AUGUST MEETING OF IOWA CURE
August 27th, 2 P.M.
TRINITY/LOS AMERICUS UMC
1548 8TH ST. DES MOINES, IOWA

We have invited leaders from the Iowa Justice Action Network to present the program. They recently held a very successful two day workshop in Waterloo and they have agreed to share the highlights of that event and let us know how we can get involved. The Iowa Justice Action Network (IJAN) is a non-profit organization working to reduce mass incarceration and create a criminal justice system that is fairer to all Iowans while protecting public safety. We educate the public about current injustices and realistic alternatives to mass incarceration and barriers for returning citizens through workshops, conferences and social media. We hope you will plan to attend.

MASSIVE HIRING OF EMPLOYEES FOR AMAZON FULFILLMENT CENTERS
You may have heard that AMAZON is conducting massive hiring events for their future “Fulfillment Centers” all across the country. Most of us probably have made purchases from AMAZON and enjoy the huge number of products they offer and the speed of delivery.

If you are a member of CURE you probably saw the article in the latest International CURE newsletter describing CURE’s efforts to get a copy of the hiring practices of AMAZON. We first made this request to AMAZON in 2015. They have not been forth coming, but a reliable source has shared with us that the following:

No person serving a felony sentence on probation or parole will be considered until the probation or parole is completed and another seven years has passed (3 years for marijuana possession.) If the crime was heinous, Amazon imposes a lifetime ban on the consideration of employment.

They have denied this is its policy, but in early 2017 a group of drivers filed class action complaints in MA regarding this practice.

In October the International CURE board will meet and will discuss the possibility of a boycott of AMAZON products. We would like to ask you to write Jeffrey Bezos, President, Amazon, 410 Terry Ave. North Seattle, WA 98109-5210. Remind him that prisoners and their families are very good customers of AMAZON. We also hope you will share your thoughts with us regarding this issue.

SHINGLES VACCINE FOR THOSE INCARCERATED
Most of us have seen those advertisements showing the nasty, bubbling sores produced by the herpes zoster virus. If you are over 65 you may wonder if you should rush to health service and get the vaccine. Susan Shields the director of the IDOC pharmacy has had some requests and in response has developed a policy for the department.

At this time the Zoster vaccine (for Shingles) is not given routinely. Administration will be considered on a case by case basis dependent on the patient’s medical condition with an emphasis on those patients:
1. Those with a serious chronic health problem, cardiac, pulmonary, or renal disease which could make them more susceptible to the zoster infection;
2. Who have already had a shingles outbreak in the past, to help prevent them from developing it again.

For a copy of the full policy, please contact me at the Iowa CURE address or contact the health center staff at your facility.

TELEPHONE REBATE EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2018
Many of you may have heard that the new head of the FCC (Federal Communication Commission) appointed by President Trump does not support caps on the cost of phone calls for the incarcerated. We were happy to hear that the Iowa DOC does not plan to increase the cost per minute of phone calls. At the July DOC Board meeting the Board approved the following expenditures for the telephone rebates in FY 2018:

- Education (HISET, Literacy, Special Needs, Life Skills) $458,119 ( $40,000 for Apprenticeship Program)
- Apprenticeship Program and Vocational Training Telephone Administration: (accountant at ISP) $70,968
- Translation Services $1,000

Total: $530,087

Steve Dick, Deputy for Finance reported than the revenues are up and if this continues, it may be possible to reduce the cost of phone calls in the future.
The NEWS MEDIA RECOGNIZES WORK OF IOWA CURE MEMBER
Stephen Fraiser, a longtime member of Iowa CURE was recently recognized by the Fort Madison newspaper, "The Fort Madison Democrat." Fraiser has been incarcerated at ISP for many years. During that time he has been involved in many classes and programs. He knows that there are many negative things about prison life, but he wanted to do something to make a positive contribution to life behind the walls.

When he first came to ISP there was a newsletter produced by the prisoners, but then it stopped. He felt that there was still a need for one. He recruited a number of persons to work on the paper, he is a member of Toastmasters and speaks with educators on the staff. The current newsletter is called "The Reformer, it is written and presented in such a way as to build community within the prison and to demonstrate to those outside the walls that positive things are happening at ISP. Well done, Steven, we are proud of you!

