

MIDWEST RAINBOW NEWS

AUGUST 2022

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"We live in capitalism. Its power seems inescapable. So did the divine right of kings. Any human power can be resisted and changed by human beings. Resistance and change often begin in art, and very often in our art, the art of words."

— Ursula K. Le Guin

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.

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MAMA SAYS

When I first began fighting for legal name changes in 2018, we had no attorney and had to negotiate some serious speed bumps. Today I am happy to announce that our army of pro bono attorneys is growing and, since 2018, 12 beautiful women have successfully made it through the process. There are several more just getting started, including our very first trans masculine person! I am so happy for all of you and for those who will follow. Our sincerest thanks and heartfelt gratitude goes to all of the attorneys and those who work tirelessly to help in our cause.

I know that I am not the only one who noticed the absence of Ms. Dominique Morgan in the last issue of our National Black and Pink News. I am sorry to announce that Dominique has resigned as National Director of Black and Pink, Inc. and moved on to other things. Dominique stepped up during a time of loss, to fill a need within the organization. During Dominique's tenure, a number of wonderful things took place, the opening of Lydon House being just one of several. Let us not forget Dominique in our prayers and wish her luck for the future.

Speaking of changes. The Gazette will be going through some changes, including a change of name, very soon. With a name change will also be a change in content. By necessity, we are going to stop printing letters in favor of stories/articles. We still encourage you to write to us and, if we are able, we will act on complaints of abuse by those who should know better. We hope you will enjoy the new name and format. We will work hard to provide timely stories and useful information, maybe a joke or two!

With a Mother's Love
Patricia



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.

SAUCE QUEEN'S CORNER

No Bake Cookies

Makes 12 to 14 two-inch cookies

1 peanut butter jar lid = 1/4 Cup

- 1 pinch Salt
- 1 lid of peanut butter
- 1 lid of powdered milk
- 1 lid Butter
- 3 big spoons of Hot Coca
- 6 lids of oatmeal (1 pack=1 lid)
- one empty big chip bag (like plain tortilla chips)
- 1 bread sack or chip bag
- 1 water pitcher or a big bowl
- 1 stinger
- 1 big bowl



- 1.Fill pitcher or bowl 2/3 full of water and bring to a boil.
- 2.Put everything except oatmeal into your chip bag.
- 3.Place the bag in the boiling water so the mixture is submerged, but not the entire bag. Boil the mixture for 20 minutes, stirring inside the bag occasionally.
- 4.Put oatmeal into your big bowl.
- 5.After 20 minutes unplug the stinger take the chip bag out of water, stir one more time, and then pour it over the oatmeal.
- 6.Mix thoroughly until oatmeal is fully mixed with the chocolate.
- 7.Place a spoonful on your bread bag or opened chip bag to make each cookie and let dry/set.

Tuna Melt

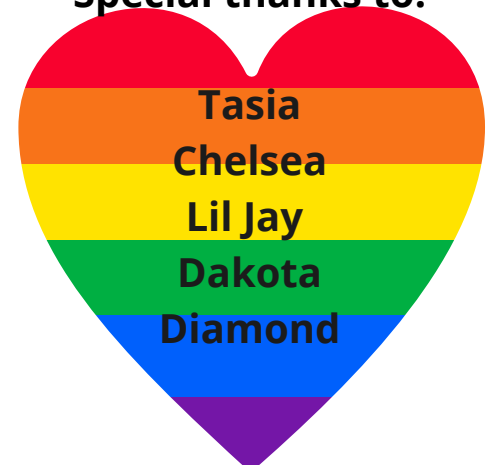
- 1 package flour tortilla shells
- 1 package tuna
- 8 oz tub sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 oz jalapeños
- 8 oz quick rice
- 1 oz refried beans dry
- Microwave
- Snack Cracker box, ripped in half
- salt/pepper/onions and garlic to taste
- optional hot sauce or sriracha

SAVORY

Open flour tortilla shells. Pull apart and then wet both sides with water. Place on a snack cracker box ripped in half. Carry both halves of the cracker box to the microwave. Lay the tortillas on top of the box and cook one at a time for 20-30 seconds. Push down to flatten the warmed flour tortillas. After doing all 6, take them back to your cell. Let sit just until cool and then place back into the flour tortilla bag and zip to close

Cook rice for 5 minutes, drain, and let it steam for another 5 minutes with the lid on. Chop jalapeños. Combine tuna, diced jalapeños with the cooked rice and mix well. Add refried beans mix into the rice/tuna mixture. Add water if needed, but the refried beans are used as a binder to keep the mix together. Cook the mixture until hot. Spread cheese on tortilla shells. Stir rice mixture and spread onto the cheese. Top with salt, pepper, onions, and garlic to taste (and hot sauce or sriracha, if desired),. Fold and recook for 1-2 minutes in order to cook the shell.

