



MIDWEST RAINBOW NEWS



JUNE 2023

VOL. 3 ISSUE 6

"You look ridiculous if you dance. You look ridiculous if you don't dance. So you might as well dance."

-Gertrude Stein

HOUSEKEEPING

DISCLAIMER

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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?

Although things seem to be improving in terms of uniform delivery of the newsletter, please reach out if you do not receive your copy for more than one month in a row. Thank you!

Midwest Rainbow News
PO Box 81624
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

MAMA SAYS

Here it is, June already! Happy Pride to all our boys and girls!! Throughout this month, I would love it if you sent in stories about how you celebrated Pride month, and we will try to get as many of your stories published as we can.

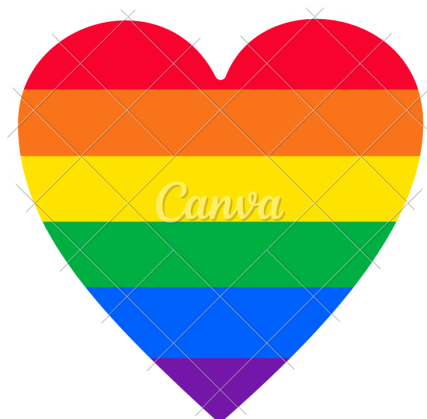
I know many of you have been hearing a lot about the legislation that was passed concerning our treatment. Let me shoot down any false rumors you may have heard. The bill the governor is expected to sign soon ONLY prohibits surgery for prisoners, which we already knew would require a court case for us to receive. So, in short: The new law does not affect our ability to get placed on hormones, nor will it affect those already receiving hormones. In next month's issue I will give you a more detailed rundown on how it will or won't affect you when you are released.

These next seven months we hope to spend working with other organizations to help educate and bring truth back into the conversation about transgender people and why gender-affirming treatment is so important. We are entering an election cycle and many politicians are looking to make their voice heard. Unfortunately, most of them use those that they know have no voice, those who cannot vote. This is why I stress so often that knowing our history is so important. We have been here before!!

I want to send my personal thanks to all those free world people who helped fight for our right to exist. People who made that long trip to Jefferson City to make our voices heard, politicians who stood up for all of us and tacked on a four year limit to the bill. Next year we hope for a better outcome AND, in 2024 each and every member of the House of Representatives will be up for reelection!

Have a fabulous Pride and stay safe!

With a Mothers Love,
Patricia



RECIPE CORNER

Vanilla Wafer Bars filled with Peanut Butter, Chocolate and oatmeal cream pie

Ingredients

3 (16oz) Vanilla Wafers
1/4 coffee mug hot water
1 pkg. Vanilla Cappuccino
4 coffee mugs Hot Chocolate mix
2 (2oz.) pkg. Cream Cheese
2 Heaping Tbsp's Peanut Butter
1 box Oatmeal Cream Pies

Directions

Crush all vanilla Wafers as fine as possible. Divide this into 2 large bowls. Divide hot Chocolate mix between the 2 bowls, as well. Add 6 Tbsps hot water to the bowls and mix well, then knead to combine. These ingredients must be thoroughly mixed well, You want a moist and stiff mixture. Once both bowls are kneaded, get 2 large clean chip bags and place one bowl of the mixture into each chip bag. Flatten mixture evenly in the bags. Cut open each end and down the back center of the 2 bags and allow to dry for a hour.

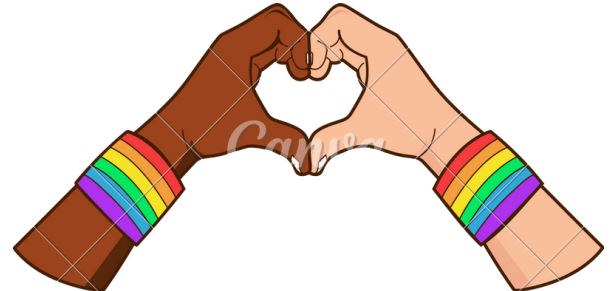
When 10 minutes are left on your hour, start preparing filling. Combine cream cheese, Cappuccino, Peanut Butter, and 5 Tbsps hot water into a small bowl and whip well. Cook in a Microwave for a few seconds until hot and the Peanut Butter is soft. Mix well again.

Evenly spread the cream mixture over the top of 1 half of Vanilla Wafer mixture, then split the whole box of oatmeal cream pies into 1/2 using a knife or a ID card and put one oatmeal cream pie with marshmallow up and the next one down using 12 of the 24 halves then top with the other vanilla wafer mixture in the second chip bag and put the other 12 oatmeal cream pies (marshmallow down) on top of the Vanilla Wafer Cookie mixture.

