

# “Committed” to being heard

*A voice indefinitely “Committed” to being heard.*

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## **MSOP Patients Gather Together Over A Single Pair of Shoes**

August 31, 2015

by: Terry Lee Branson

Today around 50-75 patients gathered together in the main building’s hallway regarding a clinician taking a pair of shoes away from a patient named Ramone B., aka (Cuba). The justification for her taking the shoes from Ramone was because they were given to him by his friend Shannon H. who also happens to be a patient at MSOP-ML. These two individuals have remained friends since meeting back in 1999 and it is a friendship which has experienced many ups and downs for both of them. In the D.O.C.– ML facility Shannon would shine his work boots and Cuba one day stated “what are you some kind of general or something” and that is where this friendship started. I have known Shannon for quite some time and witnessed his changing into a more caring and compassionate person. This I will hopefully be able to relate to you through the following story presented below.

A little history about Ramone. He is a Cuban immigrant who doesn’t have a green card and therefore isn’t a U.S. citizen. Yet the state of Minnesota has civilly committed him to what has been deemed an indeterminate life sentence within MSOP. But this is only the beginning of this story, and even I am not privy to all of the details. Since his commitment here at MSOP, he has had to resort to going back to prison for a violation in order to get a pair of shoes for himself and prison clothing. MSOP does not provide any patient in their care with shoes or clothing on a yearly basis, such as the department of corrections does. In fact Ramone doesn’t even get General Assistance, or medical benefits since as stated earlier he isn’t a citizen of the U.S. Yet here he remains residing in what a federal district judge has described as a draconian facility that is unconstitutional both on its face and as applied. Where he has run around in a pair of shower shoes for what I’ve been told has been for the past two years. Further from what I have been informed he has difficulty seeing and is in need of eye surgery.

It is important to understand too that Ramone doesn’t trust those of authority. Frankly, I personally know several within this facility who have built such a distrust towards many of those who are in authoritative positions, including myself. But I do know this! Ramone does trust his friend Shannon along with a few others (about 4 individuals) that go to visit him in the Beta unit. This is evidenced when you hear the difference between how Shannon talks to Ramone and when staff attempt talk to him. There is no denying that when staff talk to Ramone he instinctively puts up a barrier and lets them know verbally that he doesn’t trust them. I witnessed such an occurrence at this gathering. During a period of time when Shan-

There are people who live in a state of perpetual hurry without ever attaining inner composure. Restlessness not only prevents all thoroughness but actually becomes a danger if it is dominant in places of authority.

Quote from “The I Ching” or “The Book of Changes” by Wilhelm/Baynes; hexagram 32 “Duration” pg. 129.

non was talking to the higher up Ramone’s clinician attempted to discourage him from participating any further and wanted him to return back to the unit. It was evidenced by everyone present that Ramone immediately felt as though he was being placed in an emotional turmoil displaying immediate anxiety over whatever this clinician whispered into his ear. Shannon got Ramone’s attention once again and he immediately calmed himself back down and was ready to listen to what his friend had to say. You could see the immediate hurt in Shannon’s eyes too when his friend became upset and how his protective brotherly instincts were preparing to kick in. But I must also say that at the same time you could almost read Shannon’s face, see him recomposing himself. It immediately became apparent that deep within, Shannon new this was more about his friend having a pair of shoes than making a scene where chaos could easily pursue. He talked to the staff that had assembled and then addressed the group informing them what he expressed to the senior staff that were currently present. Shannon stated: “I have informed staff that I will be here everyday until my friend gets his shoes back, and that I believe most of you will be here as well”.

*(MSOP Patients continued on page 4)*

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Did you enjoy reading this publication? Then let me know your thoughts regarding this your favorite newsletter entitled “Committed” to being heard.

**Editors Commentary by : Terry Lee Branson**

**Letters to the Editor**  
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**"Committed" to being heard**

**- MISSION STATEMENT -**

This paper has the full intent and purpose of presenting a continuous positive and informative service within the confines of the space it reside within.

