

A New Vision The Rittenhouse Newsletter



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Fall Issue

Coordinators Report

by Giselle Dias

My time with Rittenhouse over the past few months has been one of great emotional, personal and spiritual growth. I have been fortunate to experience good people who care to make a difference. There are times when I feel the mountain that we are facing is insurmountable. However I feel strongly that if I am in good company I am always willing to climb on and the steps never feel as challenging.

This was certainly the case on August 10th, Prison Justice Day. As I sat alone in the cold and rain, with my placards in hand outside the Don jail I wondered "Is this what it is all about? How do I continue when no one else seems to care?" Were people becoming so apathetic they couldn't take a couple of hours out of their day to stand in solidarity. Then one by one the people came. As we began to walk we could hear banging from the windows inside, we knew the men inside were standing with us. We walked solemnly yet there was a sense of hope that although we had a long journey we were willing to take the next step.

The Lifers Restorative/Transformative Justice Initiative at Fenbrook prison was one of my most moving and unique experiences. The eight week

program that was organized by a number of creative and dedicated individuals (including Dave Dobson, Rick and Michele Sauve and numerous others who I have failed to mention). The weekly seminars included topics such as restorative justice, anger and grief, victim sensitization, restorative to transformative justice, victim loss and misconceptions, insights and empathy, reparation, mediation and reconciliation, healing and wholeness.

The final day seemed to bring much of the events together, although I always feel the process is the most moving and exciting piece. My admiration for the courage these men displayed is overwhelming. Thank you for sharing the process with me. It is an experience I won't soon forget.

Our volunteer and donor appreciation on September 23 was an evening of celebration. When I look back over my past two years at Rittenhouse I can smile at all the life that has been brought to us through all of you. Without the Rittenhouse community we would not find the hope that is so necessary in these turbulent times. Thank you again for being builders of Healing Justice.

Our last training for trainers in transformative justice on October 21-23 was a great success.. We were

honoured to have such an eclectic group. Although the training was small in numbers it was certainly not lacking in insight, experience and personality. I can say proudly that we have a wonderful group of new trainers who will carry the vision of transformative justice and social transformation far. With a warm heart I thank you Ruth, Maria, Leona, Stephanie, Diana, Thomas, Jane, Daniella, Paula, Leonard, Lindsay, and Glen.

Last but certainly not least, ICOPA planning is going great. There are too many names to mention but I have truly been inspired by the number of individuals who have made such a strong commitment to the conference and the cause. For those of you who would like to get involved it is not too late. Our regional meeting is on November 21, 1999 at Rittenhouse (157 Carlton St) from 9:30am -3:30pm. Please see the ICOPA brochure for further information and how to register.

*In this world you are given
as you give
And you are forgiven as you
forgive-
While you go on your way
Though each lovely day
You create your future as
you live. (Peace Pilgram p167)*

I wish you all a very happy and safe holiday. God Bless!

..... **HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

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Mission Statement

Founded in 1990, Rittenhouse is an agency dedicated to bringing transformative justice instead of retributive justice to our criminal justice system. Transformative Justice simply means *making the basic goal of a criminal justice system healing, not revenge.* We believe crime can become an opportunity to bring transformation into the lives of victims, offenders and their families.

Prisoners' Justice Day

August 10th, 1999

by Gary Doucette

On August 10, 1999 a group of us gathered in front of the Toronto (Don) Jail to pay our respect to some of societies least remembered individuals. These are the men and women who have died in the bowels of our Criminal Justice System, our prisons. One might ask, why? or who cares? The truth is that they are people just like you and me. They laugh and cry, they have hopes and dreams, they make mistakes and some of them die in custody. Personally I couldn't think of a worse way

the inmates exercise yard. At one end of the yard lies a very sacred area where the bodies of numerous inmates were laid to rest. Many of these bodies were unclaimed, as the families and friends of these individuals relinquished any attachment to their lives. Prison has a way of separating men and women from their families and friends and the walls are effective at keeping outsiders at bay. So what ever happened to the cemetery of the least, the last, the lost and the lonely? Where are those grave-sites that I speak of today?

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Since the new Don Jail was constructed, the former wall surrounding the graveyard and exercise area was removed, in order to provide parking

to go, behind the wall that separates the free from the caught.

