

January 12, 2015

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Fox lake Correctional Institution P.O. Box 200

Fox Lake, WI 53933-0200

To whom it may concern:

Please pardon my intrusion but I'm writing this letter to plead for a second chance at the life I never had. My name is Andrae L. Bridges and I currently reside at the Fox Lake Correctional Institution here in Fox Lake, Wisconsin. I have been incarcerated for nearly 23 years now. I entered the system as a juvenile and have since changed my life for, the better.

On March 25, 1992--just six days after my 16th birthday I was arrested and charged with First-Degree-Intentional Homicide-Party to a Crime. I got waived into adult court and subsequently sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole until the year 2037. That means I won't be able to see the parole board until I'm 61 years old, and even then release isn't guaranteed.

The events that took place on the night of March 25, 1992 resulted in the tragic and senseless death of 14 year old Corzetta Vance. I initially made a statement claiming responsibility for the shooting but it was never determined who fired the fatal shot. In either event, I was convicted and sentenced as such. I take full responsibility for that night's events whether it was my bullet that caused the death of another or not, as I fired the first shot.

Upon realizing my female friends were arguing with another gang of females I fired my gun into the air in the hopes of defusing what I believed to be a very hostile situation. I NOW know that discharging a weapon like that was totally irrational on my part--a testament to my state of mind at the time. Needless to say, after firing that shot, all hell broke loose. In turn, one life was lost forever and many other lives were drastically altered.

I have never made excuses for my actions and I never will. Many may wonder, how dare I plead for a second chance at life after taking the life of another. Well, it's because I truly believe I have earned a second chance at the life I never had. I plead for this chance with a clear conscience. I committed my crime when I was very young--I am not the same person I was when I got arrested. In the nearly 23 years I've been incarcerated I have gained a real appreciation for life and everything it has to offer. I have not only accomplished everything that was asked of me but I have volunteered to participate in programs that changed me for the better. My prison record indicates positive adjustment with good work evaluations, as I have used my time productively. I have completed several educational, vocational, and treatment-based programs:

Educational Attainment:

USED, 1993

Associates Degree in Theology of the Bible Math/Marketing Classes - 6 Credits

LVA Tutor Training

Over 600 Hours Community Service Welding/Production Welding

Employment History:

Lead Food Server

Vocational Printing Clerk Controller-Dishwasher

Administrative Clerk

Trash Collector

Segregation Janitor

Librarian

BSI - Printing/Cabinet Making

Certificates:

Assertiveness -Training

Cognitive Interventions Program (CGIP) Phases I, II, III, and IV Restorative Justice

And that's just to name a few. I have received many more certificates. However, I pride myself most on my personal and spiritual growth, and having had the opportunity to participate in the Reach Out Program once facilitated at Columbia Correctional for 10 years. This program gave me the opportunity to educate and mentor at-risk youth.

I am blessed with an outstanding support system, including and not limited to my father, Peggy Swan of FFUP, Dean/Professor Stan Stojkovic, and a loving fiance I'm planning a life with. I have drafted an extensive release plan and will present well to potential employers upon release. These factors, together with my level of maturity, labor skills, and desire to give back will significantly reduce the likelihood of me ever re-offending. The community does not need protection from me!

Thank you for your time and consideration in regards to this sensitive matter.

Sincerely,

Andrae L. Bridges

cc: file

Peggy Swan, FFUP

Terri Fleming, Fiance