPay to replace and/or repair all the kiosk, but expected it to be short lived. As far as we know at this moment some of the kiosks have been repaired. There were questions from some of you about the possibility of more kiosks in the yards of UCI, we asked JPay: "JPay will provide as many kiosk as the DOC officials feel comfortable with. JPay can make suggestions with regards to these circumstances, however the number, position and location is dictated solely by the DOC".
- **JPay concerns** - You can report kiosk/Wi-Fi concerns via a trouble ticket to the JPay Inmate Support Dept. If that doesn't work you can contact us. We also heard about emails and pictures being lost and have reported that to JPay. You will need to ask your loved ones to call the JPay Contact Center at 1-800-574-5729 and provide specific dates and details surrounding these circumstances so JPay can better address this problem.
- **E-Books** - Several of you asked when you will have access to the free ebooks on your tablets and when more music will be available for purchase. Reply: "JPay has an existing e-books and music library, however each item JPay offers will have to be approved by the DOC. As these items are approved offering will increase".
- **TV system UCI** - We were contacted about missing channels after storm/lightning - we asked Assistant Warden Knox about it and she replied: "There are two TV antennas that provide service for the Death Row Unit. One of them isn't working and the other is old. They do get some channels but not all the channels that they used to get. We do not have funding to purchase antennas". We will get more information about this and see whether it is feasible that FDRAG can help with this.
- **Flu Shots** - We inquired when flu shots will be offered, no dates yet available.
- **Rat Problem FSP** - Already a problem for many months. We contacted the warden several times about this, as did many others, and he told us they are having a pest control program in place - keep us updated.

Correspondence

Kari Jones is in charge of requests for correspondence. You can send your letters (with some information about yourself like age, interests, etc.) directly to Kari. Her address has changed, it is now: **Kari Jones, 6127 Gillot Blvd, Port Charlotte, Fl. 33981**. We comply with **Title 33 of the Florida Administrative Code** and do not place inmate ads soliciting pen pals or market advertising services.

Cards

Please send your requests from now to our card lady **Tammy Alpers, 473 Ellis 204, San Francisco Ca 94102**. Tammy offers general greeting cards and holiday cards. 5 cards and in English or blank cards only. Please include 4 stamps with every request to cover postage. It may sometimes take a little while before you receive the cards, complaints about this are not appreciated. Tammy is doing what she can and we are not running a business!!

Christmascards

We will also again be offering Christmas cards (5 cards per request). Please write to Tammy if you would like to receive Christmas cards and enclose 4 stamps for postage. You will receive 5 Christmas cards, don't ask for more, we can't help you with that. **Tammy Alpers, 473 Ellis 204, San Francisco Ca 94102**.

Mailingaddress

Please send your letters to: **Janneke van Steenbergen** - Maasdijk 1c W/S LEBA - 5317KP Nederhemert, The Netherlands or **Geesje de Jong** - Maleme 17- 15237 Filothei - Athens, Greece, or **Diane Thornton** - 68 Queen Street. Withernsea. East Riding of Yorkshire. HU19 2HA. England. This is meant for **all** the mail, **except** card/correspondence requests (for that see addresses above). Alternatively, a fast option is to ask your family/friend/penpal to email us at **fdragflorida@yahoo.com** about any issue on your behalf, or email one of us with JPay if possible.

FDRAG (Florida Death Row Advocacy Group) is dedicated to working to improve the living conditions on death row in Florida and we are here to try to help you with your concerns, complaints, issues etc. For those who would like help from FDRAG, we do ask that you contact us directly and we get back to you as soon as possible.

Website: <http://www.fdragflorida.com> **Email:** fdragflorida@yahoo.com
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/fdrag.florida.5>

Geesje de Jong - FDRAG Director- Maleme 17- 15237 Filothei - Athens, Greece. **Janneke van Steenbergen** - FDRAG Assistant Director- Maasdijk 1c W/S LEBA - 5317 KP Nederhemert, The Netherlands. **Diane Thornton** - FDRAG assistant - 68 Queen Street. Withernsea. East Riding of Yorkshire. HU19 2HA. England

FDRAG sends you warmest Christmas & Chanukah wishes, blessings & hope for the New Year to all of you. Stay safe & healthy, from all of us at FDRAG.



Angel Tree Gift Form

The idea is to help you buy a Christmas gift for your child/grandchild/nephew etc: the gift will be mailed to them in time for the holidays with a card bearing your name and message.

Only children up to 12 years old, no more than 2 gifts per gift form.

Your name:

Name of the child:

Message on the card:

(or include your message on a piece of paper)

Desired gift (give us 3 ideas):

Please keep your desired gifts under approximately \$20.

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Age of the child: Boy or girl:

Your connection to the child:

Address of the child:

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Please return the form before November 20, 2018 to:

FDRAG

**c/o Tammy Alpers,
473 Ellis 204,
San Francisco Ca 94102**

Or you can ask a friend/penpal to email us the details.