**Disclaimer:**

Statements, viewpoints and opinions expressed in articles, letters to the editor or by anonymous writers are those of that individual author and **do not** reflect the position of this newsletter or any affiliates that may be or become associated with this publication. All submissions become the property of this publication and may be eligible for reprint without authors permission.

**Guidelines:**

This paper will attempt to perform research, conduct interviews and gather information to create content that will inform and educate readers about activities and events of interest to the MSOP community and the public in general.

Not all submitted materials will be published. Any articles meeting the principles of this paper will be considered for publication. Articles containing disrespectful opinions, defamatory materials or sexually explicit items will not be published. The editor may edit submitted materials to bring materials into conformance with acceptable journalistic standards to the best of his ability and available space.

This paper will not publish articles pertaining to information about individual clients receiving treatment at MSOP.

All articles submitted for publication must include authors first and last name. Authors may request to have his/her name withheld from publication by submitting a written request (included with that article) to the editor. All necessary supporting documentation must be provided prior to publication.

The editor reserves the right to submit questions for reader's views and comments on any article published within these pages.

**Deadline for Next Months Submission**

No later than **second** Saturday of the month. If it arrives in my mailbox the following Monday it's not being published unless its content is of extreme valuable to this community. **Have a friend proof read your submissions.** Do not forget to **sign and date your submissions.**

Big things are in the works for "Committed" to being heard and I want everyone to know that the future is looking alot brighter. The word is spreading throughout and people are taking notice of what we are doing here at MSOP.

I want to thank my friend Kerry L. for his help this month and guidance he has provided towards making my dream become closer to being fulfilled. Some of you already know that "Committed" to being heard is going over the internet. I will have a webpage of my own which will increase the viewing capacity of the newsletter.

It is my continued hope that those of you who are participating by submitting material for consideration to be published will continue doing so. Without your help and support this newsletter would dwindle in the content it provides. I alone would be unable to provide the information that needs to be shared with those in society who are intentionally kept in the dark.

Understand I am like a kid at Christmas looking at the possibilities that are potentially forthcoming from having my own web-site. The next issue should bear the address to the web-site for everyone to share with those they love. I will still be providing hard copies to those interested in reading what is written on these pages.

This is the beginning. I am still hoping at some point someone will come forth willing to provide a financial donation for the continued growth of this newsletter. Once everything is settled with the legal issues and we are allowed to once again have our own computers, printers and other materials, I then hope to have enough in the coffer which will purchase many of the items needed to grow even further.

But right now I am grateful for the opportunities that are coming forth and truly feel blessed by those who are taking me on a path that I would never have been able to travel upon on my own. Thanks to everyone for your help!

**RAFC Votes Branson in as Secretary**

For those of you who don't know, I have been voted in as Secretary in the Resident Advisory & Family Council (RAFC). I believe that a difference can be made, as long as we work together as a community. I take my responsibilities very serious as do many of the other members of this committee. We are attempting to ensure that the days ahead of us are more positive and that all of our voices are heard in the future.

Terry Lee Branson

**Committed" to being heard is always trying to provide its readers with information that will assist them in covering a wide variety of issues. If you have any addresses that may be of interest to our readers please send them in for publication. Thank You!**

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Washington, D.C. 20003-1148

Native American Prisoners'  
Rehabilitation Research Project  
2848 Paddock Ln. (FREE details)  
Villa Hills, Kentucky 41017

Here I am once again being hounded about a new picture for my identification card. To some this may seem like a trivial issue and not really worth ensuing so much energy upon. But to me it is a principle of not the picture or the ID card, but more of an issue of why that is so important an issue with staff in where the main focus is actually supposed to be placed upon sexual deviant behaviors?

In this facility there are many rules which any number of violations appear on a daily basis. The number one violation that I hear about the most and actually witness is sexually related behaviors. There is a policy that I refer to as the NO "Touch" policy # 420-5016.

"Touch Between Clients : Socially acceptable public physical contact is allowed between clients. Clients must be respectful of each other's boundaries and aware of appropriate situational touch. No touch is allowed in any client room.