Allow to dry 2 hours before you cut and serve. Enjoy



PRIDE IS EVERYDAY



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*

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 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.



ON OUR HEARTS AND MINDS

LOVE OVER LOGIC

Why would anyone want to fall in love in here? I do not mean friendships forged into family by the fire of doing time, but the love that binds two souls for eternity. That moves Olympus and the Underworld just for a simple "I love you" that touches something in your heart that nothing has ever ever touched before. Why? Because it is amazing to find that one person.

I know some of you are rolling your eyes and are about to turn the page, but just bare with me. Eight years ago I would have been there with you. Even my fiance will tell you I am a person ruled by logic, with some very rare exceptions like cakes and chips. Like you, when I was fresh to the yards I thought two people falling in love while incarcerated was dumb. Worse, it was comical when someone declared they were in love, then a few weeks later they fell in love with someone else. Don't misunderstand, I am not hating, go on and share the love. However, logic says serious love would never work in prison where there is so much out of your control. You may get transferred, go to the hole, or get moved at any random time. There are those who drop kites on you, or organize ways of splitting you up for any number or reasons. The list of issues couples may face behind these fences goes on, and on.

So then why for the love of the Gods would anyone fall in love while they are in prison? Because you cannot help it when the fates place that one person in your life. For me that was a sunny day in a smoke box on the little yard of four house at S.C.C.C., he walked right up and asked if I was "Sapien." An acquaintance of mine in J Trip asked him to look out for me. I was wary of him, mainly because I was of everyone that first year into my thirty year bid. There was also something that felt right about him despite being in the closet in the back of my closet's closet. We quickly became fast friends, and could not stop talking about everything, and anything, as we walked around the track, or lazily basked in the freedom of rec. It was amazing being so close and familiar with someone.

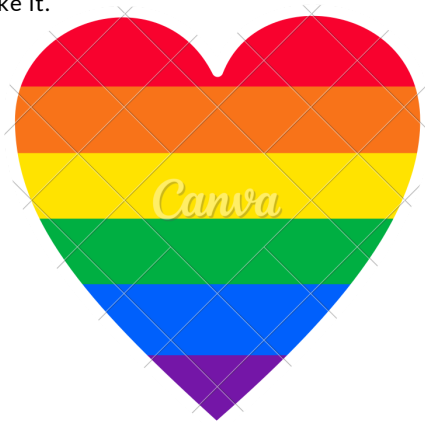
As we lounged in the light of our new friendship though, there were whispers stirring in the dark. Others did not like our growing friendship so they planted a knife in a box of cakes and had him removed for a very long time. Our friendship was strained by his absence, which allowed others to sow the seeds of distrust into me once again. The number one regret on my list is the day I cut him out of my life because I believed the lies of others, and for the next couple of years I danced around the hill avoiding him at every turn. I often wonder what it would have been like if we were able to share that time. For me it was a time of freedom as I grew more confident in myself. As I shed my fear. As I spread my wings and learned to fly. What was locked away refused to be shackled any longer, but it had not quite gained the strength to escape the prison I condemned it to. Fortunately, the Fates will not be ignored.

When he moved into the house with me our friendship began to bloom once again. Timidly at first as I worked through my apprehension, but in no time we were spending as much time as we could together. During this period, I was going through a string of bad roommates so when he asked if I would move in with him I jumped at the chance to have a good person to live with. Even if I was unsure if I was ready to go any further than friends with him. So, I moved in and for an hour and a half I sat on the floor in front of him discussing where our relationship was going. My nervousness was telling me not to take it beyond friends, but as we talked those jitters quickly dissipated. When he gently pushed me back against the bed I began to feel free as he delicately kissed me goodbye as I left for a program. When I returned we spent the evening watching "American Horror Story: Freak Show" while eating homemade nachos. Then, we spent the entire night holding each other and kissing like two people who have been apart for years. During that time he found the keys to the cell where I had locked Sabrina away decades ago, and by the morning I was the happiest I had ever been in my life. I was free, and I was with someone who was stimulating, funny, and just felt right. However, later that morning they told me to move to a different house where I spent the next 3 months trying to get back to him.

When I did, I spent the next eight years in heaven, where I fell in love with a man who might never go home. He pushed me to be the best person I could by challenging my thinking, my views, and pushed me to learn and grow. Who was there through my darkest and brightest days. Always gentle, patient, and full of love. Even now that we are separated for this short period I still feel his love every day, and I hope he feels mine, as we prepare to be married in September. I cannot wait for the day to come, in a year and a half, when I can answer his calls just to hear him say "good morning."