Special thanks to:



For writing us this month!



Stay Cool and Safe
Happy Eating!
Michelle Sauce Queen
Miller

RAINBOW NEWS RECOMMENDATIONS

Watch, read, or listen to something you think others might like? Write us with your recs and we'll include them below

MAMA BEAR

Storytelling podcasts:

The Moth
Story Corps
Ear Hustle
Risk!

Pop culture podcasts:

Studio 360
My Brother, My Brother, and Me

Health and Wellness podcasts:

Hidden Brain
Mayo Clinic Q and A
Ted Talks Health
Life Kit Health
Conversations
The Trauma Therapist
Health and Wellbeing
Help and Hope
The Dark Place

Parenting podcasts:

Parenting Great kids
Rad Parenting
Raising Good Humans
The Longest Shortest Time

The most hilarious one that I listen to is Psychobabble with Tyler and Korey, two queens that were on The Amazing Race. They have a lot of interesting conversations. In need of meditation? THINK is the one to go to for soothing relaxing music. I hope this helps.

BREE

By now I hope that you all have your tablets and that they are working. Since getting these new tablets and new apps, I have grown very fond of the podcasts app. I have done a lot of exploring in the podcasts app and have found several podcasts that pertain to those in the alphabet tribe. I have listed them below. Enjoy!!!

Content Warning: Some of the Podcasts discuss various kinds of trauma, so please keep this in mind when deciding which ones to listen to.

Subject: Personal Development

Show: *She's So Cool*
Episode: Narrative: Laverne Cox
Show: *Women of Impact*
Episode: GiGi Gorgeous on the Power of Vulnerability
Episode: Why your gender and sexuality shouldn't matter.

Subject: Parenting and Family

Show: *Ted Talks Kids and Family*
Episode: The Trans Story includes you, Nicole Maines

Subject: Public Radio

Show: *StoryCorps*
Episode: Remembering Stonewall: 50 Years Later
Episode: StoryCorps 497: Meet Them Where They Are

Subject: Personal Development

Show: *Think with Krys Boyd*
Episode: The Challenges and Joys of Raising a trans child.
Episode: A Trans Woman Reflects on What it took to transition
Episode: A transwoman in an ultra-Orthodox world
Episode: Growing up Queer, What kids need to know
Episode: How Society Fails Trans Kids
Episode: Why does gender matter

Subject: Mental Health

Show: *One Hour at a Time*
Episode: Addiction and Trauma in the Transgender Community
Episode: The Latest and Greatest on LGBTQ Issues
Show: *Mental Health Monday*
Episode 239: LGBTQ Family and TV
Show: *The Trauma Therapist*
Episode 271: LGBTQIA and The Healing of Trauma
Episode 74: Beck Gee-Cohen MA LADC

Subject: Education

Show: *Lectures in History*
Episode: Expanding Rights in the 1960s and 1970s

HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M TRANS?

-excerpt from Schuyler Bailar
@pinkmantaray

The first thing to remember is that there is no singular narrative of what it means to be a trans person. Gender (regardless of how society wants to box it) is not a binary – it's a spectrum, a continuum.

The longer answer is that I cannot tell you who you are. Only you can figure that out. And I'm sure, if you're anything like me, you're currently rolling your eyes. I get it. It really sucks trying to figure out who you are. But you're asking all the good questions right now and that's exactly where you need to be. Asking yourself questions. You don't have to have all the answers right now.

I would really invest in thinking about who you are – who you want to be – when the lights go out at the end of the day and you're alone in bed. Don't focus on your body and it's shape or genitals or hormones. That's only a fraction of this. Ask yourself the questions that pull at your heart, that disturb you:

1. Who are you inside?
2. What will make you live the happiest, most authentic life?
3. If nothing else could stop you – if other things didn't matter, what would you do? Take your family, your sport, your significant other, everyone, out of the equation. What would you do just for you? I always imagine myself on an island alone, trying to survive on my own, just as me. Who did I see? I always saw myself a man.

WHAT NOW? WHAT NEXT?

I've been having those two questions swarm around my head for some time now. 'What Now? What Next?' I'll tell you why in just a second. But first, ask yourself those same two questions. There's always room for growth and development. Whether it's in your own personal life or as an alphabet family community. What can you do to better your life or help better one of your brothers or sisters? Nobody should become complacent in this thing called life. When you become complacent you become satisfied, and when you become satisfied, you start to settle. And we cannot and will not settle, family. There are more battles to overcome, and more rights to claim. You are a beautiful human being and you have just as much right to receive the same amount of respect as the 'heterosexuals' around you.