1. Other forms of touch (e.g., hug) may be allowed between consenting clients when therapeutic in value. This touch must be supported by the clients' treatment teams and must not be sexual in nature."

So, lets talk about the lack of enforcement regarding this policy against the enforcement of other policies that are not sexually related. I would wager that there are more documented Behavioral Expectation Report (BER) violations of any other policy within this prison, than there are of those regarding the policy dealing with touch. In fact I personally believe that inappropriate touching is supported by the staff within this facility to promote homosexuality!

In a conversation with an upper management official on Saturday, he pretty much admitted to me that MSOP staff really don't have the time to enforce this one particular rule violation for several reasons. The one that stood out the most was because it would consume too much staff time in writing BER's. He further stated that staff are not as aware as some of the clients seem to be when it comes to witnessing this behavior. I questioned this since that is the responsibility of the staff working within this facility in the first place. They have all sorts of logs that they document client behaviors within on a daily basis. They have incident reports that they continuously update on the computer regarding the behaviors they observe clients per-

forming which goes against the therapeutic community as a whole.

I was further informed that in society homosexual behavior is more acceptable and opinions are changing on the entire subject of what is and isn't acceptable behavior between two consenting adults. I fired back that 1.) I am not in the real world because if I was I wouldn't be harassed over a picture on my I.D. card and 2.) It appears that MSOP staff are attempting to promote inappropriate sexual behaviors within the treatment program by allowing such inappropriate behaviors to go unaddressed whenever they are repeatedly exhibited and which violates a written policy.

Further the policy can't actually be enforced when it comes to the clients being behind closed doors. Staff readily assign two clients to a single room because of the need to fill beds verses the need to ensure no two clients aren't being inappropriate in a two man cell. Since the two years since I have been here I have witnessed a number of clients being moved from one cell to another because of their confessions of inappropriate sexual behaviors that go against MSOP's policies. Mostly because they are no longer receiving their gratification from that partner and they seek someone new to rekindle the spark.

Frankly I believe some of the staff in this facility need to be retrained regarding what their functions are when it comes to defining and providing sex offender treatment. But then too what can you expect from any program that has repeatedly proven to be a complete failure. Since its existence it has not successfully released one single client back into the community. I take that back, MSOP has released several. But then too they have all have died and been buried.

I believe I learn more not doing treatment than some of those who are actually participating in the treatment program. But then too, I have accepted the fact that I could be here for the remainder of my life knowing that there are many travesties which I will be able to think about and write about.

### Responsibility, Accountability, Respect

by Fat Bastard

As you walk around this institution these three words are plastered all over the walls in key areas. It is based upon a belief that if you accept responsibility for your behaviors, accountability for your actions, and respect for all others, you will build a community where there are no problems or major issues. Course we all know this isn't feasible.

I will go one step further by stating that this also isn't possible when those who are trying to shove these three aspects of treatment down ones throat, don't adhere to the same philosophy they preach. They want to be responsible for holding you accountable for your behaviors, and yes I will admit that they are respectful in the way they do it. But they are not at any point in time being held accountable for their own actions or behaviors. There is no actual oversight committee within MSOP who an individual can communicate with to listen to the grievance.

Further the way the chain of communication works, especially since the class action; you become one of the fortunate ones if you write a Client Request Form regarding a concern/issue that needs to be addressed. I keep the client copy, and have a few that have gone unaddressed since their submission in May 2015. When I ask about it, I am told it takes time to figure out a solution that will work for both sides.

It seems that those who continue preaching about responsibility, accountability and respect are the same ones who are least likely to be practicing what they preach. It comes down to a simple solution. When you resolve an issue, then you can move onto the next issue which needs to be addressed. Seems there is never no moving onto the next issue in this environment.