REPORT ON NEW MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION STAFF
An in depth report on the work of the medical administration staff was given by Dr. Jerome Greenfield, M.D. Health Services Administrator and Mental Health Director and Steven Cook, M.D., Medical Director. They also introduced Kathy Weiss RN, who has been appointed the Administrator of Nursing.

Dr. Greenfield has been working very hard to fill the positions of healthcare providers in the system and has hired a number of doctors. There is a problem in hiring nurses because of the recent legislation passed regarding collective bargaining. Forty three nurses have left the DOC, 24 have been hired and there are 19 positions still vacant. Dr. Mark Fortson will be the new doctor for ISP starting August 1st. They are trying to recruit an optometrist, several more psychologists, a nurse practitioner and a dentist.

The cost of pharmaceuticals is increasing due to many factors, including the aging population, the opiate crisis, treatment of individuals with hep C and HIV and number of people requiring treatment for mental illness. 33.1% of the DOC population have a serious mental illness.

It is very encouraging to hear about the work being done by the Dr. Greenfield, Dr. Cook, Kathy Weiss and their staff.

UPDATE ON IDOC STAFF
There has been a number of changes in wardens serving the IDOC in the past couple years, but it appears that all positions are now filled.

Randy Gibbs was appointed to serve as warden at the Clarinda Correctional Facility. The facility houses over 900 incarcerated persons many of whom have mental health issues and/or intellectual disabilities. Sheryl Dahm served as warden at the Clarinda facility for a short time and introduced a number of positive changes in its operation. The men living there hope these improvements will be continued by the new warden.

Robert Johnson was appointed as warden of the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility following James McKinney's appointment to IMCC. He has also been serving as warden of the North Central Iowa Correctional Facility. At a recent meeting of the Iowa DOC Warden Johnson assured those present that he and his staff are able to handle the administration of both facility with great efficiency.

When the IDOC received the 3 million dollar grant for the Statewide Recidivism Reduction Strategy Dr. Beth Skinner, Recidivism Reduction Coordinator explained that when the grant expired in 3 years she would be looking for a job. She did not have to look far as Director Bartruff has announced that she she will now be serving as a member of his administrative staff.

Dot Faust, Deputy Director for Offender Services has retired and Katrina Carter Skinner is serving as interim.

DEAR PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX
Harmony lives with you in Iowa and I have known her now for ten years. And I don't think she is going to move out. She tells me you charge double for stamps, she tells me she mixes coffee creamer into the toast and microwaves it into a bread pudding that she shares with her boss in the facility library. She tells me she runs out of magazines with pictures of fish and birds. She tells me she likes devotional but they are not the same as national geographics. She tells me there is always noise even in the place you send her that you call quiet. She asks me to write and when I do she's telling me to enjoy my life and, stop running around. I think that is all talk because I think she likes to hear the list of things done and to do. But I know she also likes to hear about quiet with a little something--frog musicians, the shuh-shuh of the sprinkler, the trickle of the sink I haven't fixed.

REPORT FROM ICIW AND FRIENDS OF IOWA WOMEN PRISONERS
In July we welcomed Kirk Nesset as the new facilitator of Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners. Kirk has attended FIWP for many years. He is employed at Prelude. He has met with the Warden and other staff to talk about our relationship with FIWPS. We also thanked Vi Darsee for her many years as facilitator. She has been faithful in providing many great programs and in working hard to raise funding for the FIWP Scholarship Fund. Thanks so much Vi. Vi will remain on the Leadership Team.

At the July meeting Kirk included the statistics for ICIW in the program handout. He plans to do that each month. He reported that the average length of stay per the Recidivism Reduction Analysis is 4.5 months.
In June Sheryl Dahm, the new warden, brought the members of her leadership team to our meeting and each spoke briefly about their work. They also answered questions. Those attending were: Deputy Warden, Lorie Woodward, Treatment Director, Courtney Arringdale, Nurse Manager, Kerri Freidof, Steve Carroll, Business Manager, and Security Director, Bryran Reicks. They are just coming together as a team and are listening to the concerns of the staff and the women.