Anyway, before I get to preaching and take up more paper. My questions came into play for me for a couple reasons. First, I was on hunger strike for 14 days (do not entirely recommend it, I starved!) because as I wrote about in the previous months, I been supposed to start my HRT. I kept y'all updated about what they've 'said'. Keyword: said. They have told me they have scheduled my phone call to the regional office, to 'you should be starting this summer'... That was back in January... It's currently August. (Maybe September when you read this) But they took me serious on my hunger strike (I think). I hope so cause I lost 15 pounds I didn't have lol. But they let me see the emails they've sent to regional (centurion) to speed them along up there. But I keep asking, 'What Now? What Next?' because it seems like no matter how hard I try, no matter how loud I scream, my voice is not getting heard...

Second, As I have also informed you guys, I went up and seen the parole board back in June. I can happily say my time is coming to an end! Again the questions arise, 'What Now? What Next?'. I know what I want for my future, but the part that I think about constantly is a fear that most can probably relate to. And that's the fear of failure... I know I don't want to come back to this place, prison has scarred me mentally, emotionally, and physically. But society and life as we knew it was still moving along and now I got to jump back out there and I just don't want to fail. So I'm just asking those questions preparing for my release that is coming faster than I expected it to be.

Finally, I ask those questions in regards to what I'm going be able to do for those part of this family that I'm leaving behind. I met some pretty amazing people and gotten close with some and I hate the situations some are in and if I could just do something to be of some help to better their life while they're incarcerated I'll be there.

So family, What Now? What Next? What are you reading this going to do to make life a little bit easier given the circumstances we're in? Don't stop fighting for what you believe in. Don't stop fighting for what you want. Don't Stop The Fight.

--Emeri



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*



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL ON ABOLISHING PRISONS



In 1981, Black Panther Party member Mumia Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death by a “hanging judge” for the killing of a white police officer in Philadelphia. In 2000, Amnesty International found that the case “was irredeemably tainted by politics and race and failed to meet international fair trial standards.” Mumia forms part of the generation of Black radicals on whom the state tested law-and- order propaganda and lockdown in the ‘60s — a prelude to the carceral repression it would deploy against poor Black and Brown urban communities in the 1980s and 1990s. On death row, Mumia became a writer of great literary power, and we are pleased to present this piece as part of Abolition for the People.

— The Editors, Kaepernick Publishing

When one thinks of the term abolition, there is a tendency to see it as a threat emerging from the left. Another perspective understands, however, that abolition is a natural response to a situation that has become untenable.

What condition lay before the nation in its founding days? Slavery: human bondage, which sat like an incubus upon the new nation’s foundation, and transformed its stated aims and ideals into lies. After some reflection, perhaps, we will see that the notion of abolition has deep historical roots. Consider summer, 1776, when delegates from the Continental Congress gathered in a sweltering room in Philadelphia. These men, some of the country’s intellectual elite, were scientists, writers, doctors, and thinkers, yet their claims of the new nation’s ideals were thick with contradiction. They wrote and adopted a document that said, among other things, the following:

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it.

These words emerge from the Declaration of Independence, adopted July 4, 1776, and celebrated throughout the U.S. annually on Independence Day today.

When people came together in the 19th century to oppose the expanding slave system, they were called abolitionists. Among both the rulers and the press, such people were regarded as oddballs at best, and nuts at worst. Despite present popular opinion, slavery was the air that people breathed. The nation was so deeply and openly negrophobic and racist, that the idea of a multiracial group opposed to slavery was considered aberrant.

Furthermore, the document, signed by such luminaries as Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Dr. Benjamin Rush, and John Adams, included platitudes like “all men are created equal,” while dark men, property-less white men, and all women were neither able to vote nor be voted for posts of political power. Indigenous people were seen as part of a distant wilderness and not part of the nation that was being contemplated. In October 1859, white abolitionist leader John Brown, joined by 21 men, raided the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in an attempt to arm African captives in neighboring plantations so they could strike out for freedom. Such an attempt had to face fierce logistical challenges, given the communications needed to gain the ear and trust of a largely illiterate and deeply repressed enslaved community, constantly subjected to white armed militia surveillance.

Abolitionists brought forth another vision, and hence, another future. Harpers Ferry, Virginia, was a step in the fateful march to war that, after earth-shaking sacrifice, led to the abolition of slavery.

