

Stateville

SPEAKS

VOICES FROM INSIDE... A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE FIVE

The Good Warden

Stateville's Newest Improvement

Bill Ryan

“Dee” Battaglia, the newest improvement to stateville for some time. Inmates are looking to her for hope and inspiration for new programs and a new future of productivity.

On March 16, 2005, Deirdre Battaglia was appointed warden at Stateville Correctional Center in Joliet, IL. Battaglia is the first female warden to head an Illinois maximum

security prison and the first African-American woman in the United States to be the warden of a maximum security prison.

Battaglia wants to implement a humane management philosophy and to create an effective, efficient administrative structure. She brings professional knowledge, bold vision, and a passion for positive programs to Stateville. One of her trademarks is an ability to really listen to inmates, staff, and people from the community. Battaglia will bring a needed focus on team building.

Battaglia's educational and employment experiences provide a solid foundation for her pioneering work at Stateville. She was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in sociology from Northern Illinois University in 1975, becoming the first of her 11 siblings to obtain a college degree. Battaglia also has a master's degree in Corrections and Business Administration. Battaglia's experience with the Illinois Department of Corrections began in 1976



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when she was employed as a counselor at a correctional youth facility. Following this assignment, Battaglia worked for 13 years in an Adult Transition Center. She was appointed head counselor at Stateville in 1994. In 2004, she became Assistant Warden at Dwight Women's Prison.

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hope / change / redemption

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Coverage

WHEN YOU NEED IT

INMATES IN EACH DOC PRISON CAN SUBMIT ARTICLES TO
STATEVILLE SPEAKS



In Loving Memory of...

William Bracy

A true inspiration story by Stanley Howard.

Bracy was a tall, slim, light skinned man in his early 60's with salt and pepper hair, who walked with his head held extremely high and with incredible confidence.

He was arrested for a November 12, 1980 Chicago murder case and was refused by Judge Thomas Maloney to allow his sister to testify to his alibi. The judge claimed "his attorney did not properly put the court on notice of the alibi defense." Bracy testified on his own behalf concerning his innocence, but was still wrongfully convicted and sentenced to death.

HUMBLE; SOFT SPOKEN

I first met this humble, soft spoken man when I arrived on Death Row (Pontiac, IL) in April of 1987, and quickly discovered why all the other prisoners and prison staff treated him with respect and admiration – which was so obvious and more so than any other prisoner I've ever come in contact with. He was one of the nicest and most understanding people on earth.

WELL VERSED; INTELLIGENT

Not only was he a God fearing man who was well versed in the Scriptures, very intelligent and a great painter/artist (who taught a large number of Death Row prisoners how to draw and paint), but he had a smile and uncanny ability to make anyone feel delighted and comfortable while in his presence. Furthermore, as an Elder Statesman on Death Row, he was a father figure, big brother and true friend to all of us, and he used his brotherly love to inspire

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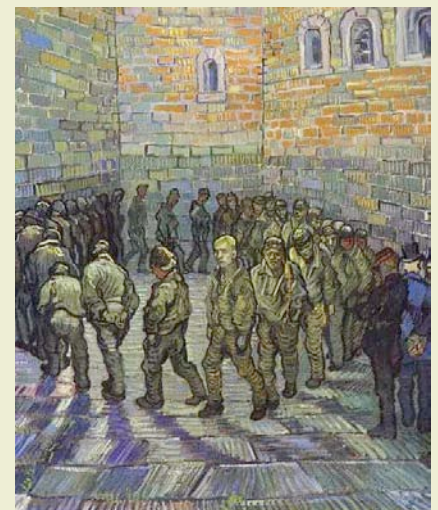
Submit Your Work

Note from the publisher

It is now my understanding that the DOC regulations DO NOT prohibit inmates in institutions other than Stateville from contributing to the newspaper by corresponding directly with me, the publisher, providing the language satisfies publication review. I regret the error I made in misrepresenting the DOC regulations in Issue 3.

Any inmate wishing to contribute articles, artwork, essays, poems, self-improvement suggestions, comments or letters to *Stateville Speaks* can do so by mailing material to: Bill Ryan, 2237 Sunnyside, Westchester, Il 60154.

Material must be typewritten and can not be about individual cases. Every attempt will be made to respond to individual submissions. Not all submissions will be selected for publication.



