

# feedback

inside & outside, voices from the jail struggle  
Durham, NC ~ december 2016 ~ volume 24

## **‘We stand for something that we don’t even practice’**

It’s been a long time coming but I know change gon’ come. We just have to come together as one. What’s up IOA... Tears of an Inmate in volume 23 is my poem, but that really doesn’t matter. I’m doing fine, still stuck behind these walls. The question about the national anthem protest really made me think and before I give my opinion on the matter I want to point out I am not a racist. I have a loving Caucasian family that I love and adore, but honestly I stand strongly behind Kaepernick (and others who follow). Why stand together for a national anthem when we’re not a nation. We’re divided—if it’s not blacks against whites, it’s the government/politicians vs. the civilians. They’re a bunch of hypocrites. We stand for something that we don’t even practice. And, YES, black lives do matter. The government / law enforcement shouldn’t be able to just shoot down our black youth and get away with it because they run things but expect the country to feel remorse and sorrow when someone strikes back and kills a police officer. Don’t get me wrong—violence doesn’t solve everything, but those victims have families, too. The officers that are committing these murders should be treated the same way as a civilian, not a minor slap on the wrist—make them sit in jail two and three years. And to the young black men today: stand up for more than a color or a hood. Stand up and be somebody. Chase your dreams, because a lot of the stuff we choose to do only leads down a road to hell. Why continue to let a system that doesn’t like us continue to run our life when we can make an easy change. It’s there, we have to want it. I’m not above anybody. I’ve been sitting in DCJ for going on 3 years now and it’s been a living hell not being able to come and go as I want, being away from my family and friends and being told what to do by another man. If I learned two things, it’s: 1. I’m not built for a life in jail behind bars. I know I’m way better than that. 2. I now know there is change in me. I want better for myself, how about you?

I’m gon’ thank IOA, stay strong to all those that’s behind bars and to R.J., those words you put in your letter on the front page of volume 23 was some real shit—you’ve got my respect. Sincerely, *TRE*

## LET US OUT

Dear IOA,

Sorry it took a while to respond to your letter. I've been kind of down, but thanks for the care that you guys and the rest of our supporters give. Nothing has really changed on my end of the deal. I'm in the same pod locked down for 22 and a half hours. Yes, ABL has taken over with handling our trays. I'm actually surprised the food's better, but there will never be no place like home. As you know, they took our cups and spoons. I'm not with that idea. They don't clean the trays they feed us on good. So imagine the cups and spoons. I've seen some cups since they took them that didn't look clean. They claim the cups are new as well as the spoons, but they're not. This jail is full of shit. I've heard stories about the mental health pod but they're all different so I don't know what to say about it. Ms. Kelly and the mental health staff are way overworked, but I'm glad she's getting a pod for her patients. I have to go, thanks again for writing and thank you to guards like Ms. Corbit and Ms Gayle for the encouraging words they give me to keep my head up. To my fellow inmates, stay strong.

Sincerely,  
Ghost

### **What is Feedback?**

**Feedback** is a publication of Inside-Outside Alliance (IOA), a group of people trying to support the struggles of those inside (or formerly inside) the Durham jail, and their families and friends. We recognize that any of us can be outside one day, inside the next -- the revolving door of incarceration. We also participate in struggles against police harassment and brutality. IOA maintains a website called Amplify Voices Inside ([amplifyvoices.com](http://amplifyvoices.com)) that publishes the words of Durham jail inmates and former inmates talking about conditions inside and outside and how they see the world.

The name Amplify Voices Inside comes from something a brave and rebellious inmate wrote in the fall of 2012. This publication, Feedback, is a sampling of recent contents of the website. When something amplified is redirected at the source of the sound, the effect is called feedback. That is what this is: the voices that have been amplified to the outside world being re-broadcast inside the walls of the jail. Feedback is also distributed on the outside and sometimes includes 'outside' voices. Unless a person requests use of their real name, then writers' initials have been changed to protect identities and minimize repressive attacks and harassment.