Abraham Lincoln, one of the most admired presidents in history, would describe the raid and the raiders as little better than lunatics and regicides, less than a year after the attack failed. In February, 1860, Lincoln spoke before a crowd at New York’s Cooper Institute (now known as Cooper Union) to distance himself and his party (Republicans) from the Harpers Ferry raid. Lincoln told his audience that Brown wasn’t a Republican, and that Republicans had nothing to do with the raid. Indeed, Lincoln assured his northern audience that neither he nor his party supported abolition. And, truth be told, this is far from a remarkable perspective, for the fact of chattel slavery was one deeply normalized in American experience and history.

Indeed, abolition was the exception, not the rule. What this means, of course, is that abolitionists were truly remarkable people who saw beyond the present into a time not yet born. Spurred often by religious convictions, abolitionists supported attacks against the slave system, which they saw as an unnecessary evil.

In 1858, a year before the Harpers Ferry raid, Lincoln opined that slavery would last for at least 100 more years — or at least until 1958 or the 1960s. It is important to note that Lincoln’s prognostication was meant to appease the slavocracy. It was not an assessment of the counterrevolutionary dynamic that would detonate after the war.

Despite this observation, what that means to us writing from the 21st century is that people we now regard as successful African American leaders and entrepreneurs like Oprah Winfrey, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Duke Ellington, Lena Horne, Muhammad Ali, Dr. Maya Angelou, Debbie Allen, Toni Morrison, Malcolm X, Bessie Smith, Maxine Waters, Alex Haley, Lerone Bennett, Hank Aaron, and, yes, even Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, would have been born into captivity, if Lincoln’s opinion prevailed.

Abolitionists brought forth another vision, and hence, another future. Harpers Ferry, Virginia, was a step in the fateful march to war that, after earth-shaking sacrifice, led to the abolition of slavery. Thus, abolition was not a skip in the park. It is a deep, committed movement of social transformation that seeks to bring down institutions that needlessly inflict pain upon the People.

Abolitionists like Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and John Brown forged a new America, one unimaginable to earlier generations. They saw farther than their contemporaries, and even warned them of problems threatening from the periphery.

In May 1865, a month after the Confederacy surrendered to Union forces, Douglass delivered a potent warning for his fellow abolitionists about the counterrevolutionary threats that emerged from the ruins of the Civil War:

Slavery has been fruitful in giving itself names. It has been called ‘the peculiar institution,’ ‘the social system,’ and the ‘impediment’... It has been called by a great many names, and it will call itself by yet another name; and you and I and all of us had better wait and see what new form this old monster will assume, in what new skin this old snake will come forth next.

Douglass’s warning, about the mutability of that old racist snake, was not heeded. The achievements of Reconstruction were drowned in a sea of terror and blood. The lessons of the noble anti-slavery Abolition Movement is before us. It is a lesson to struggle and struggle, from generation to generation, until the People are finally free, and that ‘old snake’ has no more masks behind which to hide.

Abolitionists tried to make the nation live up to its promises of equal justice, of freedom, and the rights enshrined in the Reconstruction Amendments set forth in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, which were designed to protect the rights of Black citizens. The Reconstruction Era marked the brief period of Black postwar freedom until the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the 1875 Civil Rights Act. In that era, white supremacists waged a terror war against Black people, and maintained it for the better part of a century, until the emergence and rise of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The lessons of the noble anti-slavery Abolition Movement are before us. The lessons to struggle and struggle, from generation to generation, until the People are finally free, and that “old snake” has no more masks behind which to hide.

The 13th amendment ensured the continuation of slavery by another name — in the guise of the carceral state. Today, prisons are the third largest employer in the nation according to sociologist Loïc Wacquant — and Black people are, once again, its currency.

Although we have drawn from the text of the Declaration of Independence to cite “the Right of the People... to abolish” unjust systems that threaten the Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness of the People, that right doesn’t arise from the document. It comes from the hearts, minds, and urgings of the People — the living People who today breathe the air that sustains us all. Is that not the same energy that calls us to support today’s abolition movement, that works to tear down the system that deprives millions of people — entombed in prison cells and solitary confinement and in this prison house of nations — of their Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness?

We need not historicize questions, nor cast them into the hoary days of the past. They live within us, in our hopes, our dreams, our visions of a world free of such repressive systems that are but the shadows of slavery. Abolition Now!



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LEGAL/ADVOCACY

NEWSLETTER

RESEARCH

Lambda Legal
C/O Help Desk
4221 Wilshire Blvd
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
1247 S. 14th
Omaha, NE 68108

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
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