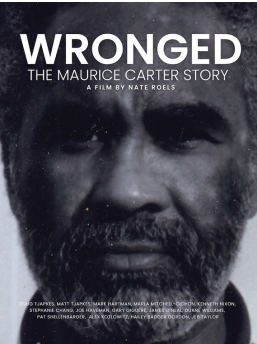


HFP Goes to WHV



HUMANITY FOR PRISONERS visited Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility on Jan. 28th as part of the Reentry United Conference. It was an exceptional opportunity for us to connect directly with prisoners and provide them with essential information and resources. At our table prisoners had the chance to explore our literature and learn more about the wide range of services we offer. They were encouraged to ask questions, gather information, and sign up to become a client of HFP. We'll be a part of similar programs in various Michigan prisons in 2025!



WRONGED to go to Shanty Creek!

The powerful documentary Wronged — The Story of Maurice Carter hopes to be heading to northern Michigan in November for a screening at the fall conference of Criminal Defense

Attorneys of Michigan! Our longtime friend/supporter Jim Samuels, a former president of CDAM, is paving the way for this outstanding opportunity! CDAM has more than 400 members.

Prison Visitors Go to the Seat Next Door!

The latest use of mass punishment is placing our loved ones on the opposite side of the table during visits. Forty years of visits and our visitors could sit next to us. Now? A hug at the beginning and end, and that's it. So much for the MDOC's propaganda of encouraging family connection. Oh, they've an excuse after two prisoners tried to use visitors to smuggle drugs into the facility. Caught, both were punished, as they should be. Yet, that's how our seating got rearranged into a crescent shape near the guards' station. But you know what? Dope fiends are going to

From the Desk of Doug  
Black History Month  
Observed, Not Celebrated!



My dear friend Cy Young, itinerant Black preacher back in the '60s and '70s, joked with me on my radio talk show when Black History Week had just been bumped up to Black History Month. "But," he added, "they picked the shortest month of the year!"

I'd like to explain why many Black families in our state won't be doing much celebrating during this short month:

- While Black people make up less than 15% of our state population, the incarceration population is nearly 50%!
- Black people in Michigan are more likely to receive longer sentences than white people... up to 19.1% longer!
- Black people are more likely to be charged with crimes. For example, in Washtenaw County, police are more than four times as likely to request criminal charges for Black people!
- Black people are more likely to be confined awaiting trial and to receive incarceration rather than community sentences. And,
- Black children are seven times more likely to have had a parent behind bars!

In Black History Month, 2025, I'd like to ask, on behalf of my many, many Black friends, that we do more than just cluck our teeth over these stats. Sitting idly by while this injustice continues is unacceptable. Just one month ago we observed Martin Luther King Day. Today, this great American hero says to you and me:

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

— Doug Tjapkes, Founder

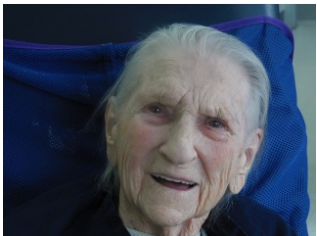
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do whatever they can for their next fix, and smuggling was going on long before I came in, and long after I'm gone it'll continue. In the meantime, I, and those who aren't into this nonsense, suffer the wrath of our captors with this latest Draconian edict.

## Commutations Go to Two HFP Friends!

Governor Gretchen Whitmer recently approved the commutation of sentences for five Michigan prisoners. We're proud to report that two of those applications came from HFP clients, David Powell and Andre Brown. After a combined 40 years behind bars for drug convictions, two especially deserving clients finally headed home. Our congratulations to David and Andre, as well as the others who had their sentences commuted. Special thanks, as well, to HFP volunteer Geri Morris who provides outstanding application assistance for our clients!

## Parole Goes to Our Oldest Client!



Congratulations, also, to HFP's oldest client, Dorothy Morris, who exited prison gates Jan. 9. Dorothy is 95 years of age, and we're hoping that she will still have

some wonderful years in freedom. She spent 41 years, 4 months and 23 days behind bars on a life sentence. She was commuted on a life sentence.

## Grinch Goes to Saginaw CF

"This place is the most sterile, institutionally gray drab imaginable; no Christmas decorations, not even a tree in the visiting room. It's like when the Grinch stole everything, even a crumb too small for a mouse. The meal was a mushy gray meat, an apple pie missing the apples and a crust so hard my spork bent in half, and what was supposed to be cheesy potatoes... there was no cheese because it had been stolen and sold back in the units. Despite the chaos swirling about me, there were moments of personal peace and closeness to God. And that's what counts."



## New Legal Mail Policy Goes into Effect



### Department of Corrections

The Michigan Department of Corrections has implemented a new legal mail policy, TextBehind, which requires all legal mail senders to register online and attach a QR code to the outside of their envelopes. Please direct all questions about the TextBehind policy to Norma Killough: 517-335-2242; KilloughN@michigan.gov.

## Favorite Hymns Go to You Free of Charge!



HFP Founder Doug Tjapkes' new CD of piano improvisations on old gospel songs is available at no cost. When making your next donation to HFP, simply request a copy of the album. Former HFP board member Veena Kulkarni-Rankin, a concert pianist, says:

*"Listening to Doug play on 'In the Garden' reminds me of his friendship with Maurice Carter and their shared vision of helping all prisoners. His expressive playing and making space for extra notes, melodies and harmonies speak of his compassionate heart: a heart that makes room for another person, then another person, and yet another. As I listen to Doug play, I'm inspired to be ever more compassionate and to invite you to listen with me. May your ears enjoy the music, and may your heart grow all the more."*

"I swore never to be silent whenever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented." — Elie Wiesel