As we held our candlelight vigil to honor the dead prisoners of days gone by, I recalled a story told to me years ago during a tour of the old Don Jail, which now is dead itself. Back in the days of Capital Punishment here in Toronto (the Good) prior to 1962, there were a number of inmate deaths recorded. Some of these men were fated to leave this world on the end of a roe. Others fell at the hands of other inmates or disgruntled prison guards and others apparently took their own lives. The majority of suicides in prison are assisted suicides' that acquire far less paperwork and investigative efforts than homicide.

spaces for the expanded staff currently employed there. I often wonder if the prison staff ever think of the prisoners they park on top of as they enter their workplace each day. Is this symbolic of society's views toward our prison population today?

I will always remember these prisoners, as once upon a time that man or woman was once somebody's sweet, adorable baby, somebody's daughter or son, somebody's sister or brother or maybe somebody's husband or wife. They could have been somebody's father or mother, or neighbour or friend. But those prisoner's were **SOMEBODY**, and for that, **LET US NEVER FORGET!**

Behind the old Don Jail stood a high brick wall, which engulfed

God bless you brothers and sisters, and may you now Rest in Peace.

The Spirit in which we carry it out

By Ruth Morris

From my perspective, some of the difficult issues we have faced have not been over the scope of our services, but over the spirit in which we carry them out. I am totally committed to establishing community alternatives that are Community alternatives: Not prisons in the community. That is not a sly dig at enforcement, except where it is carried out vindictively or self-righteously. It is a positive statement about the kind of program I believe we have to have if we are really to be an alternative to prisons.

Prisons are not just buildings. I have nothing against buildings, but I do have something against prisons, because of the way they treat people. Some of their effects come from the administra-



of address, privileges and rights, and restrictions reaching far into the future.

3) Promoting violence as the basic tool of human interaction. Without coercion, there would not be inmates, and the inmate subculture in reaction, as we all know, is very violent, and sets up its own pecking order of further violence.

If we are to

be a true alternative to prisons, we have to run a program which does not do these things, and which rises above them, and helps our clients to rise above them as well. We cannot practice discriminatory hiring, or condone passively the daily humiliation of staff who have supposedly expiated a past offense, and

are still being denied a basic part of their job.

Neither can we close our eyes and ears to our clients, when they come to us with tales of having experienced violence, or of being deprived of food. How can we tell them to grow toward a more humane approach to human relations, and join the conspiracy of silence ourselves about their problems? If we are telling them that there are peaceful, positive ways of pursuing their goals, isn't it a part of our job to help

them find them?

Perhaps this sound very broad. I am not suggesting that we have to go out and found a new political party, or engage in broad political action, or even dabble in any number of good, related causes. But where an issue comes to our attention directly as part of our work and directly affects our clients in our jobs, then I am suggesting that a true community alternative deals with it in a positive, loving, active way. A prison in the community ducks it.

An awful lot of the evil in the world happens that way: people define their responsibilities narrowly, everyone is doing their own job nicely, and people and human values are dying in the cracks between.

(Original article written in 1982, but the message is still relevant today.)

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tion, and some from the inmate system itself, in its reactions to the situation. But among the effects that I think are part of prisons, that we have to avoid if we are to be a true alternative, Are:

- 1) Categorizing people into a rigid caste system
- 2) Stigmatizing people, with inferior clothes, environment, forms

Sleeping Beyond Hatred...

by Christopher Dye

Joe opened his eyes to a settings straight out of a B-rate Horror film. Unfortunately, he knew instead this scene was that of his final moments in life! He anxiously glanced about the archaic chamber, hoping only to assimilate details.

From his position bound atop the table in the center even the starkness of the Room retained a grotesque quality, he could not avoid a lingering view of the assorted instruments of terror arranged in precise fashion on the tray to his right. Images of painful demise danced amidst their glistening chrome-plated reflections. Publicity surrounding the serial murders perpetrated by his captors already confirmed the lethal contents of those syringes resting only inches away. His muscles tensed involuntarily against the leather straps securely fastened over his torso, arms, and legs.

He gradually convinced his body to cease such futile resistance. He even managed to regain some measure of serenity as the nightmare progressed before him.

