



1422 Massachusetts Avenue SE ♦ Washington, DC 20003 ♦ www.vscdcjails.net ♦ 202-544-2131

*...News for inmates from Visitors' Services Center, an organization which provides services to the men and women of the DC Jails.....*

**Our Mission:** *Toward our overall goal of reducing recidivism, VSC's mission is to help inmates maintain their family ties and to help them, as well, create and strengthen ties to the community through a combination of direct services and referrals so that they are better prepared for release back into a community we all share - to live, to work and to raise their children.*

## Help for Haiti - plus a challenge from us to you!

No matter where you are, one couldn't help but have an outpouring of sympathy plus a desire to help the people of Haiti whose lives were shattered in an instant and changed forever on January 12<sup>th</sup> when a devastating earthquake hit this small country. Several inmates have called us and written to us asking us how and where they can send money. Individual VSC staff members have sent money to the Red Cross and you can do the same. The address is Help for Haiti, American Red Cross, PO Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013.

To stretch every dollar sent, let us know if you send funds through your inmate account to the Red Cross, including the amount, and the VSC staff will match your contribution with a contribution of our own to the Red Cross - to double the donation and help the Haitians who need it most.

## New Year's resolutions - never too late

We surveyed our staff and volunteers to find out what New Years resolutions they considered and thought we'd pass them along to you just for whatever.....here they are:

- ♦ *Drink plenty of water*
- ♦ *East breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a beggar*
- ♦ *Sit in silence at least 10 minutes each day and dream more while you are awake*
- ♦ *You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.*
- ♦ *No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up*

## It's Tax time

As in past years, VSC is offering to help inmates prepare their income taxes: both federal and state.

**There is no charge for this service.** Akin Akinmurele, a volunteer with VSC and an accountant, has assisted us with this service over the years and he will again be with us this year. If you need help, write or call us and we, in turn, will provide you with a tax questionnaire to complete. We will work with you to retrieve your W2 forms and all necessary information. Once your forms are completed, they are returned to you at the Jail for signature. We will provide you with a stamped/addressed envelope so that your returns can be mailed and we will provide you with a copy of your return as well for your records. For further information on how we can help you and your family with tax preparation, please call Betty Gatewood at 202 544-2131.

## How can I get a non-driver ID?

DC residents who are within 6 months of their release date from prison are eligible to receive a non-driver ID free of charge. In place of required documentation indicating proof of name and residency, you may present a letter either from the Department of Corrections, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency or DC Parole and Probation indicating your date of release. You can get a non-driver ID at the following locations:

Penn Branch Service Center, 3220 Pennsylvania Avenue SE

Georgetown Service Center, 3222 M Street NW

SW Service Center, 95 M Street SW

Hours of operation: Tuesday through Saturday 8:15 to 4:00. CLOSED MONDAY. If you need ID upon release, be sure to get this letter indicating your date of release through your case manager. Ex-offenders are welcome to use our address as your mailing address until more permanent housing is located.

## Clothing

If you need clothes upon release, visit So Others Might Eat (SOME). They are located at 71 O Street NW. Distribution depends on the first letter of your last name. The schedule is as follows:

**Men** (last name A-L) 8:30 to 9:30 am Tuesday and Thursday; (last name M-Z) 8:30 to 9:30 Wednesday and Friday

**Women:** (Last name A-L) 10:00 to 11:00am Tuesday and Thursday; (Last name M-Z) 10:00 to 11:00am Wednesday and Friday.

## Jobs Have Priority

Located in the lobby of the CCNV shelter at 2<sup>nd</sup> and D NW, Jobs Have Priority is a program which offers employment and housing assistance. They also offer a business center with access to computers, the internet, telephone and other office equipment.

Walk-ins are welcome Monday through Friday between the hours of 8am and 4pm.

Tel: 202-393-7117.

**Remember...we are here to help you.** In the past few months we have provided funds for birth certificates, police clearances and transportation. We have connected hundreds of inmates with family members, attorneys, employers and landlords. We have provided answers to such questions as: Can I sign up for the Marines while I'm locked up? Can you help me get a stale dated check reissued? How can I tell someone that I want my food stamps cancelled? Can you call my boss and see if he will hold my job? Will you call my friend and ask him to pay my storage bill for one more month? We have also responded to many questions from families and friends including: What are the visiting hours? Can I visit on Saturday? Is the Jail still on lockdown? What time will my husband be released? Can I wear a sweatshirt when I visit? Can inmates receive e-mails? Is my son there...he went to court today and hasn't come home. **Call on us....we look forward to hearing from you.**

**VSC Board of Directors:** Rainey Brandt, President, John Clark, Vice President, Bryan Young, Treasurer, Mary C. Kennedy, Secretary, Roy A. Austin Jr, Leona Bennett, Betsy Biben, John Graham, George Holland, Claire Johnson Fay, Kathy Patterson and Jeremy Wiley. Kyros Freeman, *of counsel*.

**VSC Staff:** Ann C. Keep, Bill Chandler, Betty Gatewood MSW, Sarah Coleman, Cynthia Johnson, William Napper, and Mary Elizabeth Pate.

**Recognized by the Catalogue of Philanthropy as one of the Washington Region's "best small charities"**