VAN GOH'S: "THE YARD" ISSUE ONE

Bracy continued...

all Death Row prisoners to remain strong and positive while suffering under the everyday threat of death in some of the worst inhumane conditions in the world. It's because of him, that a lot of Death Row prisoners were able to maintain some sense of sanity without completely falling apart. After losing my grandmother (who was the love of my life) and having my first appeal denied in the early 1990's, the walls of Death row started suffocating the life right out of me and had me standing on the verge of a mental and emotional breakdown. Bracy was one of the main influences that held me up throughout the entire ordeal, and he told me "the system wanted me to fall apart in this manner, and that I had an obligation to remain strong for my family."

"JUST ONE MORE DAY..."

I will always remember the day I told him that I just couldn't take being on Death Row anymore, but instead of giving me one of his heart-to-heart talks, he simply asked me to do him a favor by doing "just one more day."



At that time I thought it was one of the craziest things I had ever heard, but his solution, "just one more day," has kept me strong for many years. That's just the kind of guy he was - always giving sound and memorable advice, helping others and showing that he cares.

Judge Malone was convicted and sent to prison for accepting bribes to fix cases in the "Graylord" scandal, and Bracy received a new hearing from the U.S. Supreme Court (SEE: *Bracy v Gramley*, 520 U.S. 899 (1977)) Afterwards, I became convinced that the excessively harsh treatment he received

from Judge Maloney was "to hide or to compensate for the fact that leniency was sold in other cases."

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS...

The court ruled that Bracy had a right to a "fair trial in a fair tribunal before a judge with no actual bias" and it's unfortunate and unjust that he never received that chance to be rightfully reunited with his family and Loved Ones.

Bracy is no longer physically with us, but his love, guidance and inspiration will forever shine in our heart! We love you William Bracy and know that you are safely in God's Loving Embrace!!!!

I send my deepest condolences to his family and Loved Ones on behalf of all of us and those who work endlessly in the campaign movement to end the death penalty. ■

--Stanley Howard April 2005

Good Warden Continued...

Some of the men at Stateville who knew her previously have dubbed her "the good warden." In the visiting room on the day of her appointment, I heard her referred to as a "straight shooter," someone who honestly communicates with inmates. Another man told me, "She sure helped me when I was in segregation."

Not only is Battaglia the first female warden in Stateville, she may be the hardest working one. Since her appointment, she has worked 15-hour days, listening and developing plans. Her vision for Stateville includes a major commitment to EDUCATION. This makes sense. Research consistently shows that education is the key to personal growth and rehabilitation for prisoners.

"BE PATIENT..."

Although the first weeks of Battaglia's tenure have been devoted to management issues there have been programmatic improvements. These include a Book Club, an additional creative writing class,

expansion of the House of Healing programs operated by volunteer Chaplain Lori Wilburt and a successful exit program for men leaving prison to go home.

It obviously will take time to develop a climate within Stateville that provides educational and personal development opportunities for the 3000 men incarcerated in the prison. To the guys in Stateville I say, be patient. Change is coming. Just do the time and don't let the time do you, as the old prison adage goes!!!

APPLY TO VOLUNTEER...

In order to create the Good Warden's vision of a safe, secure environment where positive behavior is rewarded by opportunities for personal development, many volunteers are needed. I urge every one reading this outside of prison to consider applying to be a volunteer. I urge prisoners reading Stateville Speaks to contact friends, and supporters and ask them to become volunteers and/or Stateville Speaks subscribers. Anyone interested may contact Bill Ryan at 708.531.9923 or by email at nanatoad@comcast.net ■

Spend some *TIME*

Volunteers are greatly needed at stateville and many other DOC prisons.

For more information on becoming a "limited" or a "full time" volunteer, contact:

Shaena Fazal
shaena.fazal@gmail.com
300 W. Adams St. Suite 617
Chicago, IL 60606
(312)782-1902
(312)782-1902 (FAX)

Essays and Insight

PROPOSALS AND PERSUASIVE EDITORIALS

Redemption

Andre Patterson
Co-founder of N.I.V.



In the loud darkness of a penitentiary night, try to picture what it is you see moving behind your eyes. When you're not distracted by the constant onslaught of complacency trying to overcome you, and the churning of your mind tries to come up with a vaccine to cure the boredom of life, in a 23-1 prison... what do you feel?

When you no longer hear the sound of a hundred voices trying to yell over each other; constantly; persistently pounding on your ear drums; and now the only evidence of any life around you is the faint drone of "whispers in the dark." Somewhere off in the distance (or next door) what do you hear?

When reality slips into the bunk with you, and wraps you into a suffocating embrace, what kind of reaction does she squeeze out of you?