## Why can't I get a written response?

by: Steven Hogy

It is my understanding that MSOP wants its clients to put their questions/concerns in writing. I have sent a senior clinician four requests to answer the question regarding why she wrote a negative observation into my Individual treatment plan (ITP). The response I received is she would rather meet with me one on one. I have continuously asked for the response to be in writing and to no avail have I received a response other than one which avoids the issue directly. This clinician seems to not get what I am asking for, as her response is apparently too difficult to document on paper. Perhaps this is her way of once again finding a way to document yet another negative observation that she again would be unwilling to respond to in the form of a written response. I feel if she is capable of writing a negative report on me she also should be capable of providing justification (in writing) regarding how she came up with such an observation.

I have come to the conclusion that staff only document negative reports into your ITP. This is to hold the client back by prohibiting his progression into the treatment program. If they put any response questioning their documenting every negative report that comes into question then I personally feel the truth would end up coming out and they would have to go back into all the documentation they have thus far done and strike the majority of it all from record. But if you meet with them one on one they would be allowed to say that issue was never actually addressed or that you agreed their observation was justified and therefore would be considered as factual documentation. This would then stand up in front of the Sentence Review Board (SRB) or the 3 Judge Panel since there is no actual documentation showing that you contested the negative reports they continuously document. Again allowing them to continue presenting negative behavioral documentation to these panels every time you go in front of them and again showing that your existence in this program is warranted.

I am a firm believer that if all MSOP clinical staff were to do their job with some form of ethical standard in regards to reporting about the individual client, about 40% of the population here would be all that remains. That number is perhaps even considerably high in reality. In all of my lifetime I have never met so many people in a profession to report lies to enhance their occupation. If I lied to my employers or clients the way MSOP staff lie to those in upper management and its clients, then I would have been fired.

It is my firm belief that MSOP is unethical in all of its reports because they are against the sex offender becoming a healthy and productive individual released back into society. To the best of my knowledge of searching the client network regarding policies and procedures; I have yet to find any MSOP documents regarding MSOP assignments or note taking. Further there are no standards regarding ethical behaviors of the clinical staff. And finally, remember MSOP clinicians behavior is based solely on the "Theory" manual.

*(MSOP Patients continued from page 1)*

Several others acknowledged their willingness to return as often as necessary to show support for both Ramone and Shannon.

This isn't the first time Shannon has been denied the right to assist his friend. He earlier attempted to provide his friend some clothes which were deemed contraband and a major struggle ensued until Shannon eventually got the clothes back and had them sent out to the church he belongs to. Through the process of the clothes being sent in and being sent back out more than once, some were lost. In the end Ramone never received any of the clothes from his friend. I witnessed this struggle personally almost a year ago. I believe it was even deemed by both clinical and security at some point that Shannon was somehow circumventing, manipulating policies, or possibly displaying inappropriate behaviors in helping his friend. Yet none of this documentation (in my opinion) could actually be justified beyond a friend wanting to help a friend. All Shannon actually seen was his friend wasn't being cared for by those who accepted that assignment and responsibility, in becoming Mr. Ramone's guardians for as long as he is civilly committed.

So when it was suggested that the clients should gather in support of Shannon being able to help his friend, word spread throughout the facility. Of approximately 400 patients at MSOP roughly 50-75 showed up and stood beside Shannon in support of Ramone. It remained a peaceful gathering throughout as Shannon requested the shoes be returned to Ramone. Several senior management staff were present and eventually Shannon and Ramone along with a couple of other patients went into a room to discuss remedies to resolve the issue. After about 45 minutes of talking a staff member was seen going out and getting the shoes and handing them to Shannon so he could put them onto his friend's feet. When they came out of the room Shannon was wheeling his friend in the wheelchair you could see how emotional he was. You could also see that his friend was excited about having something besides shower shoes on his feet. Several of the patients started clapping which added to Ramone's excitement which was apparent by the way his face lit up with joy and which would knock even the strongest man weak for a moment. Frankly I still get a little emotional at the thought of actually witnessing 1st hand someone in here truly experiencing a moment of real happiness. Believe me there were several individuals in the group who were wiping their eyes when they saw Ramone's beaming face.