The real question is, "why would anyone deny the love that finds them in even the darkest places of this world?" Even outside of prison, love has its hurdles. It takes teamwork and effort to overcome them, just like it does on the inside. So do not be afraid, skeptical, or dismissive of finding that special person in prison. Be open to what the Gods have blessed you with because it is worth every moment of joy and heartache that comes with it. There is nothing else like it.

Sabrina



THE MOST ICONIC DRAG PERFORMERS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

By Elaina Patton, Jillian Eugenios, Ellie Rudy, Brooke Sopelsa and Jay Valle for NBC Out - June 1, 2023

Now that the centuries-old art of drag has become a preferred target in the current culture warfare, we chose to dedicate this year's annual NBC Out Pride 30 list to the performers who have put this art form on the map. While drag is not new, what is new is the tidal wave of state legislation seeking to restrict where and in front of whom drag shows can be performed. So far this year, lawmakers in at least 16 states have introduced such measures, with the governors of Tennessee, Florida and Montana signing bills intended to restrict drag performances. Without further ado, here are some drag performers who have had the most impact on the glamorous and increasingly controversial art form.

Princess Seraphina (1700s)

Although she predated the modern usage of the term "drag," which is said to be a product of late-19th century British theater, Princess Seraphina is widely regarded as the first English drag queen. The female persona of 18th-century Englishman John Cooper, Princess Seraphina dared to roam the streets of London when homosexuality was a capital offense. And she was reportedly as familiar to her neighbors as she was to the regulars of the underground bars and clubs known as molly houses, which hosted London's thriving gay subculture of the 1700s. Much of what is known about Princess Seraphina comes from court records from a remarkable trial in which Cooper — who exposed himself to legal scrutiny amid the era's "sodomy laws" — brought charges against a man who robbed him at knife-point and threatened to expose his sexuality.



William Dorsey Swann (1860-1925)

William Dorsey Swann, who was born into slavery in Georgia, went on to make history as the first self-identified drag queen and the first American activist to lead a queer resistance group, according to historian Channing Joseph. On New Year's Day in 1896, Swann was charged in Washington, D.C., with "keeping a disorderly house," which was typically a euphemism for running a brothel. But what he was actually running, according to newspaper accounts at the time, was a drag ball (or, as the judge characterized it, a "hell of iniquity"). Swann, who had previously been arrested for "female impersonation," was quickly convicted and sentenced to 10 months in jail. Swann requested a pardon from President Grover Cleveland, and, while the request was denied, it was reportedly the first time an American used legal and political action to fight for the right of LGBTQ people to gather.



Madam Pattirini (1854-1931)

Madam Pattirini (above), the drag alter ego of [Brigham Morris Young](#), was one of the 57 children of [Brigham Young](#), the founder of Salt Lake City, Utah, and the second president of the the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly known as the Mormon church). An [article published in 1901 in the Deseret News](#), the paper owned by the LDS church, noted that Morris Young performed in drag as Madam Pattirini, an "Italian prima donna," at the birthday celebration of the church's then-president, Lorenzo Snow. The article said Morris Young showed himself to be a "prime entertainer" and praised him for his "good falsetto voice and the ability to sustain a female character." For those looking to honor Morris Young's most well-known act, a Utah distiller [introduced a gin named after the drag diva in 2017](#).

Gowongo Mohawk (1860-1924)

Gowongo Mohawk, born in the western New York village of Gowanda, was one of the first Native American actors to perform on the American stage and the first known Native American male impersonator. After seeing white stage productions in which Indigenous people were portrayed as savages, the young actor decided to challenge the racist narrative and add an authentic, Indigenous perspective to American entertainment. In the late 19th century, she started writing, directing and starring in her own performances, in which she would also critique traditional gender dynamics, often while in male drag, according to the site Drag King History. The groundbreaking actor, who performed across the United States and Europe, would shock her audiences, most of whom had never seen Indigenous characters played by Indigenous actors – or, presumably, a woman in drag.



Gowongo Mohawk (1860-1924)

Crystal LaBeija (1930s-1990s)

When Crystal LaBeija, a Black drag queen and trans woman, was announced as the third runner-up at the 1967 Miss All-America Camp Beauty Contest, she was having none of it. Before the winner, a white queen named Rachel Harlow, could even be announced, LaBeija stormed off the stage to protest against the competition, which – she and other queens alleged – favored white beauty standards. Frustrated by the apparent racism in drag pageant culture, LaBeija founded her own drag ball exclusively for Black queens in 1972. To promote the event, she and fellow Harlem queen Lottie founded the House of LaBeija, leading other Black and Latina queens to do the same – and thus, ball culture had arrived. For those still doubting LaBeija's drag icon status, the queen of queens, RuPaul, revealed in a 2018 New York Times article that the first drag performance she saw was LaBeija singing a Donna Summer song in black fishnets and a bustier.