I'll tell you what I see; what I hear; what I feel in the darkness... I see the tears of a thousand grieving mothers, running together, mingling with the blood of loved ones lost; forming great lakes of sorrow... I feel the hatred and bitterness of a million victim's families; marching for closure; needing healing. I can hear them chanting, "An eye for an eye;" demanding blood; retribution for their loss. I can see the

corpses of countless victims' senselessly slain. And I can hear their blood in the streets, crying out for rest.

I feel the struggle of countless families trying to rebuild, after a hurricane of tragedy has struck, violently and abruptly; turning their world upside down. I see widows wandering aimlessly; lost in a fog of depression and an endless maze of sleepless nights.

I hear the sad confusion as a child asks, "Where's Daddy?" And the grievance in that child's mother's voice as she answers, "He with the angels now..." I feel the sick emptiness that consumes the soul of Andy Fervil's twin brother after he was gunned down before his very eyes. I see his tear stained face as he gazes blankly at his reflection in the mirror and sees his brother alive again...

Over and over. Over and over... I hear the feverish condemnation and I feel the agonizing, yet liberating rush of remorse emanate from one inmate...

I see redemption... ■

Foot Notes

Terri Stirewait resigned from her position in Dwight Women's Prison after 23 years of service. Terri was staff advisor for the highly regarded Dwight newspaper that is written and published by the women in Dwight. We wish Terri the very best in her upcoming marriage and her job at Abraham Lincoln Museum

Tips from a Brother

Donald L. McDonald, Talib - co-editor

When I was fifteen, I got a job working for a restaurant. I met a new friend who had just bought his first car: A brown '73 Chevy Vega. Without thinking, I immediately made a big deal about how nice the car was and how I'd love to take it for a spin. So, he threw me the keys and hopped into the passenger side.



Problem was... I had never been behind the wheel of a car in my life...

Afraid to look dumb, I took the keys, put on a face and did everything I had seen my father do when he occasionally took me somewhere. I didn't get one city block before the car stopped running and I had no idea what to do.

"AFRAID TO LOOK DUMB..."

Sad to say, but I believe many of us have had the same or similar experience. I say "sad," because we allow false pride to get us into situations we shouldn't be in. We want everyone to believe we know something, when we really don't.

We're afraid to say, "I don't know," because we're fearful of someone thinking we're stupid, square, poor, or that we are less than whatever we should be.

The problem is that, *THAT* method of thinking is what is really stupid; *not us*.

Yet, it is the main reason why most of us are in prison; trying to impress on someone that we know something that we don't. So, let's get real here for a second. NO ONE knows everything. How many times have we been in a fight trying to prove we were tougher

than the next person? How many times have we held a gun trying to prove we were rougher than the next person? Or that we needed to have some level of respect from people who didn't really have a deep interest in our lives or well-being? Why do we care what they think of us?

"HAVE PRIDE IN TRUTH..."

My point is simply this... There are millions of people in the world, and most of them can out do any one of us at a given time. So, the next time someone gives you something to do or asks you a question that you don't know the answer to, say the smart answer... "I DON'T KNOW." And have pride in the truth.

If we want to learn about something; read a book or ask someone who knows. But, I'll tell you this: Forty to natural life is a long time to pay just to *PROVE* to someone that there is a reason to be jealous of you... especially, if that person ends up picking up the habit and tries to put in practice on YOU. ■

Starting with You

Vincent "Legg's" Galloway - co editor

I would like to thank the Administration of Stateville Warden Miss Dee and Assistant Warden Dominguez for allowing the inmates at Stateville to watch the movie "Redemption" regarding the life of Stan "Tookie" Williams, former leader of one of the biggest street organizations in this country.

While in Segregation in San Quentin on Death Row, Stan received books from an older inmate. These books, he was told, were to be "windows."

And when Stan opened the dictionary and looked up the word, "Redemption," it was defined as the following: 1. The act of redeeming... 3. The payment of an obligation. *Continued on page 7...*

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ISSUE ONE

Starting with You

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After such a definition, Stan Williams changed his life, wrote three books aimed at teaching children about gang life and was nominated five times for the Nobel Peace Prize.

