



# MIDWEST RAINBOW NEWS



JANUARY 2023

VOL. 3 ISSUE 1

**"Nobody's free until everybody's free."**

**-Fannie Lou Hamer**

## HOUSEKEEPING

### DISCLAIMER

The ideas and opinions in the Midwest Rainbow News are solely those of our contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midwest Rainbow News.

The Midwest Rainbow News makes no representations as to the accuracy of statements made by individual authors, including but not limited to legal and medical information.

By sending submissions to the Midwest Rainbow News, you are agreeing to have your submission published. We may edit submissions to fit our anti-oppression values and/or our own editing guidelines.

## Missing your copy?

We had some trouble last month with several camps rejecting the newsletter due to the new mail policy, but we are working on fixing that! If you didn't get the first issue of Midwest Rainbow News last month, look for last month's and this month's coming to you from FL.

Midwest Rainbow News  
PO Box 81624  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

## MAMA SAYS

2023 is here! It is time to move forward, strengthening our position on current projects and moving forward with new ones. When we become complacent, we ignore issues we know we have to deal with.

Most of you filled out the survey asking about issues you may be dealing with and sent it in. What was missed in the questions? What issues are you "personally" dealing with you would like someone to look into? Remember: if an issue causes you emotional or physical pain, depression, or anxiety, others may also suffer the same or worse than you.

Too often we internalize our suffering for fear of further rejection or of making the situation worse. Write to Mother and let me know what is going on in your life, what steps (if any) you may have taken to fix the problem or remove yourself from the situation. With recent changes in the system, I am often prevented from responding directly to your letter/email, but I can promise everyone will be read and analyzed for some form of solution. No one knows what you are going through but you!

Mother is nursing a broken leg, something my dear daughter Bree pointed out is the first of three steps to old age (broken leg, broken hip, old folks home!), so I will keep this short. Remember, 2023 has just started! Look what we have accomplished in 2022, let's not lose momentum!

With a Mother's Love,  
Patricia

## THE PRISON JOURNALISM PROJECT

The Prison Journalism Project is a great place for any prisoner to express their views while working to establish themselves as a credible writer and journalist. Many first time authors have been published on the Prison Journalism website. It only takes imagination and willingness to write your story. It is 100% free, costs you only time and dedication. Ask about their writing program and upcoming correspondence-based classes. For more information on how to get started, contact them at:

Prison Journalism Project  
2093 Philadelphia Pike #1054  
Claymont, DE 19703



# IN MEMORIAM

## Amber McLaughlin 1973-2023

2023 begins with our community mourning the death of one of our very own. On Tuesday, January 3rd, our beautiful daughter, sister, and friend, Amber McLaughlin, was executed at the Bonne Terre Correctional Center. The State of Missouri carried out our nation's first state execution of an openly Transgender woman.

Letters, emails, and a petition with 2157 signatures were sent to Governor Parsons asking him to commute Ms. McLaughlin's sentence to Life in prison. But our voices were ignored as our Governor was determined to end Amber's life.

Amber was not alone in her final days. I was able to communicate with her a couple of times, and she had spiritual support from Rev. Lauren Bennett of St. Louis.

Amber did not live a normal life. Her childhood was marked with abuse and neglect, being bounced from one foster home to another until being adopted at age five. Unfortunately, the abuses continued.

We will not forget Amber. We will list her name among those spoken during Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremonies.

May She Rest in Peace!  
Patricia



We will all miss our sister who was executed today. Many of us know the bravery it takes to come out of the closet, but to face death as yourself shows true bravery that cannot be matched. Goodnight sweet sister, may the Goddess embrace you as you truly wished to be!

-Vinny-

HAPPY NEW YEARS SISTERS and BROTHERS! We made it to see this year! We lost a whole lot of brothers and sisters last year, but they are still living within our hearts! and we have to keep Sister Amber in our Prayers!!!! My whole family is praying for her! may love warm your whole day and week as well as the whole year! I love you all!!!! Brother Mylowe

## WRITE FOR US!

We are actively seeking material from our readers to publish in future issues. We will no longer publish messages from one reader to another.

We are looking for:

- Articles with accurate information about relevant DOC policies, legal developments, and current affairs (cite your sources!)
- Tips, life-hacks, and how-to articles that our readers would find useful
- Media recommendations — books, authors, podcasts, tv, movies etc. Preference given to free things. Write a little bit about why you're recommending it and/or what you got from it.
- Personal essays on topics relevant to our community, including but not limited to: mental health, personal growth, what sucks about being LGBTQ in prison, what's cool about being LGBTQ in prison, pride, shame, self-acceptance, friendship, liberation from oppression, dealing with difficult family relationships, etc.
- Good news — if you have something to celebrate!
- Reports from your camp on conditions for LGBTQ prisoners
- Responses — If you have something constructive to add to a particular conversation, you can write a response to a previously published piece

## SEND SUBMISSIONS TO OUR PO BOX OR THE BLACK-PINK GAZETTE TABLET CONTACT

IF YOU'RE A NEW SUBSCRIBER AND DON'T HAVE THE CONTACT ON YOUR TABLET YET, PLEASE BE PATIENT. IF YOU'RE STILL MISSING THE CONTACT AFTER A COUPLE WEEKS, WRITE TO OUR PO BOX.

# CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY EXPANDS DEFINITION OF 'WOMAN' TO INCLUDE TRANS WOMEN

By Katie Kindelan for Good Morning America, 12/15/2022

Cambridge Dictionary has expanded its definition of the word "woman" to be inclusive of transgender women. In addition to the longtime definition of the word, "an adult female human being," in the dictionary entry for woman, additional descriptors have been added.

Cambridge now also defines a woman as, "an adult who lives and identifies as female though they may have been said to have a different sex at birth."

Included in the new entry are the examples, "She was the first trans woman elected to a national office," and, "Mary is a woman who was assigned male at birth."

A spokesperson for the Cambridge Dictionary told ABC News the addition to the entry was made in October. The change made news this week after it was first reported in the U.K. newspaper The Telegraph.

The change was made by editors after "careful study," according to the Cambridge Dictionary spokesperson. "They carefully studied usage patterns of the word woman and concluded that this definition is one that learners of English should be aware of to support their understanding of how the language is used," the spokesperson said in a statement. "The first definition at the entry for woman remains unchanged and continues to be 'an adult female human being.'"

"Our dictionaries are written for learners of English and are designed to help users understand English as it is currently used," the spokesperson continued. "They are compiled by analysing a large corpus of English texts (over 2 billion words in total) taken from all areas of writing and publishing, which allows us to see exactly how language is used. We regularly update our dictionary to reflect changes in how English is used, based on analysis of data from this corpus."

The dictionary also includes a definition for "man" that is inclusive of transgender men. Along with the traditional definition of "an adult male human being," the entry for the word man also includes the language, "an adult who lives and identifies as male though they may have been said to have a different sex at birth."

Transgender is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as "an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity or expression is different from their sex at birth."

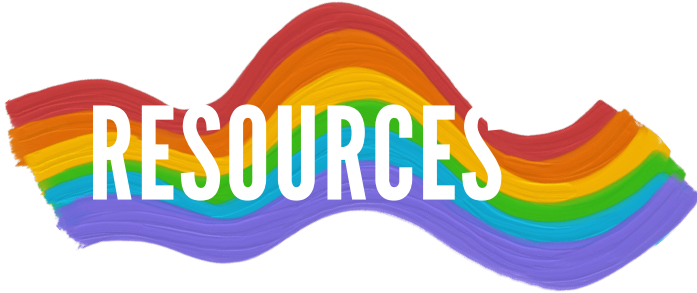
A transgender woman is a person who lives as a woman, but was thought to be male when she was born, while a transgender man lives as a man, but was thought to be female when he was born, according to the National Center for Transgender Equity.

This year, Dictionary.com, which defines woman as "an adult female person," named "woman" as its word of the year.

"This year, searches for the word woman on Dictionary.com spiked significantly multiple times in relation to separate high-profile events, including the moment when a question about the very definition of the word was posed on the national stage," the online reference site said in announcing its word of the year this week. "Our selection of woman as our 2022 Word of the Year reflects how the intersection of gender, identity, and language dominates the current cultural conversation and shapes much of our work as a dictionary."

The site said the biggest spike in searches for the word "woman" came during the confirmation hearing of now-Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, who was asked by Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn, of Tennessee, to "provide a definition for the word woman."

"It was a rare case of not just a word in the spotlight, but a definition. We at Dictionary.com weren't the only ones to take notice. The prominence of the question and the attention it received demonstrate how issues of transgender identity and rights are now frequently at the forefront of our national discourse," Dictionary.com stated. "More than ever, we are all faced with questions about who gets to identify as a woman (or a man, or neither). The policies that these questions inform transcend the importance of any dictionary definition—they directly impact people's lives."



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**LEGAL/ADVOCACY**

**NEWSLETTER**

**RESEARCH**

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Los Angeles, CA 90010

Missouri Cure  
P.O. Box 28931  
St.Louis,MO 63132

Liberation Lit (inquire for free books)  
P.O. Box 45071  
Kansas City, MO 64171

ACLU  
906 Olive St., Suite 1130  
St. Louis, Mo. 63101

LAGAI (Ultraviolet)  
3543 18th St #26  
San Francisco,CA 94110

Library of Congress  
101 Independence Ave. S.E.  
Washington, DC 20540-4660

Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services  
925 S. Country Club Dr.  
Jeff City, Mo. 66109-4510

Black and Pink  
6223 Maple St., #4600  
Omaha NE 68104

Centurion  
1400 Edgewood Drive  
Jefferson City, Mo. 63109

Transgender Law Center  
P.O. Box 70976  
Oakland, CA 94612

Prison Health News  
4722 Baltimore Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19143



National Center for Transgender Equality  
1032 15th St NW  
Suite # 199  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Slingshot (quarterly radical newspaper)  
3124 Shattuck Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94705



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18 Tremont St Suite # 950  
Boston, MA 02108

Prisoner Express (twice a year)  
Prisoner Express  
PO Box #6556  
Ithaca, NY 14851



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370 Turk St # 370  
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**LEGAL/ADVOCACY**



Southern Poverty Law Center  
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The Midwest Innocence Project  
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