Shannon was standing there with eyes red as well and you could actually get a sense of his own joy of being able to see his friend receiving some positive attention from so many people. It is difficult for me to describe the emotional waves that transpired that day. I simply do not know all the words that would be descriptive enough to represent the way so many people partook in making something as simple as a pair of shoes have so much meaning. But what is just as important to me personally is that there is at least one person in here who was willing to stand up for his friend and I know there are several in here who are willing to stand up for their friends.

I want to thank the staff that had the authority to make the decision to return the shoes to Ramone. From my experience with some of them, it had to be a difficult decision to reverse. So I commend those who did have a change of heart. In the end perhaps even they saw that it was only a friend wanting to help a friend when no one else would.

### Showers Clean Enough?

by: Bobby Stabnow

I have been told by the staff on complex 1E that all the chemicals that we currently use for cleaning the showers are getting discontinued because the facility is going to be replacing them with an all in one cleaner. I do not think that this should happen. If a system is not deficient then why change it? I would like to encourage as many people as possible to start writing requests up the chain of communication to try and prevent this from happening. I have started this process myself by writing to the unit director of complex 1E. I plan to follow the chain of communication as far as it can go. The more people that do the same the more likely we are to prevent this from happening. So in the words of one of my friends; now is the time to join in the fight. If we are united as one there is nothing that we can't accomplish. If all you want to do is complain about the problem but never want to offer any solutions you are just as much a part of the problem that you are complaining about. So my proposal is to become part of the solution and try to come up with some answers that will help to solve the problem. My answer is a client request form writing campaign.

### Ramblings

By Old Music Man

Wow, I take a month off and look what happens! One of the best "Committed to being heard's" yet. So many contributors, and good stuff too! Nice to see Mr. Lonergan's articles. I am sending that information to my kids, sisters and friends. When the nice folks of this state realize that either they will have to pay more in taxes, services will be cut, fees will be increased or a combination of those, they may pay closer attention. Now that the suit has been found unconstitutional *on it's face* (the actual law used to commit us) and *as applied* (the MSOP or program that is doing the "treatment"), by not correcting it they are damaging us. That's being malicious, which means they owe us money. That period began on the ruling date June 17<sup>th</sup>.

I was uncertain about what to write about when MSOP provided their modified programming assignment. My mom's been gone for over a decade, but I can still hear her voice saying what I heard thousands of times growing up "Life ain't fair." I do believe in thinking errors and correcting them when appropriate. So I saw a BIG one in Peter Puffer's introduction to the assignment. He writes, "How an individual manages and represents himself within a group/program will likely be consistent with how he will manage and represent himself in the community outside the group/program." And a bit later, "Again, a number of assignments get at how the decisions you make and the behavior(s) you choose/display in the MSOP-ML community would be interpreted by people living in the community – a community in which you will hopefully be a member." **BULLSHIT!** I think the thinking error he has is called **overgeneralization**.

In the risk assessment done for my SRB a year and a half ago, the evaluator called this a "sterile environment." She knew how unrealistic living here is. How it /SN/T like the real world. So, to try to generalize from this assignment to the real world is a lot of BULL. When was the last time you lived in your master bathroom?

Then, there's the actual assignment. Let's assume you were living in the real world, hell-bent on living a straight decent life following all the laws, working an honest job to pay the bills, etc. Then, an old buddy comes up to you and tells you of a great way to make good money. He and his buddies have a business robbing banks. They have been successful five times and never been caught. You don't even have to go into the bank, just drive them there, wait, and drive them off after they come out. You know it's illegal, and could get into a lot of trouble, even though they say it's no risk to you.

So, now we know that what this place does is unconstitutional. Everything they do isn't legitimate. (We knew this before from reading the 706 experts' report). It is illegal, like robbing banks, and we know this, they know this, but are acting as if it's the norm and they're and what they do is OK.

Now they give an assignment that 1) Includes the matrix and claims it has to do with dynamic risk factors. The experts pointed out that the matrix is essentially a sham. The judge, in his ruling pointed out that Minnesota is the only place that uses it. 2) they want us to do what they abandoned from the ASCHLAR model and give details on all of those we victimized. The model adapted from the Canadians focus' on our cycle for the detailed history. But now we are to give details about our offending. What else could this be used for???