We are pleased to learn that the Women at the Well pastors are now conducting worship services in the Minimum Live out unit. Since women can’t attend the services inside the institution, they had been asking for this. We also are happy to hear that the problems with the use of the rest rooms in the Sacred Place and the Program building have been resolved. The women take up a collection each month to be given to an organization that works to address the needs of others in our society. There recent gift was to the National Association for the Mentally Ill. (NAMI)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?
If your address has changed since you received your last issue of the Iowa CURE newsletter, please let us know. If you are incarcerated the prison mail room will not forward your mail. Please also keep in mind that all of our work is done by volunteer board members, we have no staff we are not able to offer legal or other services. Our work is to work as advocates for those impacted by the criminal justice system.

THE FORT, THE DOCUMENTARY
ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE FROM WITHIN
by Charles Robinson-Bey

There has been much speculation about the future of the “Old Fort Madison.” There were recent tours of the facility for the public and a documentary was produced. We are including this thoughtful review of the history of this institution to give readers another view.

The documentary about the many historical aspects of the old Mt. Madison prison and the transition to the new Fort Madison was quite interesting as it aired over our institutional channels in early May. Mixed feelings of how it then (and in its early days) in comparison to how it is now; painted a striking picture of change and transformation over the years. The obvious attitudes of those by gone eras and those of today, all sit in stark contrast of one another - as does the physical structure of the “grand damn” and her heir apparent.

As depicted, the evolution of change over the years at the Fort Madison prison was a common theme in the annals of penology. There were periods of strict conformity in the early days - illustrated by a solemn existence of the inmate with only a Bible and his/her personal resolve to see him through. The prevailing positions of remedy emanating from the prison overseers of the day were always hard time as your sentence and God as your salvation.

There were periods of liberalism which meant the inmate had rights, with various forms of rehabilitation and reconstruction commonplace. Several instances of the broadminded view points of rehabilitation and reconstruction common place. Several instances of the broadminded view points of the ISP systems leadership was demonstrated in the film. Recall if you will the many opportunities that were available to the inmate, various sports leagues and self-help groups, personal cameras, musical/educational/vocational and horticultural possibilities and even progressive thinking, prison officials leading the way.

There was even mention of a free and unobstructed local press core reporting on the issues of the day; a far cry from today’s standards.

The film told of the “old girls” demist that was caused by a couple of catastrophic events. Spoken of were the riots of “1981 and the “escape.” Not mentioned was the surge of conservatism and anti-prison reforms that took wings in the early eighties and the early stages of the prolific profitability of the prison growth industry. All of which many believe contributed to where we are now - multi-million dollar state of art facility.

And there was Jack Nutter - the star of the show - Through his personal experiences during his lengthy period of incarceration. His firsthand accounting gave the viewers a dose of "how it really was" during the transitional periods of the Fort’s storied history. With Jack there weren’t any “castle in the sky” fascinations about “the wall.” His story was real and uncut and buoyed by sixty plus years of being on the scene. He was the one voice that was able to link eras together and give the viewer an actual (partial) glimpse into the fort’s history - which I’m sure the producers of the video sought do.

The move, another central focus of the video, was flawlessly carried out. Conversations with other inmates (other than those shown) as well as staff, all point to nostalgic thought about wanting to return to the “old Fort.” Personally I can’t begin to imagine why. Sure, there were some advantages being there - single bunking for one. For reasonable thinking individuals should realize the advantages (minus double bunking) of moving into a brand spanking new facility certainly outweighed the disadvantages - such as, the inadequate use of space, etc.

Other inmates whom I spoke to about the video indicated no interest whatsoever in the local production. Which in its fundamental nature, I found to be quite understandable. But overwhelmingly, the video was met with affectionate fascination, and appreciation, and high approval from most.

Gone are the liberal, fascinating, and appreciation, and high approval from most. Gone the days of the 50 foot walls - which were a prominent and majestic feature of the “old Fort Madison prison”. Gone is the death penalty which the state used to met out its ultimate justice packages early on. Gone are the liberal, forward thinking and reform minded attitudes of the system. They took flight long ago, even though the mighty barriers of granite still maintained its presence and powers of containment.

Still lingering, however are the fading memories of the last remaining “old school” convicts. The graying beards, receding
hairlines and the time induced crevices etched into their faces, provide only remaining ties to the glorious past of the "old Fort". It's all the new school now, the "new Fort".