**To contribute words or art, write to: IOA, PO Box 1353, Durham, NC 27701.**

You may be able to reach us by phone at 919.666.7854

Or, if you are not in jail and are able to, send an email: [insideoutsidealliance@gmail.com](mailto:insideoutsidealliance@gmail.com)

**\* Se habla español. \***

**Maybe next month.**



## **'I am 62 and losing valuable income because of this machine'**

Thanks for responding to my letter. Unfortunately, I have already been sentenced to 90 days and re-take STARR and GRAD again which I had completed in March and April of this year, thanks to Judge Hill both times...By the time I am released I will have served 7 months this year in this fucking rat hole, which is very, very nasty. This is my second conviction based on the date provided by an electronic machine. (CAM, Continuous Alcohol Monitor)

We in this country have machines such as cars (air conditioners, radio, electronic windows), T.V.s, computers, cell phones and

hoverboards that explode, heating and air conditioning home units and the list goes on! But the CAM device according to probation officers and judges swear this CAM unit is 100% correct, no possibility of failure!! I am looking for a class action lawsuit to join about product malfunction.

I am 62 and losing valuable income and living of life because of this machine. See if you can locate one (suit) on the net as I have no access. Also amplify my story and refer me to sites about stories you have uncovered...

— G.S.

## **‘They always cry it’s a security concern when they don’t want to change for the better’**

Hey, I have just completed putting final touches on a petition for Writ of Mandamus to be mailed to Durham District Court in the AM. Trying to level the playing field keeps me wide open in here!

I can hardly wait to get out of this awful place. I am 65 years young. There is much work to do in the realm of jurisprudence for the offenders and the courts to get the playing field leveled and reduce crime.

I am going to seek a Soros Justice Fellowship when I get out to conduct a study in Durham, Wake, Guilford, and Mecklenburg jails and courts to see just how effective their court appointed lawyer system is and how justice is meted out in these courts. I’d like to compare the plea deals offered by those various DAs for similar offenses committed in those 4 counties. If I get a justice fellowship, I could then hire a small staff and have other non-profit agencies help me to extend this study to all 100 counties.

The courts need someone — a serious watchdog — looking over their shoulders, as District Attorneys. I came upon a NC Supreme Court decision (an older one) that was really a farce. Those justices who agreed to that mess should have long ago been voted off the

bench and disbarred for life! The 4th Amendment only protects private citizens against unreasonable search and seizures from gov’t officials. But if police can adduce a private citizen to break into your house to look for and find incriminating evidence to turn over to police, law enforcement can use that evidence against you. Or if someone breaks into your house to rob your safe, and finds drugs in it, they can go tell the police what they saw (while stealing from you) and police can obtain a search warrant to go into your house — then charge you for the drugs! WTF! What happened to your 4th amendment rights to be secure in your home, papers, and effects? You can google the case easily.

A lot of us here got registered to vote via absentee ballot... T. P. misunderstood the people when they asked if he was serving time for a felony and he said “yes” but he is not. He is awaiting trial for a felony. He got upset and walked out! He needs to vote!

All of these police shootings of unarmed blacks is ridiculous. Even more alarming are those officials who want to suppress the video cams until a court order is obtained. That court order requirement came in effect Oct 1st 2016 and cannot be

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grandfathered to shootings that occurred prior thereto. Reminds me of the Rodney King beatings. We don't need anyone to interpret what we can see and interpret for ourselves!

Our food has gotten a little better. No more soy as a meat substitute. We get turkey or chicken (ground up) in patties and hamburger helper — like meals, but still no meals that include chicken with bone, meatloaf, etc. unless we buy it at \$7.50 or more for 2 leg quarters! I don't know why we can't get frozen or canned greens, lima beans, spinach, squash, creamed corn, okra, butterbeans, a piece of celery with a dab of peanut butter, etc. The new Co. cut out the sugar packs, salt and pepper packs. So we got no seasoning at all and nothing to sweeten oatmeal. . . .

Some jails sell very small palm held battery radios that you must use cheap headphones to listen to, that cost under \$10.00. Those would be ideal and help eliminate disputes and anger with 50+ people vying to work on the TV! These youth only care to watch sports, violent gangsta movies, anything rap oriented and damn cartoons. Virtually none care to see the news (unless someone they know is shown being sought for killing or shooting) or anything that is politically associated. There is a lot one can do in their cell alone listening to the radio — from listening to news, NPR, talk shows, Bible study, good music, etc.