Crystal LaBeija (1930s-1990s)

Pepper LaBeija (1948-2003)

Described as the last of the great queens of the Harlem drag balls, Pepper LaBeija became known to national audiences as one of the charismatic, central subjects of Jennie Livingston's groundbreaking 1990 documentary, "Paris Is Burning." But prior to that, in the 1970s and '80s, LaBeija was one of the leading stars of the ball scene, known for her commanding presence, voluminous costuming and extravagant displays, including her signature "Egyptian effect" runway performances. Over her decadeslong career – during which she had a long tenure as the mother of the House of LaBeija, founded by the legendary ball figure Crystal LaBeija – she won an astounding 250 ball trophies. She is also credited with upholding her house's mission of resisting the Eurocentric ideals pushed by the early drag ball scene and demanding that people of color be celebrated by the art form they created.



Pepper LaBeija (1948-2003)



Julian Eltinge (1880s-1941)

Julian Eltinge was the “king of (drag) queens” in his day, and his fame as a female impersonator “rivalled that of superstar performer RuPaul’s status today,” according to a biography of Eltinge published on the Los Angeles Public Library’s website. He reportedly started performing drag at saloons in Montana as a teenager before finding his way to the vaudeville circuit, Broadway and, eventually, Hollywood. In 1912, the Eltinge Theater on New York’s iconic 42nd Street was named in his honor, and during this time he was said to be one of the highest-paid actors in America. His drag performances were known for their convincing portrayals of women, and he would remove his wig at the end of his performances, shocking the audience with the reveal.

According to his New York Times obituary, Eltinge performed for King Edward VII of England as a young actor, and the monarch was so impressed that he gifted him a white bulldog



Julian Eltinge (1880s-1941)

Barbette (1890s-1973)

Long before the queens of “RuPaul’s Drag Race” embraced wig reveals, a high-wire performer from small-town Texas made a career of removing her curls. Barbette, born Vander Clyde Broadway, found fame in the 1920s and '30s performing daring, acrobatic shows in full drag at world-famous venues like the Moulin Rouge. She ended these acts with a signature move: removing her blond wig to reveal boyish brown hair underneath it. This flair for the dramatic and her elegance in the air attracted the attention of Europe’s elite, among them Coco Chanel and the writer and artist Jean Cocteau. After injury and illness ended her aerial career, she returned to Texas and lived on in seductive photographs and as a former muse for men such as Cocteau, Alfred Hitchcock and Tony Curtis.



Barbette (1890s-1973)

Stormé DeLarverie (1920-2014)

It's popular belief that New Orleans-born Stormé DeLarverie threw the punch that ignited the 1969 Stonewall uprising. Throughout her life, she was considered a protector of New York's LGBTQ community, working security and watching over Greenwich Village's gay bars and streets until her death in 2014. In the 1950s and '60s, DeLarverie presided over the Jewel Box Revue – the era's only racially integrated drag troupe – as mistress of ceremonies and the lone "male impersonator." Her signature, tailored style eventually caught the attention of photographer Diane Arbus, who immortalized the performer in a famous 1961 portrait: "Miss Storme de Larverie, the Lady Who Appears to Be a Gentleman, N.Y.C." And her disregard for gender norms and lifelong activism also inspired the documentary "Storme: The Lady of the Jewel Box," which details how the singer brought audiences together in a time plagued by homophobia and segregation.



Stormé DeLarverie (1920-2014)



FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS

Dear Sisters and Bros behind enemy lines, I am writing you all to encourage you all to never give up on your dreams no matter how petty others believe they are or how huge they may seem, anything is possible if you chase the dreams that wants and needs you. We are powerful human beings and there is no power on earth that is stronger than ours. We have supernatural powers, power that releases the potential in all of us! The creator intended for us to use this potential for the greater good of our community. He/She (creator) knows that our potential can change the world in which we live in. Look at what Billy Porter, Janet Mock, Laverne Cox and RuPaul have been able to do even while walking within the shadows of hate and violence. They have and are still maxing out their full potential, by any means necessary.