“MAKE WINDOWS”

A list of Books that can help each of us continue to redeem our lives for the better, include:

1. The Holy Bible
2. The Holy Qur'an
3. Dictionary
4. Thesaurus
5. "Protecting Your Health & Safety", by: Robert E Toone
6. "Finding the Right Lawyer", by: Jay Foonberg
7. "A Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual", by: Columbia Human Rights Law Review
8. "Lockdown Prison Heart"
9. Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
10. Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure
11. Federal Rules of Evidence
12. "P.M.A. Positive Mental Attitude", by: W. Climent Stone

Let's free our minds and make some Windows of our own. ■

“Positive Mental Order”

By Ted Williams

It is imperative for you to develop a Positive Mental Order. PMO is a focused mindset. It can be activated by inserting and retaining positive energy. PMO will surely help you develop a proactive disposition that will see you through some of your darkest moments. Even when it's raining outside you will feel great inside knowing the sun is still shining through all those clouds. PMO can lift your spirits and keep you on a positive high throughout all the negativity you will be

confronted with. Stay active in goodness and exercise your mind. Don't let boredom engulf your efforts. Press on. ■

Prison Reforms: We Must Restore Programs In Prison

By Willie Sterling

Thirty years of imprisonment, entwined with devout participation and observation of cultural, educational, spiritual, recreational and general awareness programs, has given me a unique perspective concerning why there should be a re-emphasis placed upon programs in the prison system.

Programs could be the panacea, the cure, for the alarming recidivism rate. Men do better when they know better and have better things to do. Aristotle once said, "We are what we repeatedly do." So how can a prisoner acquire and learn better habits? Whether it's art or ceramics, writing poetry or drama class, educational programs can help. The social contact and interaction with others, learning and doing something meaningful, can instill humility and help with conformity. To help negative, anti-social, rebellious and violent offenders to conform and follow established rules, guidelines and structures should be a goal of the corrections system.

The majority of prisoners is crying out desperately for alternatives- and wants to change. Under the macho bravado, the facades and images, there's a core of conscience wanting to come out. However the political system places no emphasis on change. Making men better men you would think would be the humane goal of a civilized institution. But that's not the Illinois agenda today. Pressure from the public about what's really going on in correctional institutions could swing the pendulum from punishment toward reform and programs. Politicians are afraid to appear soft or lenient on crime. However, where public safety is of utmost concern it would be common sense to try to turn around as many prisoners as possible. Don't send them back to society with no transitional skills, no monies, no plans, no purpose. The recidivism rate is a valid reminder that the absence of programs is a problem pushing the skyrocketing

nationwide prison and prisoner increase.

Today the United States imprisons at a rate greater than any country in the world on a per capita basis. As an advanced nation we should be a much better, more humane example of what to do with fallen members of society. ■

D.O.C. Honors its Finest

By Min. Dennis Digby

On May 25, 2005, an event was held at Stateville to honor its finest: the volunteers who come to Stateville and other prisons to provide their services of ministry, support, mentoring, education and other selfless acts of dedication and committed service.

Held in the Stateville gym, it was dubbed "Volunteers Appreciation Night," but it was truly a night of honor and acknowledgement for the many volunteers that give freely of their time, gifts, and talents. There were approximately 120 total in attendance. They were greeted as they entered by Wardens "Dee" Battaglia and Jimmy Dominguez, who were very warm and attentive hosts.

The program began with a series of selections by our own Stateville Choir, who were inspiring throughout the evening. Next, came the invocation by Chief Chaplain Watts - Senior Chaplain for D.O.C.

All in attendance then were treated to a finely catered dinner which was a true culinary delight. We were allowed to enjoy a solo performance by Chaplain James Payne, who is also the new choir director and who also received a special award in acknowledgement of his 55 years of dedicated service at Stateville. Our overall 'MC' was Chaplain George Adamson who presided over the evening's presentations. George Wittington, the undisputed 'Poet Laureate' of Stateville, presented his poem titled, "I AM".

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Interviews

COMMENTARY AND FEEDBACK



Interview with Marlon Shannon about Warden Dee Battaglia and Assistant Warden Dominguez

By Vincent "Leggs" II Galloway

Q: How long have you been at Stateville?

A: I have been incarcerated here at Stateville for 28 years.

Q: Oh, so you are a C-Number. What do you think could and should be done for C-Numbers here and around the state?

A: Bluntly, I think they should've released the C-Number inmates. I mean, I've been incarcerated for almost 30 years with no out date and other C-Numbers are pretty much in the same boat. I feel that this is more than enough time to rehabilitate a person. What is rehabilitation? I guess it is what you would call the walk of a spiritual human being.

Q: How long have you Known Warden Miss Dee?

A: I have known Warden Dee for 12 years.