In an attempt to invoke some reasoning for his fate, Joe looked up into the menacing face of one of his tormentors. The searing vindictiveness of the stare directed back

sent a chilling, tremulous jolt across his spine. The other cult member kept an expression of methodical callousness which almost belied his own fascination with the ritual at hand.

As the pair settled into their diabolical routine of sacrifice, Joe became aware of several other disciples nearby positioning themselves for better viewing.

Joe began to push the fatalistic ceremony from his mind. With his eyes again closed he silently

place of purity and loving-kindness. While his Murderers remained in the consumption of their venomous hatred.

As the miserable, sadistic fiends gained satisfaction from injecting their selected poisons into his system, Joe opened his eyes.

He smiled a warm, radiant smile which offered genuine compassion and forgiveness. For those who knew not what they did.

Securely enfolded in a blissfulness unique to one truly at peace, Joe closed his eyes once again. To experience the joy of sleeping beyond hatred.



Part Two

Joseph Stanley Faulder, Gi, passed away in Huntsville, Texas on June 17, 1999. Mr. Faulder was a native of Jasper, Alberta, Canada. Following an extended struggle, which spanned more than

prayed the twenty-third Psalm. His thoughts drifted through green pastures and still waters of his native Alberta. He felt his soul restored within the brilliance of the northern lights.

Until he truly did fear no evil.

He then began to chant a beautiful mantra passed along years before by a cherished comrade. Eventually he reached that

two decades, Joseph is finally free from the tribulations of this earthly existence. The friends that he left behind all rest assured that he still has that special smile in his heart. Numerous vigils and memorial services were conducted in both the United States and Canada to mark Joseph's Ascension.

(Continued on next page...)

The Final Saga of Joe Faulder

Part Three

On Thursday, June 17, 1999, Joseph Stanley Faulder was executed by the State of Texas. This act was in overt violation of the Vienna Convention of Consular Relations. Furthermore, it was protested by both Canadian Officials, including Michael O'Shaughnessy, and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Texas Governor, and Republican Presidential Candidate, George W. Bush chose to ignore the protests, as well as International Law and Treaty Agreements, and allow the execution to proceed. At sixty-one, Mr. Faulder became the oldest of 178 people killed by the state since 1982 when capital punishment was reinstated.

His original conviction was overturned by a higher court shortly after the 1978 decision, however, the state subsequently retried, convicted, and condemned him again in 1981. Thursday marked Mr. Faulder's tenth separate execution date handed down over the years. His family was under the mistaken impression that he was deceased, while in fact he languished on Texas' death row, until 1992. Legal and humanitarian issues surrounding both Mr. Faulder's case and execution have again placed an international focus on the United States' most active capital punishment state.

Conclusion

The preceding, three-dimensional view of Joseph Faulder's execution constitutes my humble attempt towards facilitation of increased consideration on the subject of capital punishment.

This particular case contained several individual elements which brought fundamental validity, of the penalty itself, into question. Every one of the more than 530 cases

... Finally, as a native of Texas, I hereby apologize... for the barbaric ignorance and political arrogance which allowed the murder of Mr. Joseph Stanley Faulder.

resulting in execution in the United States since 1977 contained an array of individual elements. Just as each one also extinguished a human life in the process.

In the Faulder case specifically, I invite proponents of the death penalty to the following: carefully study the aforementioned Vienna Convention on Consular Relations; and then, differentiate between state-sanctioned executions and premeditated criminal murder in cases which authority figures anywhere might simply choose to ignore international law or treaties.

Finally, as a native of Texas, I hereby apologize to the evolved civilization and humane sensibilities of the Canadian people for

the barbaric ignorance and political arrogance which allowed the murder of Mr. Joseph Stanley Faulder. As an inmate serving multiple life sentences in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, I assure the family and friends of Joe that he is indeed in a much better place now.

Acknowledgments

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Rittenhouse's Pen Pal Project

From the

Pen-Pal Project Coordinator

by RoseMary DeSimas
Coordinator of the Pen-Pal Project

Hi everyone this is Rosemary, the coordinator of Rittenhouse's Pen-Pal Project. For those of you who haven't heard of our program, we link up people in the community to people in prison. The goal of the program is that these connections will hopefully result in friendships that can help prisoners from becoming too institutionalized and expand their sights beyond the prison.