I spoke to Captain Barnes last week about radios. He quickly said NO. They always cry it's a security concern when they don't want to do something to change for the better—or when they cannot offer a single plausible reason not to do something. They are so in the “ice age” in NC jails and corrections.

Don't even mention that Uncle Tom's Cabin pathetic Major Paul Martin. The Sheriff knew what he was doing when he sent that “house N” to the forum to do damage control for the “massah!”

I an others are thankful for all of those who helped make the event take place and who attended and were clarions for us in bonds, Hopefully future meetings will be more productive and someone other than Martin will appear on the Sheriff's behalf since Nefarious Andrews is too good to come on his own. He's too busy making commercials with those other two sheriffs thumping for Roy Cooper to be governor. There is no difference between Cooper and McCrory. Both lie like hell and pander to their own cronies. If Cooper had been governor when HB2 surfaced, he would be backing it to the Nth degree. And have the entire Bible Belt behind him. He is as hypocritical as McCrory is. . . . You guys keep up the good work. I hope to join y'all in the near future! God bless!

Jim Price

## ‘Police stopped me from praying downtown’

How are you doing? I am doing fine now. I am still in this jail. I don't know when I am to go to court for my case. I've been in here for five months now and I haven't seen a judge or my lawyer but one time.

Look, my first amendment rights was violated because I'm a Muslim who was praying in Arabic and the Durham police stopped me from praying downtown. And yes, I do have a witness, but the police don't take his statement.

So, can y'all help me out.

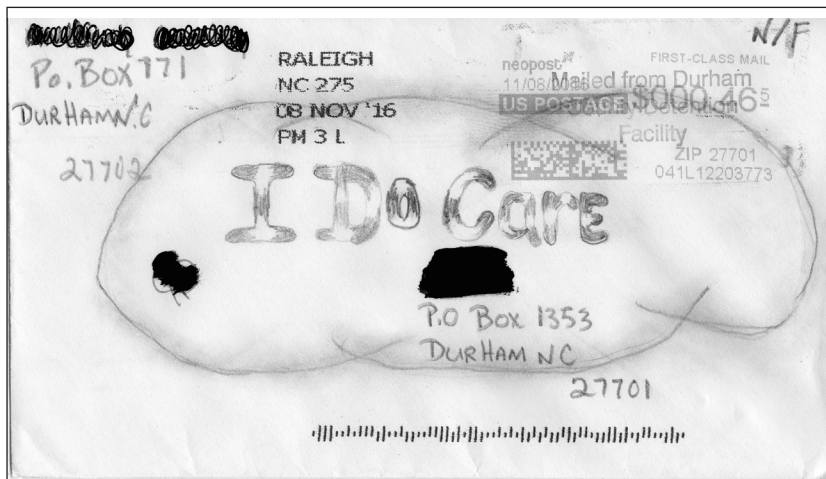
— A.C.

## ‘...going like I am in slavery days’

Thank you for writing me. I am in court — or that week and thank you for calling my lawyer for me. I am doing fine. I am still in this jail, going like I am in slavery days. We can't practice our religion freely here. I am a Muslim who can't have a prayer rug to pray on or have Islamic services here at this jail like the Christian faith have services and we can't. And medical charge me \$20.00 for a sick call about the bites I'm getting from bed bugs that this jail is not doing anything about. I still have staph infection (see attached, from 7.15.16) and medical or staff haven't given me anything for this matter. I haven't gotten the new mattress or antibiotic soap. I was given all-in-one shampoo and it don't have antibiotic soap in it and I still have staph infection right now. Please tell everybody about this!

Sincerely your friend,

A.C.





## Respect and Dignity

Wow, in 4D, this guy named C.B. started a men's group. It's not only for the young, but the older men, too. I feel it will help take out a lot of negative energy. We all are going through our own problems. Knowing some days are worse than other days.

So let's start with respect, cause we all must have and give respect.