3) Mr. Puffer wants us to totally dishonor those we victimized by suggesting we know or knew what sexual needs they had. 4) He further wants us to dishonor them by saying how they are or are not effected today by our victimization of them. You cannot win with that. If you say you think they've moved on, (after all it's only been how many years, over a decade and a half for me), you lack empathy. If you say they think of it every day you are continuing to want to have power over them, and/or are living in shame. These are only a few things completely wrong with this assignment. I would like to ask Mr. Puffer how stupid he thinks we are. We didn't just fall off the turnip truck. Many others think they are looking for more evidence to use against us. And, this program is a failure, the matrix is a joke and complying with anything until the fixes put forth by the judge is not a good idea.

I could go on, but don't need to, as I know the overall reaction is very negative.

On the other hand, did you read our attorney's suggestions on a fix? All are to be done by the end of this year! While there are still other issues to address, those are good new indeed! While I am sure the AG's office will object, I am hoping that the judge will be fed up with it all and grant that fix.

'Till next time, Peace and harmony.

Dear readers: I asked, and Health Services sent, information that will help to keep us healthy. Enjoy! <Bishop>

*The Minnesota Department of Health Fact Sheet, Dated July 2006, States:*

## **Make Hand washing a Healthy Habit.**

### **Thorough Hand washing Can Help Prevent Disease**

Hand washing plays a major role in preventing the spread of diseases. Washing your hands regularly with soap and water can protect you from many illnesses caused by viruses and bacteria. Washing removes germs you pick up when you touch people, animals, or surfaces. If not removed, these germs may get into your eyes, nose, or mouth and cause illness. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) strongly encourages everyone to develop good hand washing habits.

### **Can't See Germs**

Germs hide on remote controls, door handles, keyboards, faucet handles and any surface people touch. Since we can never be sure what germs are on our hands, washing them regularly and thoroughly with soap and water is a very important safeguard against infectious disease.

### **When To Wash**

Overall, wash your hands as frequently as you can; it is **essential** to wash your hands at these special times:

- Before touching any food or eating
- After using the bathroom
- After handling animals or animal wastes

### **How to Wash**

The following procedure will remove up to 99.9 percent of the germs that get on your hands during the course of daily activities:

- Wet your hands with clean water
- Apply soap
- Rub your hands together vigorously and scrub all surfaces
- Scrub for 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice)
- Rinse with clean water
- Dry hands briskly

**Note:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub (wipes or gel).

Food handlers ... must wash their hands with soap and water before applying hand sanitizers. (Minn. Rules Chap. 4626.0070 – 4626.0085)

### **Want to Know More?**

More information on hand hygiene can be found on the MDH Web site at [www.health.state.mn.us/handhygiene/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/handhygiene/).

“Hand washing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infections.” U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

### **Contacts:**

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Communications Office  
85 E. Seventh Place  
P.O. Box – 64882  
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(651) 215-1300  
[www.health.State.mn.us](http://www.health.State.mn.us)

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St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 215-0870, TTY 651-215-8980  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

### **When Should [YOU] Wash [YOUR] Hands?**

- After arriving;
- After coughing or blowing your nose;
- Before making or eating food;
- After using the toilet;
- Before and after changing contact lenses;
- After playing outdoors;
- After playing with animals.

The answer to the August riddle presented at the bottom of page 13.

The answer is “WATER”. Get it? “H” to “O” = H<sub>2</sub>O.

## Financial Health of the RAFC

By: Peter Lonergan

One of the biggest things MSOP residents face today is what will happen to us next. I have always thought that is where the RAFC is supposed to be; duking it out over MSOP policy.

When we organized as a nonprofit, a lot of people had various things to say; most of it negative. Some of the talk was for good reason as historically, the RAFC was pretty loose with patient funds.

I took over as Treasurer shortly after the organization was organized. Again a lot of heat. Everyone wants to point out problems, but no one wants to offer solutions. Those *crying cowards* know who they are.