With all the pomp and ceremony that was mustered ushering in the era of the new "Fort", a moment of silence and a measure of respect must be bestowed upon the old "Fort" and its past ways of life. The lights at the old Fort have been dimmed forever. Still living on in the hearts and minds of many, is its illuminated history of days gone by.

Note: It was reported at the July Board of Corrections meeting that the Lee County Health Services may be interested in leasing some of the space at the old site and the Law Enforcement Center for Lee and surrounding counties are interested in using the old CCU.

We also understand that Historic Iowa State Penitentiary, a non-profit group is trying to save the old prison by perhaps turning it into a museum and tourist area as has been done in other locations across the country.

CURE’S WORK ON PROBLEMS WITH EXCESS HEAT
MPCF
Last summer Iowa CURE was contacted by a member concerning the suffering of the men at MPCF due to the excessive heat and the lack of ventilation. This was a very severe problem in the ad seg cells where the only air circulating was that coming in through the meal slots on the doors.

We contacted IDOC staff and Deputy for Prison Dan Craig went to Mt. Pleasant and did an onsite evaluation. Everything was done to improve the circulation and this was follow-up with installation of new windows which improve the flow of air from the outside. More fans were made available. This summer there were additional steps taken to moderate the situation. Men can purchase fans and those leaving can donate their fans to be used by those who can’t afford them.

We hope that the staff will work to keep the number of men in ad seg to an absolute minimum, especially given the fact that this is a minimum security level facility.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CURE
Iowa CURE is a a 501(c)3 organization and your gifts are tax deductible. When you send in you membership to Iowa CURE we will send your name to the National organization and you will receive their newsletter.

We are not qualified to send or receive “Legal Mail.”

We do not offer services such as legal services and re-entry services.

We are not setup to accept phone calls from jails and prisons. We can accept calls from family members and friends. Please send us your concerns in writing.

We will respond if at all possible. Do not send us copies of letters that are part of a mass mailing.

Do not send us copies of your legal papers or your only copies of court documents or disciplinary reports as we cannot send them back.

We cannot represent you in challenging your disciplinary reports.

Please file grievances and, if not, successful, file a report with the Ombudsman's Office.

UPDATE ON SRR
(STATEWIDE RECIDIVISM REDUCTION)
Dr. Beth Skinner states that the Statewide Recidivism Reduction is more than just a grant or an initiative. It is now a part of the way the Department does business and will continue to be in the future. Dr. Skinner will continue to oversee this work after the original funding ends in October.

In an article by Erin Murphy Leeterprises IDOC staff states that the increase in prison population in the past 2 years in spite of efforts by the state is insignificant. He notes that according to the Federal Bureau of Justice, 29 states recorded a decrease in the total number of prisoners. Marty Ryan, staff person for the Justice Reform Consortium, who keeps very close track of this information regarding Iowa's prison population says, “Something's not working…the numbers should be going down if everything is working right.

3 years ago the IDOC received a 3 million dollar grant from the Department of Labor and great effort has gone in to designing a plan for effectively reducing recidivism. It t involves training of staff and collection of data regarding how staff uses their time.

Iowa CURE feels that programs such as, the Apprenticeship Program which receives its funding from other source is a far better example of what actually reduces recidivism. When people return to society they need to have jobs that pay a living wage, safe affordable housing, reliable transportation, education, maintaining family connections. These are some of the key factors in reducing recidivism.

If you want to learn more about the SRR, please go to the Iowa DOC website where you will find a link where it is explained in depth.

CROSSROADS OF IOWA
The work that Crossroads of Iowa is doing is unduplicated in Iowa. We offer three classes inside the Polk County Jail that tend to be therapeutic: Finding Your Voice, Understanding Grief and Journaling classes. Each week, three classes are offered to four separate areas inside the jail. Many times inmates repeat our classes.

While in the classroom, we discover many needs after release such as, for therapists, housing, employment and that information is provided. If upon release a referral, they will contact us. Or, if they need to meet for support, that is also offered.

Annually, a Crossroads of Iowa PTSD Trauma Seminar is planned at Grand View University. CEU's are offered through the National Association of Social Workers-Iowa Chapter for therapists, social workers and family counselors. Agency
directors, case managers and other staff come from all over Iowa to hear about the latest treatment offered. The fifth annual trauma seminar will be in January 2018.