Q: Is she a fair person?

A: In my opinion and many other brothers here, she has been a fair person dealing with the well being of us, as well as being a genuinely caring person.

Q: Assistant Warden Dominguez was a big help in Feb. with the Black History Month Program that was sponsored by your prison ministries. Could you explain how that came about?

A: It was God's plan. I have to give all the credit to Him. Prison Ministries deal with the positive progression and upliftment of Prison Inmates. We had an idea to celebrate Black History Month with a program that would reflect the positive change and attitude with us behind the wall and we proposed it to Assistant Warden Dominquez and the rest is God's work. I believe that Warden Dominguez believes in giving us a chance to show our creativity and our positive progression, and at the same time make us responsible, and accountable for our actions. Like he said at the rogram, "Today is a new day and whatever you want to happen down here is in your hands." On behalf of Prison Ministries, I would like to thank Warden Dominquez for giving us this opportunity and for helping to push positive programs as well as positive reform and rehabilitation.

Q: Stateville hasn't had anything like that in a while. Do you think Warden Miss Dee, and Assistant Warden Dominquez will bring more programs?

A: Most definitely! But, I think it is on us how much we want it.

Q: How can Stateville become better?

A: It's simple. It's going to take both sides to play their part. First, the administration has to do its part in providing these programs that will help in our educational, creative,

and rehabilitative reform. Second, it is up to us to leave the past in the past. If you know what I mean. We have to focus on today and tomorrow, and show that we are not how we are looked at by the outside, as savages, degenerates and unsaveable. We have to stop using our fist and force and start using our minds, for the betterment of our situation, positive growth and brotherhood. If not, like the commercial say, Anything else is uncivilized and unacceptable.

special note from the editor

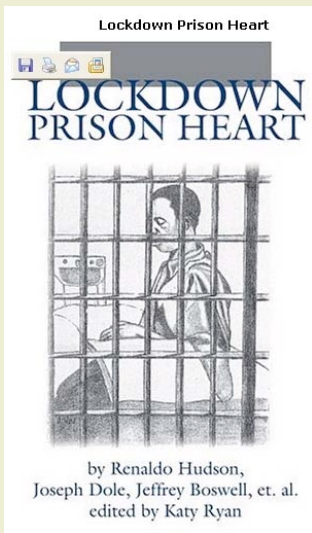
Shannon earned his freedom in July 12 after serving 28 years. He was one of the C# prisoners who were given indeterminate sentence before sentencing guidelines were changed in 1978

Tabu was a model prisoner and very active in Prison Ministry programs while in Stateville. Congratulations and best to you Tabu!!!!

Creative Corner

WHEN INSPIRATION HITS... POEMS, WRITINGS, CONNOTATIONS...

Lockdown Prison Heart



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“I Leave You Love”

Willie D. Scales

I leave you love.
 Love builds
 I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another
 I leave you a respect for the uses of power
 Power, intelligently directed, can lead to more freedom
 I leave you faith that GOD is the greatest power, but great, too, is faith in oneself
 I leave you racial dignity. I want all people to maintain their human dignity at all costs
 I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow man
 I leave you, finally, a responsibility to our young people. The world around us belongs to our youth. They will take over the future.



Continued from page 6

This reporter had the honor of assisting with the presentation of the Humanitarian awards, along with Marlon Shannon, Angel Torres, and George Wittington. The awards were presented on behalf of Ministries/Fallen Men & Women of a Village. The recipients were Warden "Dee" Battaglia, Queen Mother Helen E. Sinclaire, T.G. Burroughs, Ministers gar Aytahiel and Ahk Merasha. I also read an address I prepared honoring and thanking the volunteers.

Chaplain Adamson, along with Warden Battaglia, presented various other volunteer awards as the closing comments were made and the benediction read. The event closed as it began with a selection from the Stateville Choir.

As the guests were leaving, they stopped to comment on the "great time" they had, how they enjoyed the choir, the beautiful table ornaments that were designed by the creative arts class, the great food, the kind words they received through our presentations. This was a great night for truly deserving people. I know all in attendance will find a way to keep this special night in remembrance.

“Should I”

Tom Odle

Do I need thoughts so cold?
 Could I feel more alone?
 Am I more damned than thou,
 Should I wear the tortured crown?
 Should I live my life as a lie?
 Could I be less alive?
 Shall I bask in God's light?
 Should I fall one more time?
 Should I feel last somehow?
 Do I feel less than thou?
 Could I be less undone?