Potential is light, so let your light shine and may it shine bright for all the world to see! Your light, your life matters! Don't let the haters dim your light. Just imagine what the world would look like if Malcom X, Tyler Perry, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, or Ida B. Wells gave up? It would look pathetic, so refuse to look pathetic and powerless! We are the trendsetters. Believe y'all and put some movement in your beliefs, beliefs with no movement are a waste of good thoughts. I am powerful and a big believer in myself and my community. I refuse to give up, there ain't no way I can give up on my dreams. Look y'all I am so excited after years of trying with absolutely no success or movement, finally my life has gained a positive flow, and I am marching toward my goals. I am in the process of legally changing my name and medically transforming into a woman.

I hope nothing changes and I am given what the state is mandated to give me. Being approved is like winning the lottery! So I beg you all to never give up on your dreams! Power up! Tap into your emergency powers and keep pressuring those with authority over you to allow you to receive what the state allows you to receive. We deserve to be corrected inside the Department of Corrections and if there is a service they can and must provide you to make you a better person than you were before you fell, then make sure you get it. Don't give up! If at first you don't succeed, pick yourself up and try it again and again. Dare to be uncommon! Sometimes the roads rarely walked are the roads that will lead us to greatness. Don't wait, time is essential, the now is a gift, it's why they call it the present. Give yourself a gift, the greatest gift, the gift of knowing who you truly are. Please yall pray for me, that I continue making progress, physically, mentally, financially and that I keep my old ass out of trouble.

Also pray for our sisters and brothers in Ohio who had their church attacked by a hater who set it on fire, (April 2023) because they planned to have a drag performance at their venue. Pray for the family of Koko Da Doll (April 2023) a trans woman who recently shot a documentary about her life and was brutally murdered in Atlanta. Pray for us all, we are all we got, they don't wanna see us shine. I love you all and I am sending you all a whole lot of liberty, light and happiness.
Auntie Summer Breeze



PREGNANT TRANSGENDER MAN STARS ON COVER OF GLAMOUR UK'S PRIDE ISSUE

By [Jay Valle](#) for NBC Out, June 2, 2023

Glamour UK launched its digital June Pride cover this week featuring a pregnant transgender man. The cover features transgender activist and author Logan Brown standing topless with a suit painted over his chest and his pregnant belly on full display.

"I am a transgender pregnant man and I do exist, so no matter what anybody says, I literally am living proof," Brown told the magazine.

Glamour UK, an online women's magazine published by Condé Nast, launched its Pride cover issue on Thursday, coinciding with the start of LGBTQ Pride month. The magazine has previously showcased prominent figures in the LGBTQ community, such as Grammy-award winning artist Kim Petras and "Queer Eye" cast member Antoni Porowski.

This year's issue "celebrates the allyship between women (cisgender or not) and transgender people through our shared experiences — in particular pregnancy, healthcare and childbirth," the magazine explained. The cover interview, which was conducted two weeks before Brown, 27, gave birth to his daughter, Nova, recounts the cover star's experience with an unexpected pregnancy and navigating the medical system as a trans man. Brown also shared in the interview that he and his partner, Bailey J Mills, a drag performer and TikTok star in the U.K., received a mix of supportive and negative comments after announcing their pregnancy on social media.

"Being pregnant in general is really, really difficult, but then all the things that come with it, like me being trans and stuff, no one's actually said, 'Are you okay?'" Brown said in the interview.

According to a 2021 survey by TransActual, a U.K. advocacy group, 90% of trans people in that country reported experiencing delays when seeking transition-related health care.

Despite the backlash, the cover star expressed his desire to educate those who may hold misconceptions about transgender individuals.

Brown shared with Glamour that he is working on a children's book and an autobiography that highlights his pregnancy, and hopes it will serve as a resource for other transgender people.

He added that he would also like the book to reach people who aren't transgender but "are curious and want to know about the situation," referring to trans pregnancy.



**Reach us at:
Midwest Rainbow News
PO Box 81624
Pittsburgh, PA 15217**

LEGAL/ADVOCACY

NEWSLETTER

RESEARCH

Lambda Legal
C/O Help Desk
4221 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Missouri - Cure
P.O. Box 411794
Kansas City, Mo 64141
Chair Person: Kathy Franklin

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



GLAAD
18 Tremont St Suite # 950
Boston, MA 02108

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



TGI Justice Project
370 Turk St # 370
San Francisco, CA 94102

LEGAL/ADVOCACY



Southern Poverty Law Center
400 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL. 36104

The Midwest Innocence Project
3619 Broadway Blvd., Suite 2
Kansas City, MO 64111



MacArthur Justice Center
906 Olive Street, Suite 420
St. Louis, MO 63101

National Lawyers Guild
PO Box 1266
New York, NY 10009-8941

