



FDRAG address
FDRAG c/o Britta Slopianka
4301 Confederate Point Road, CD 39
Jacksonville, FL 32210

Newsletter October, 2016

Please share this newsletter with others who did not receive one because, for now, we are not able to cover every one of you. Send also the newsletter to friends or family, this way they may be interested in helping out, emailing us with suggestions, or donate cards and stamps. Do send us your ideas & information for the next newsletter. We also love to receive your poems and drawings to post on our Facebook page! Our next newsletter will be due around Febr/March, 2017

Legal Update

The Florida Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional the state's practice of permitting judges to impose death sentences based upon a non-unanimous jury recommendation for death. In two rulings issued October 14 the court held that juries must unanimously find all facts necessary to impose a death sentence, including the existence of any aggravating factor relied upon as a reason to impose the death penalty, whether the aggravating factors in and of themselves provide sufficient grounds for imposing the death penalty, and whether the aggravating factors outweigh the mitigating circumstances (reasons for life) presented by the defense. In the first case, Timothy Lee Hurst v. State of Florida, the court vacated Hurst's death sentence imposed and remanded his case for a new sentencing hearing. The second decision, Larry Darnell Perry v. State of Florida, struck down the Florida legislature's March 2016 revision of the state's capital sentencing statute because it does not require a unanimous jury recommendation of death before the trial judge can consider imposing a death sentence. Hurst is the same defendant whose appeal reached the U.S. Supreme Court earlier this year, resulting in an 8-1 decision declaring that the state's prior capital sentencing statute violated the 6th Amendment right to a jury trial by reserving for the judge, rather than the jury, the ultimate power to find the facts that could lead to a death sentence. The Court specifically held that the statute impermissibly denied Hurst a jury finding of aggravating circumstances that could make him eligible for the death penalty. In response to the Court's decision, the Florida legislature amended the statute to require juries to unanimously find at least one aggravating circumstance, but allowed the jury to recommend a death sentence if at least 10 of 12 jurors agreed. The court's decision in Hurst made clear that the statute violated Florida state constitutional provisions requiring unanimous jury verdicts, as well as federal constitutional law. In Perry, the court struck down the amended death penalty law, saying the statute "cannot be applied constitutionally to pending prosecutions because the Act does not require unanimity in the jury's final recommendation as to whether the defendant should be sentenced to death." While the decision in Hurst says that defendants sentenced to death under the unconstitutional sentencing procedures are not entitled to have their sentences automatically reduced to life in prison, it leaves unclear exactly what will happen in the cases of the approximately 400 people on the state's death row.

For information:

Dramatic Drop in Death Penalty Support: Public support for the death penalty fell by 7 percentage points in the last year, with fewer than half of Americans (49%) now saying they support the death penalty, according to a national Pew Research Center poll released on September 29. At the same time, use of the death penalty has dropped dramatically. Over two-thirds of U.S. states have either abolished the death penalty or have not used it in more than 5 years. A handful of counties (2%) now account for most new sentences of death. Four of these counties are in Florida: Duval, Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Miami-Dade. Freddie Hall and Harold Blake have their sentences reduced to lifetimes.

Medical Update

Centurion- Centurion has replaced Corizon Health as the Department's medical services provider. The initial term of Centurion's contract with the Department of Corrections runs through January 2018. If you want FDRAG to contact Centurion on your behalf it is necessary that you 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 write a DC6-236 Inmate Request to Medical Records asking to be called out to sign a release of information form. You can sign the form to Geesje de Jong and Karin Elsea, you can write to their addresses directly .

Of Information:

- **Fans** - June/July 2016 - FDRAG members & friends donated money to buy 9 fans for men in UCI and FSP who didn't have one. If you are still 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. Please understand that we do need to check whether you have already a working fan in your possession. The funds we have available is from donations given to us and we have the obligation to be careful with that money. If we find you were not being honest with us, you will not get any assistance from FDRAG anymore (newsletters, penpal requests, greeting cards etc) Also, please don't ask us for TV's, we don't have the kind of funds to help with that!
- **Telephone Use for Death Row** - There still seem to be some problems with the phone calls, especially with mobile phones and international calls, it may take a while before everything is sorted out, but we are assured they are working on it.
- **Food/Property Packages** - The address to use for ordering packages from Union Supply Direct and Access Securepak is still the "old" address: 7819 NW 228 Street, Raiford, Florida 32026, instead of the PO Box address. Packages from Union Supply Direct and Access Securepak for December can be ordered from October 3 - November 4.
- **Books** - We heard that you now can receive Amazon books delivered either via UPS or USPS.
- **New proposed USPS postal rates January 2017** - The new prices, if approved, include a two cent increase in the price of a First-Class Mail Forever stamp. The price changes filing does not include any price change for postcards, letters and for letters being mailed to international destinations or for additional letters.