The point is: Now is the time we need to be coming together to plan our next steps in unity that we may obtain justice.

I am happy to announce that the bleeding of funds has halted under the leadership of the RAFC over the past five years. We are not spending even 1% per year what the previous administrations have spent. We keep corporate records and file our taxes.

We have come full-circle and are now a proper and healthy nonprofit organization. With that in mind, we need to consider the following:

There was a *Special Master* appointed by Judge Frank to oversee the MSOP Injunctive Relief that will be announced on the next couple of months.

I would like to see the patients in Minnesota, and in particular patients of the MSOP to have as much say over what happens next as possible. The RAFC is set up, and organized to accomplish this task.

In the coming months, we will attempt to evolve as changes become more apparent. We need to keep our eye on the ball; to see the end of civil commitment of sex offenders in Minnesota. We are always in the need of funds. If you could give anything to help defray the costs of us working for you, all help is completely and duly appreciated. People think you can only donate larger sums of money. If you have one dollar, it is still appreciated. If you want me to meet you in property so that you may write a check, I will be there with a deposit slip to the RAFC bank to see you can get it mailed.

My commitment is to the RAFC and ultimately every patient here to guarantee our continued success to get out of the mess we find ourselves in. I took a lot of heat over the lawsuit, people telling me how wrong I was; talking behind my back—I know it even still happens now.

Those people were wrong then and they are wrong now. Just have a little faith in us, give us what you can and watch what we do because we will make a difference.

Thanks!

## Amicus Curiae

By: Fat Bastard

Friend of the court. One who gives information to the court on some matter of law in respect to which the court is doubtful, the term implying the friendly intervention of counsel to call the court's attention to a legal matter which has escaped or might escape the court's consideration. 4 Am J2d Am Cur 1. One who interposes in a judicial proceeding to assist the court by giving information, or otherwise, or who conducts an investigation or other proceeding on request of appointment therefore by the court. Ballentine's Law Dictionary 3rd Ed.

I am always amazed at how so many people come forward and want to help those who are less fortunate or have been knowingly abused for any length of time.

Recently we have two Amicus Curiae briefs submitted to the court, which according to the above legal definition claim to be friends of the court. I wonder why all these individuals who didn't want to provide any legal assistance to those of us civilly committed, now all at once want to get their names entered onto record as being an important part of a major legal argument?

I can understand Hennepin county presenting an Amicus Curiae brief. Mostly because they want to find a way to protect a vested interest of not being liable for any damages by those they denied freedoms under the guise of providing treatment to sex offenders. When in actuality they were knowingly extending every one's prison sentence via civil commitment proceedings. It's their obligation to support those who pay their wages, even when they know deep within their own hearts that what they are doing is nothing more than what anyone who has continuously victimized an innocent person has done. Denied any wrongdoings!

But now we have another Amicus Curiae Eric Janus and the ACLU, who have joined forces in the fight of providing court valu-

able information! Where Hennepin counties Amicus Curiae are against our release, this one is proclaiming that the only solution is to completely gut out MSOP and start all over again from scratch. Although I agree, I fail to understand a couple of simple things.

One is. I remember talking to my friend Pete and a couple of other people who are key components in the class action. They said they tried to reach out to these organizations and was informed neither organization could provide any assistance regarding the class action. Yet here they are after a federal district judge has proclaimed the law as unconstitutional not only on its face but also as it's applied.

Two is. What's in it for them? Now that everyone pretty much knows what decision the judge is going to make; are they now willing to assist those civilly committed in future legal issues, or are they just wanting to jump on the band wagon so they may be able to add this case to their resume'. I can see it now, "We were involved in the Karsjens v. Jesson class action in which Judge Frank struck down the Minnesota civil commitment law as unconstitutional." Course I am curious where everyone was at 5,10,15 years ago when they proclaim to have known about it back then?