Many people have written and said how much a piece of mail being slid under their cell doors makes their day.

In my personal experience I have been pleasantly surprised with the things I have found in common with my pen-pals. And its also great to get personal mail in that pile of junk and bills!

Currently we have 40 guys on our waiting list and it is always difficult to find community pen-pals, so we have decided at this time not to

accept any more Americans into our program as this makes the match up time incredibly long.

If you are interested in getting involved you can call or write to the office. I will then send you out some information and a simple application. Once I receive that I

... Currently we have 40 guys on our waiting list and it is always difficult to find community pen-pals...

will give you the information on who you've been matched with. At that point the person in the community will write the first letter to their pen-pal. The person in the community has the option of receiving the mail through our office.

I strongly encourage people to volunteer with our program, the time commitment is not a big one, and I do believe you will find the experience fulfilling. You will be amazed how much being a pen-pal can make a difference in someone's life.

Hi Everyone...

Well it is that time of year again. The time for family and friends. But what about the men and women who are in prison? Those who have to deal with the fact that their family is far away at the time when it is most important to be with family. That is why I am so happy to be in the Pen-Pal Program that is offered by Rittenhouse.

I must say it makes my day when I get a letter from my pen pal because I don't have any family so it is that much more meaningful. The time that I have spent in jail she has sent me birthday cards and at Christmas a couple of years ago she sent me a Christmas card.

Last year I was on Parole and I was in the community and we lost touch for a little while. But I am very happy to have gotten back in touch with her. I feel that when we write, she writes in a way that I am not in jail, but I that I am a friend of hers and that makes me feel really good, and that there is someone who cares. And there is no better feeling than that.

The people who write to men and women who are in jail are a special kind of person. It is the time that is what is important to me and that is why I think my pen-pal is so great. And there is no way in this world that I can show how much she has impacted my life for the better.

Ryan Grills

R.P.C. Saskatoon, Sask.

P.S. I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



Volunteer

Appreciation at Rittenhouse

by Maria Karajovanova
JustUs Coordinator

The new Rittenhouse office was full of people, food and gifts at the Volunteer Appreciation evening. Among the gathered there were revolutionary and /or retired priests, former lawyers, prison workers, business people, people experienced in the correctional system, performers, activists and students on the road to become activists. A choice company. I belonged.

I came to know the work of Rittenhouse four years ago. Being a person who wants to work in the front line, Rittenhouse's focus on advocacy regarding

prison abolition and reform of the present legal system seemed too theoretical to me then. Today, after seeing some remarkable frontline prison workers and making some of my most meaningful relationships with people inside, I am coming to see that hope lies in the work of Rittenhouse. The existing legal system is so dysfunctional that it needs to be changed instead of being patched up, what we, front line workers are trying to do.

Therefore, to see the many good volunteers of Rittenhouse at the Volunteer Appreciation evening was empowering. The more we are, the sooner the work of transforming the

present legal system will be done.

Ruth and Giselle, the leaders of Rittenhouse, seemed pleasantly surprised to see the number of us there. Ruth said that nine years ago when the idea of Rittenhouse entered her mind and heart it was only two other people standing with her. Today, the number of them is tenfold.

As the worker of JustUs, the sister organization of Rittenhouse (as Ruth calls it), I have been thought so much by the leaders of Rittenhouse. I experienced first hand that their advocacy and public education efforts work.: I came to see the vision they see and I know it is the way of doing justice.

News From Fieldwork Placement

Students

by Zerom Woldeab

My name is Zerom Woldeab, I am a second year student in the George Brown College Community Worker Program. I did my first year fieldwork placement at Conflict Mediation Services of Downsview. Then I started to look for a second fieldwork placement in the college source book, and in my search, I also recalled all the guest speakers from the different agencies who came to the forum and gave to the students first hand information of the agencies they represented. I remember one of the respected guest speakers was Dr. Ruth Morris

who told us about Rittenhouse's vision of Transformative Justice. For my second fieldwork placement, I got the opportunity to do my fieldwork in Rittenhouse. In my placement I am helping in administrative office work, attending meetings and I am learning about Transformative Justice and how it works to mend and heal the broken souls of people in our today society.