We are working to offer a new program that is offered internationally, nationally and with excellent results in West Des Moines, with the Youth Justice Initiative. It is The Three Principals, where individuals are encouraged to understand that thinking and thoughts create feelings, and those thoughts don't have to be acted on or believed. Such as, the belief that "you are of no value", comes from your own thoughts. The program has been successful in San Quintin, Santa Clara Jails, CA, in the UK and other countries. This program has been proven effective for mental issues and substance abuse.

One youth reoffended within a year out of 38 in the Youth Justice Initiative, West Des Moines. The police offer affiliated with the organization. Ashlee Swinton, Project Assistant, West Des Moines Police Department, said it's the best program they have ever seen.

Each Thursday, at Peace of Mind Counseling on University, 12:00pm-1:00pm there is a Lunch and Learn that is led by one of the therapists about The Three Principals. The counselors at Peace of Mind, practice The Three Principals with all of their clients. Most generally there is a short educational video with discussion. There is no charge.

Crossroads of Iowa is planning a Women's Walk, Saturday, August 26th at Gray's Lake. Proceeds go to support our programs. If interested, go to www.crossroadsofiowa.org or call 515-633-7968.

Ruth Hardin, Executive Director

REPORT OF THE AUGUST IOWA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING

The Board of Corrections met on Friday August 4 at Clarinda Correctional Facility. We were welcomed by Randy Gibbs, the newly appointed warden. He started his new work at a very stressful time as the LODGE, which housed up to 200 men, had to be shut down and placements had to be found for those living there. The dog program started by Warden Dahm and is very successful. It is considered an honor to get a dog. Tyler Gray gave us an overview of the manufacturing of H&H Trailers and some people toured that facility following the meeting. Zion Recovery and Clarinda Academy are also a part of the Clarinda Complex.

Director Bartruff shared the new Central Office structure. First of all, Diann Wilder -Tomlinson, Inspector General is retiring and will need to be replaced, Lettie Press, Research Director, is retiring in September. Dot Faust, Deputy for Offenders Services is already gone and her work will be cover by Dan Clark, IPI, Sally Kreamer, Deputy Director for CBC, and Dr. Beth Skinner, who now has the newly created position of Risk Reduction Director. Fred Scalletta has retired and so there will be a search for position of Communication Director.

During the time for public comment about half a dozen recently retired staff spoke about their concern for those working in the system given the budget cuts and other decisions that have and will impact those working in corrections. The Board members urged them to convey this same message to their state legislators.

At the July meeting the Board members expressed a desire to respond to the budget problems and agreed that next year they will hold their meetings in Des Moines to reduce travel expenses.

MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL CURE

Carla Dawson and Jean Basinger attended the international CURE Conference which was held in Costa Rica April. People doing prison reform work all over the world gathered to share information about the work being done in their areas. Each participant gave a report regarding some aspect of reform, research, or advocacy in which they are involved.

Everyone was most eager to hear of the work being done in Rwanda to bring about healing and forgiveness at the end of the terrible civil war there. It was very moving to learn that those who had committed terrible atrocities were forgiven by their victims if they were genuinely remorseful. We have also heard that there is one order of Catholic Sisters who have been assigned to simply listen to the victims tell their stories.

The Presbyterian pastor who is the head of the chaplains in Cuba also was there and told of his work. President Castro asked him to train chaplains to work in prisons and jails throughout the country.

Terri Leclercq presented her book, "Prison Grievances" which is designed to help prisoners understand when and how to write grievances that will win. The book is written in comic book, step by step form. It is available from Amazon.

Carla Dawson gave a report on using the circle process of resolving conflict with children and Jean Basinger gave a report on the work of our focus group, Iowa Coalition for Juvenile Justice in helping those prisoners who received life without parole as juveniles to sentences get re-sentenced and paroled.

The highlight of the convention was a tour of the only women’s prison in Costa Rica. Women are able to keep their children with them until they are 3 years old. Seeing all the children in the prison caused us to have mixed emotions: on the one hand it is good to know that small children can bond with their mothers from birth, but hard to think of the time when they are separated and placed with members of their family or with a foster family.

Many of the women were in prison because they were involved in their husband or boyfriend’s drug business. There are a number of foreign women there who had been caught smuggling ash or drugs out of the country.