Voices from Death Row - Book of poems and drawings

The deadline for submitting artwork and poems to be included in the book *Voices from Death Row* has been extended until February, 2017. **Poems:** either in prose or in verse, must not exceed two pages and should relate to themes of peace and justice. You may submit up to 3 poems. Please send along a short biography (a 5 to 10 lines paragraph) of yourself with the poem. **Drawings:** should also relate to themes of peace and justice. You may submit up to 3 original drawings. Drawing on an 8.5x11" preferably heavy stock paper, in black and white or in color (any medium, i.e. pencil, pastel, water color, acrylic or oil paint, markers, etc.) Each drawing should be accompanied by a short descriptive statement (a 3 to 5 lines paragraph) about the meaning of the drawing and its connection to peace and justice and please sign your drawing with a legible signature at the bottom of the drawing. Please include also a short biography (a 5 to 10 lines paragraph) of yourself. Artwork will be published in *Voices from Death Row: Book of Poems and Drawings on Peace and Justice* by Death Row Inmates in America to come out May, 2017. Each artist included in the book will receive a complimentary copy. Poems and Drawings will be exhibited and the Book launched and available at SOS ART 2017, May 26-June 4, 2017, at the Art Academy of Cincinnati. Please send poems and/or drawings by US mail to: SOS ART, 216 Erkenbrecher Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45229. If it is possible to send poems by e mail through a friend or penpal please send as a word document or in the text of the e mail to: sosartcincinnati@gmail.com. Poets and Artists selected for the book will be notified.

Correspondence

Requests for assistance in finding someone to correspond with must from now on be sent to FDRAG member Sonja Döring. She is now in charge of handling the requests for correspondence (and doing a great job!). Please write to: **Sonja Döring, Postfach 100305, 95403 Bayreuth, Germany**. She asks you to **include some details about yourself**, that makes it easier in finding a correspondent. We comply with **Title 33 of the Florida Administrative Code** and do not place inmate ads soliciting pen pals or market advertising services. If you are Spanish speaking or would like a Spanish speaking correspondent you can also contact us!

Cards

Greeting cards can be requested from our card lady Gina Quick, **New Address: 710 Kestner Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233**. In order to receive cards, you will need to include 4 stamps in your request to cover the cost of sending the cards to you. Message from Gina: "From The Card Lady": I thank all of the guys who have been sending me stamps. I am grateful to be able to send cards to you. Thank you all for your kind words they are much appreciated. November I will get in Thanksgiving cards within the first two weeks. Have a great day and keep smiling. Many Blessings, Gina." **Cards and stamps are always needed. Please ask family and friends to donate and send to Gina's address.**

Christmascards

Christmas cards (5) can also be requested from Gina, please enclose 4 stamps for postage with your request.

In Memoriam

Remembering those we have lost on the row since November. May they now R.I.P. Our thoughts and prayers are with all their families, friends, pen-friends, and friends they have left behind on the row.

Seburt Connor 06/05/1942 - 10/03/2016

FDRAG (The 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 at the address on top of the newsletter.

Website: www.fdrag.kk5.org Email: fdragflorida@yahoo.com

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

Karin Elsea - Paralegal, General legal Questions and Medical Issues - Chemin de Beau Val 18 1012 Lausanne, Switzerland

Sonja Döring - Correspondence Requests - Postfach 100305, 95403 Bayreuth, Germany

Gina Quick - Card requests - 710 Kestner Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233

***FDRAG sends to all of you our best wishes for
Thanksgiving and Christmas***



Angel Tree Gift Form

The idea is to help you buy a Christmas gift for a child (up to 10 years old): the gift will be mailed in time for the holidays with a card bearing your message.

Your name:

Name of the child:

Message on the card:

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(or include your message on a piece of paper)

Please note, 1 gift per child and up to 2 children per prisoner, or a present that will do for more kids inside one family like family games.

Desired gift (give us 3 ideas):

Please keep your desired gifts under approximately \$20.

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Age of the child:(up to 10 years old)

Boy or girl:

Your connection to the child:

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Address of the child:

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Please return the form **before November 30, 2016** to:

FDRAG

c/o Ms. Britta Slopianka

4301 Confederate Point Road, CD 39

Jacksonville, FL 32210