That's something that should start with one-self. No matter what anyone is going through we give them their space. And at the end of the day, our unity still stands. Now that's when we get our respect from the officers, too. They will see everybody

is not here to play with them. We let them know that we all are not kids in here. Now, the same way we learn to live together, they learn to live with us. Because our manhood will stand on the same foundation.

Now we have our dignity, something that should always speak without saying a word. Like I said already, we are men. Don't nobody have to tell us what to do. We already know as men, so we do it. Only a boy would think because he

in jail, "fuck it." No!! When you act before you are told, you take away the power of the officers. Now their only job is to sit in the pod. Cause we have taken our power back. And the whole jail can only respect us as inmates. Cause of our dignity, now they see us as men.

And that's our first step with this men's group. Then we can start

seeing the positive impact it can have on the jail as a whole. That means the officer can learn from the inmates as well. With positive on both sides, how can there be any negative? And I truly believe that Durham will start something that will go world-wide.

Cause people on the outside will see more than unity with the inmates. They will see unity as a whole. Then maybe the bonds won't be so high for people who don't have the money. Maybe inmates will get into court sooner. Maybe the whole system will change for the best. All because we regain back our dignity and our respect.

God Bless,  
R.J.

"No matter what anyone  
is going through  
we give them their space.  
And at the end of the day,  
our unity still stands."

**‘Taking our spoons and cups  
are completely ridiculous  
and unsanitary, but...writing  
and actions gets things done’**

Dear IOA,

How are you? I’m doing ok myself. Hope this letter finds you in the best possible health and spirits. Yeah, when I got your letter typewritten it kind of threw me off (lol). Thanks for the latest feedback, keep them coming please.

Now, about the national anthem protests: I 100% couldn’t agree or say it better than Tom-Tom’s response! Well, the c.o.’s told us that Aramark would no longer be doing canteen and also the dude has been fired. Now, why he has, I have no clue. Different stories have been going around, like he got caught trying to bring drugs in, but I don’t know for sure. Maybe you could find out and let me know.

I haven’t found out anything new about them locking us back for no reason, they won’t tell us nothing. No problem about letting you all know about the recreation situation—I hope they all get banished (Faulkner and Coleman) from this jail for good. Yeah, taking our spoons and cups are completely ridiculous and unsanitary, but like you said writing and actions gets things done...

—A.N.

## **A nation versus itself**

Why stand together  
As a nation  
When we’re at war  
Amongst ourselves  
Why stand together  
In unity  
When it’s him versus them  
Over there  
What makes white  
Better than black  
When we’re both  
Made by man  
And why  
Make an anthem  
In which all  
Should stand  
We’re all  
Separated. It’s our society  
Versus them  
Why stand together  
As Americans  
When we’re constantly at war  
Amongst ourselves?

— *Ghost*



## VOICES OUTSIDE

### The Struggle Goes On

In reference to the continued mistreatment and neglectful conditions at the Durham County Jail, it is my intention to continually bring to the attention of the public the ongoing efforts to eliminate the harsh treatment of detainees by the Durham County Sheriff's Department and the detention officers involved.

Because of the results of the recent presidential election and elections of local and state officials, we must work even harder to change present conditions at the D.C.J. THE STRUGGLE GOES ON!!!

I must remind you that Perkins, Andrews, Couch, Boria, Coleman, Parker, McArthur, Thaxton and a few others are a few of the officials directly responsible for the problem areas at the D.C.J. The deaths of Matthew McCain, Dennis McMurray and others, as well as the many detainees that have been physically and medically neglected, spiritually and mentally neglected all remain unresolved. Detainees are still suffering unnecessarily at the hands of the unprofessional staff at the Durham County Jail. I remind you that these detainees are just that: innocent until proven guilty, and are still residents of Durham. As for the new contract for meal preparation—so what? What about all the damage and price gouging that went on over 20 years when the jail had its contract with Aramark?

The public relations surrounding the baptism of inmates and the new food contract are merely a smokescreen to make the jail and sheriff's office look good in the public eye, but we're not letting the Durham sheriff's office, nor the D.C.J., off that easy.