Carla and Jean really appreciated this opportunity to attend the International conference.

REST IN PEACE

We want to express our sympathy to the loved ones of several people who have been involved with CURE for many years and recently passed away due to illness. Honor Lifer Lawrence "Tom" Gladson worked with Iowa CURE on
numerous concerns over the years. These issues included visiting rules, the blocking of cable reception, religious freedom, issues related to the Hobby Craft program and others.

Robert Winfrey was one of the juveniles who received a sentence of Life Without Parole many years ago. He spent over 44 years in prison, much of that time in Missouri prisons. He was among those who were re-sentenced to life with the possibility of parole due to the decisions of the US Supreme Court and Iowa Supreme Court. He was recently interviewed by the board of parole and approved for gradual release; however shortly after this interview he was diagnosed with 4th stage cancer. After several weeks in Hospice he died. At his interview he apologized to his victims and expressed a desire to work as a substance abuse counselor to keep young people from making the mistakes he made. Representatives of IA CURE's focus group, Iowa Coalition 4 Juvenile Justice attended his memorial service.
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<th>CONTACT INFORMATION</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IOWA CURE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jean Basinger, Chair/Newsletter Editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. O. Box 41005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, IA 50311</td>
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<td>Phone: 515-277-6296</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:jabwab@msn.com">jabwab@msn.com</a>; <a href="http://www.iowacure.org">www.iowacure.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Members: Anne Bickell, Peggy Aguilar, Eddie Bloomer, Jackie Robinson, Carla Dawson, Diane Crane, Carolyn Utlehake, Brian Carter, Mary Kay Dial, Richard Nordin, Larry Smith, Sr. Joanne Talarico, Wendy Wittrock, Sue Hutchins</td>
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<td><strong>IA-NE NAACP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Andrews, President,</td>
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<tr>
<td>1620 Pleasant St., Ste. 210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, IA 50314</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Federal CURE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>P. O. Box 15667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantation, FL 33318-5657</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:FedCure@FedCURE.org">FedCure@FedCURE.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CURE for Vets</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>535 Queen St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, PA 19147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Jcautilli2003@yahoo.com">Jcautilli2003@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.vets-cure.com">www.vets-cure.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners</strong></td>
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<td>Website: friendsofiowawomenprisoners.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitator: Vi Darsee</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:vddarsee@q.com">vddarsee@q.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone: 515-225-8349</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets 3rd Tues of each month at noon at Wesley UMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>800 E. 12th St, Des Moines, IA</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.iowacure.org">www.iowacure.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans Program</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Brooks: VA Medical Center, 3600 30th St,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, IA 50310, 515-577-8068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Brian.brooks@va.com">Brian.brooks@va.com</a>; website: i.va.gov/homeless</td>
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<td><strong>Help for Veterans</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Will visit incarcerated veterans in need in central Iowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Miner, 515-577-8892 or 699-5999 ext. 4875</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:jennifer.miner@va.gov">jennifer.miner@va.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covers eastern Iowa: Sherri Koob, Veterans Justice Outreach, cell: 563-320-9887; <a href="mailto:sherri.koob@va.gov">sherri.koob@va.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A note about Iowa CURE: We are an organization with members in and out of the prison system. We cannot offer legal services or accept phone calls from prisoners. Letters will be answered to the best of our ability. Do not send us your legal documents. In joining CURE, you are NOT entering into a contract for services</td>
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IOWA CURE  
P. O. BOX 41005  
Des Moines, IA 50311

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

2017 DUES NOTICE

Please remember to pay your 2017 Iowa CURE dues

Fill out the application form below and mail it with your membership fee to the Iowa CURE office address below.

Name_______________________________________
Address_____________________________________
City___________________State____Zip_______
Email_____________________________________

Annual Membership Fees
Prisoner  $2
Individual  $10
Family  $20
Sustaining  $50
Life  $100

Please remove me from this mailing list  

Why should I join CURE?
Being a CURE member gives you access to experienced staff, reputable research, political action, community organizing, leadership and strategy development as well as informative fact sheets, action alerts, legislative and issue updates. Please feel free to photocopy this newsletter/application to pass along to interested friends, family, associates or loved ones in prison.

IOWA CURE
P. O. BOX 41005
Des Moines, IA 50311