September 8, 2015

Cuban Embassy  
Mr. Roman Cuban Rodriguez  
2630 16<sup>th</sup> St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Your Excellency:

My name is Steven Hoky. I am a member of a nonprofit organization named: the Resident Advisory & Family Council in Moose Lake, Minnesota. One of our Board of Directors, Professor Peter Erlinder, gave me your address. Mr. Erlinder is also the Director of the International Humanitarian Project; and he was on a team of attorney's who represented the *Cuban Five* several years ago now. So I value his counsel.

I'm writing this letter on behalf of a patient of the Minnesota Sex Offender Program named: Mr. Ramone R. Barthelemy. Ramone's date of birth is June 20, 1944. Ramone has been, what I consider to be, a political prisoner; who has been civilly committed at the Minnesota Sex Offender Program for the last seven (7) years. Since his civil commitment to Minnesota Sex Offender Program, Ramone has been denied Government Assistance and/or Medical Care Assistance. Further, the government facility fails to provide any form of yearly supplies to him (i.e. clothing & shoes).

Ramone is a refugee of Cuba who entered the U.S. in 1980 via the Marietta boat lift. He has a twin brother named Mr. Rafiel Barthelemy, believed to be living in Santiago Cuba; their home town. Ramone currently does not have a green card, thus he is considered an alien to the United States.

Ramone is currently blind from cataracts on both eyes, suffers from Glaucoma, and is in need of medical attention; for surgery regarding his eyesight. The Minnesota government within the United States appears to be allowing Ramone to make illogical decisions about this necessary surgery and other medical needs. Such indifferent care of this person adjudicated mentally challenged has been a direct cause of him to lose his eyesight in both eyes. This condition could be corrected with fairly simple surgery.

Judge Donovan Frank, a United States District Judge in Minnesota, has ruled the civil commitment statute, as of June 17, 2015, unconstitutional. Therefore, at this point, Ramone is being detained unlawfully by the Minnesota Sex Offender Program; as far back as 2008.

A fellow patient at the Minnesota Sex Offender Program named Shannon Hollie has been attempting to help Ramone; buying him shoes and clothing whenever possible. On August 29, 2015, Mr. Hollie purchased a pair of shoes for Ramone and after Minnesota Sex Offender Program government employees saw the new shoes he was wearing, they were instructed to take the shoes from him by a Supervisor (Kelli Bodie-Miner). The reason being he didn't purchase them himself, but received them from his friend, Mr. Hollie. Yet Ramone isn't allowed to receive any assistance from the government in any form to provide for himself; as others do in the facility.

Ramone has become very distrustful and paranoid of the staff that working at the Minnesota Sex Offender Program; and is weary of new people. Mr. Hollie has been good friends with Ramone for more than 15 years; and is someone he trusts. The reason I mention this: is because Ramone cannot read any materials sent to him and relies on Shannon to read all his mail to him. Minnesota Sex Offender Program staff thinks it doesn't conform to the programming that is best suitable to Ramone's needs.

All inter-institution visits have recently been suspended. Meaning: Shannon cannot visit with Ramone or read his mail to him any longer. This was related through Unit Director Brian Ninneman as set by clinical supervisor Laurel Beniot until further notice. Minnesota Sex Offender Program Staff are the only people allowed to lead Ramone anywhere within the facility; denying him one on one contact with his non-government peers. This causes Ramone further harm because it leaves him sitting in his cell alone 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Ramone does not even have a radio to listen to!

As members of the Board of Directors of the Resident Advisory & Family Council, Mr. Erlinder and I are more than willing to assist in helping Ramone with any communication that may be forthcoming. Mr. Erlinder may be reached at (651) 271-4616. Now that Cuba and the United States finally have a diplomatic relationship again, I am hopeful that the Cuban Embassy will be willing to step in and help stop the abuse of this Cuban National. This man's health and well-being is at stake. He truly needs medical help and support from his homeland.

Because of the problems within the Minnesota Sex Offender Program concerning mail censorship, as well as throwing incoming and outgoing mail away, I would appreciate a letter acknowledging receipt of this letter as it is written from within the program.

Thank you for your courtesies, on behalf of the Resident Advisory & Family Council, Org.

Respectfully,

Steven Merrill Hoky

cc: file