Our fight continues on for as long as it takes or as long as I live, and even after!

It's getting cold, so soon we will be fighting to keep inmates warm with proper heat and blankets this winter. Already we know this has been an issue for years. Sanitation in that hog-pen is also a health issue for detainees. Dental care, medicine and old thin uniforms, and water-logged trays continue to be a problem. The water at the jail needs to be tested! Disrespectful treatment by d.o.'s is one of the biggest problems in the jail, and is the major reason for much of the neglect that goes on day in and day out. We must bring about humane change. To my brothers and sisters suffering in that plantation, I.O.A. loves you and vows to stand by you...

Thanksgiving—hard in there—Yet God loves you...

Cynthia Parrish Fox  
As-Salaam-Alaikum  
Chakilah Abdullah Ali

## November 18: A Night With No Detentions

*The following is a statement released by Mia Hutchins-Cabibi, Joe Stapleton, and Kelsea Smith, who chained themselves to the DCDF entry gate on the evening of November 18 in order to prevent police from bringing people into the jail that evening:*

Ten months ago tomorrow, Matthew McCain was killed inside the Durham County Jail. Matthew was denied necessary medical treatment and died as a result. Matthew was one of at least three people murdered inside the jail. This jail kills. We believe the detainees on the inside when they report countless instances of racism, CO abuse, medical neglect, and religious persecution. No one should be inside this jail, and tonight we will not stand by while one more person is detained.

We are demanding an independent, community-led investigation into the jail.

In the current political environment, we must put our bodies on the line to defeat profit-driven white supremacy. We are members of religious communities in Durham, and we are outraged about what is happening inside the jail. The people inside the jail are friends, neighbors, and loved ones [and we hope to amplify their voices]. We are acting because we can no longer stand for systems where some profit off of the abuse and marginalization of Durham citizens.



*Demonstrators stop the progress of a Durham police car's entry into the jail.*

## **‘We will not accept concessions designed to appease our struggle . . . not on our watch’**

*The below statement was written and read by Brother Rafiq Zaidi (right) at A Night With No Detentions on November 18.*



We will closely monitor the Durham County Commissioners and Sheriff Mike Andrews’ policies and actions to ensure that our hard-fought rights and gains are not lost without a protracted fight in city chambers and in the streets of Durham.

We will not accept concessions designed to appease our struggle on behalf of the incarcerated prisoners and their loved ones.

We will not accept racist institutions’ public relations stunts masquerading as improvements within Durham County Jail.

We will not accept proposals to roll back the prisoners’ rights to decent treatment and mental health services...not on our watch.

We want an immediate end to police brutality, murder and mob attacks.

We will openly criticize all and any public, civil, clergy or law enforcement agency and conservative media who attempt to hinder our march towards Freedom, Justice, and Equality and human rights concerns for those incarcerated here in Durham.

We will continue to mobilize and organize this movement and accept leadership and sound agenda from our youth in this struggle.

If we are denied what rightfully belongs to us, then there has to be unified action that we take that will force the justice that we seek.

If this oligarchical system of oppression, greed and modern day slavery will not submit to change...then we will force it to change...by ANY MEANS NECESSARY!! Justice or Else.

## Never knew till I met you

Never knew till I met you  
That my soul could even cry so loud.  
I never knew till I met you  
That my soul could even have so many tears.

I want to be set free,  
Set so free to fly.  
To a place way beyond the sky.  
You stripped so much of me.  
You took all that I was and starved my spirit of light.  
And slowly, emotionally, I died.  
Day after day I changed slowly, totally, inside.

I never knew till I met you that my soul could even cry so loud.  
I never knew till I met you that my soul could even have so many years.

You tried to take from me the love that GOD has.  
Oh GOD, woe to my family.  
How can Satan advocate for family?  
Now I wonder why God won't even save me?

I never knew till I met you that my soul could even cry so loud.  
I never knew till I met you that my soul could even have so many tears.

How does a man live on and on like this?  
When he doesn't even know where his heart is.  
Whenever he knocks on the door he is powerless.  
Trapped in a Babylon fortress.

—*Vincent P.*