by Lindsay Hewson

Hello my name is Lindsay Hewson. I am doing my placement with Rittenhouse

until the end of December. I work three days out of the week at Rittenhouse and attend school at Centennial College the other two days. I'm in my second year in the correctional worker course. My experience at Rittenhouse so far as seen good. I have been enjoying myself and learning along the way. For the first few weeks I was helping put together the Transformative Justice workshops held October 21-23, which I have to say was a success. The staff at Rittenhouse is excellent. And I look forward to working with them throughout my placement and when I move on into the work force.

ICOPA IX

Fast Approaching

by Joan Ruzsa

ICOPA is fast approaching! This has been a busy and exciting time at Rittenhouse as the conference has become a top priority around the office. We have made a tremendous amount of progress over the last few months, but we are also acutely aware of all of the work left to do.

Along with the local and regional planning committees, we have created 5 subcommittees: Program, Administration, Finance, Publicity and Communication and The ICOPA International Committee: Long-Term Perspectives. We are looking for volunteers to become involved in these areas. We also need volunteers who can help out at the conference itself.

In terms of the program, we

have come up with an agenda and have firmed up some amazing speakers to do workshops and plenaries at the conference. The conference will run from May 10-13, 2000 and Ryerson Polytechnic University and Metropolitan United Church. May 10 will be Orientation Day, and will offer orientation to corporate crime and penal abolition, as well as a reception and open mike in the evening. May 11 will focus on the theme of "What's Wrong with our Current System?". Plenary panels will include Angela Davis, Fr. Jim Considine, Rick Sauve and Elias Carranza, and workshops will be held in the afternoon. May 12 will address "What's Keeping a Dysfunctional System in Place?". Speakers will include David Korten, Rev. Bill Phipps, David Cayley and Ruth Morris. There will be celebration and entertainment in the

evening. May 13, the final day of the conference will be about "Transformative Justice and How to Get There." Brett Collins, Kevin Thomas, David Korten and others will talk about the vision and how to get there. The afternoon will include closing ceremonies, resolutions, celebration and a "corporate crime bus tour." We are still welcoming applications to do workshops.

Everyone working on ICOPA is very excited about the way things are coming together and we look forward to more people becoming involved in this world-wide movement to create a more healing justice system.

If you would like any further information, please contact Joan Ruzsa or Giselle Dias at (416) 972-9992 or e-mail us at ritten@interlog.com.

Training Workshops At Rittenhouse

by Leone Dueck

Workshops are always exciting experiential learning experience for me and Rittenhouse's Transformative of Justice 3-day training event, held October 21 - 23 proved to be exceptionally so.

Trainers Ruth Morris and Giselle Dias provided a warm atmosphere that was conducive to grasping challenging new ideas about an improved system of justice for all in a relaxed, enjoyable manner with a variety of teaching techniques. Always with good cheer, encouragement and kindness, Giselle welcomed us into the group experience each day. Ruth, versatile, optimistic and jovial, ensured that not a moment of boredom would creep

into the agenda at any time.

A diverse group of 12 participant (professionals, volunteers, students, unwaged, academics) benefited from Ruth's expertise on the topic of Transformative Justice and on issues and concepts of our existing system (called the misery method of retaliation). The group included three out-of- "towners"--- 2 from the State of Indiana and one from the Haliburton region. These fortune three individuals found Rittenhouse's new website, read the details about the training session and attended.

The subject matter of the training was highly informative and invigorating. It included learning about corporate crime, about how problematic our current court system is and about alternative constructive methods of

dealing with legal conflict. Through equitable communicative exchanges between offender and victim, facilitated by a mediation, a grief and a resource specialist, together with all other parties concerned, improved outcomes beneficial to communities will be the happy result.

The three days consisted of intense group dynamics that included information-sharing, role-playing, brainstorming, discussing, skit-performing, singing, debriefing, and lunching together. The closing meal was particularly special. Thanks to Ruth, we delighted in eating home-baked biscuits, vegetarian soup, bean dip, jam and cake.

Congratulations to two lead-advocates, Ruth and Giselle, for an excellent experience.