

FIRE ANT



ANARCHIST PRISONER SOLIDARITY

This issue of Fire Ant is dedicated to the memory of Judi Bari.

This is issue #10, Summer 2021. Fire Ant is a collaboration between anarchist prisoners and free roaming anarchists. Fire Ant seeks to raise material aid for anarchist prisoners while fostering communication between anarchists on both sides of the walls.

To support the anarchist prisoner war fund, please email [bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net](mailto:bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net). All money will go directly to prisoners. The fund currently supports Michael Kimble, Jennifer Rose, Eric King, Sean Swain, and Marius Mason.

To download this publication, please go to [bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org](http://bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org).

Front photo is of Eric King. Back photo is Jade Juhl, on left, Pride Trans March organizer, and Jennifer Rose, at Salinas Valley prison 2017.

Thanks to the Bloomington crew for all their hard work on this project! Thanks also to Michael, Jennifer, Marius, Eric, Noah, Thomas, Sean, Julio, Patrick, Rochelle, Pepe, Brandon Oden, SOLECAST, Argyle crew, TC from BC, Peter and Fifth Estate, the Burning Books crew, Lex from IWW, Little Black Cart, Gloo Factory, Final Straw radio, MJ from Idaho, the Squashed Crew, Matt D, Risa, Cal, Dave, Olivia, the Wabanaki People, Ed O, Owl, Mini, Baba Yaga and the North Woods green anarchist horde.

-Fire Ant

## Disclaimer

This publication is for entertainment purposes only. All opinions and views belong to the individual writers and do not represent other writers or anyone involved in the production or distribution of this publication.

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## Support the Clarion Book Project!

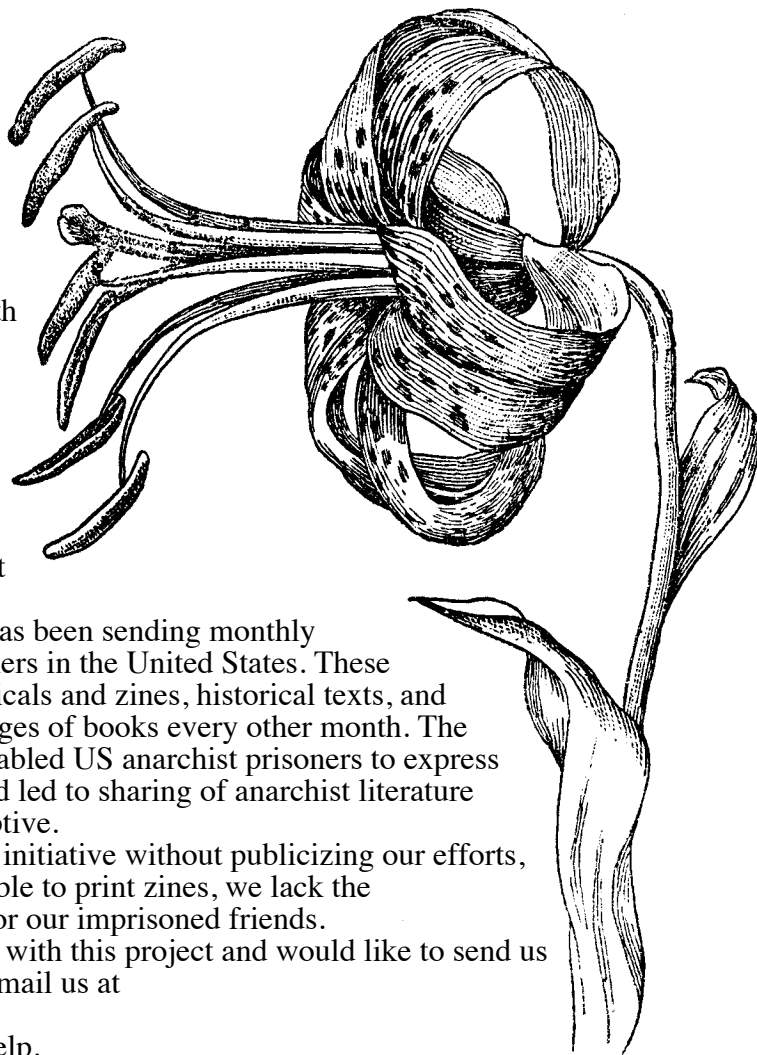
Prison seeks to isolate our friends behind walls both physical and psychological. Separated from loved ones, anarchist prisoners are removed from the daily dialogue and exchange of ideas that give birth to liberatory projects and experiments. Imprisoned anarchists will find very little in prison libraries and network television to keep them informed on outside struggles, and, in absence of comrades on the outside mailing in magazines and books, they are left without access to subversive literature of any kind.

Since 2014, Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross has been sending monthly packages of literature to a handful of anarchist prisoners in the United States. These generally feature recently-published anarchist periodicals and zines, historical texts, and articles on current events. In addition, we send packages of books every other month. The project has fostered dialogue on current struggles, enabled US anarchist prisoners to express solidarity to anarchist prisoners around the world, and led to sharing of anarchist literature throughout the prisons where our friends are held captive.

While we have been happy to quietly work on this initiative without publicizing our efforts, we would like to expand its capacity. While we are able to print zines, we lack the funds to regularly purchase quality anarchist books for our imprisoned friends.

If you are an anarchist publisher who feels affinity with this project and would like to send us books for distribution to anarchist prisoners, please email us at [bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net](mailto:bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net).

We are in this for the long-haul, and appreciate the help with toner in our DNA,  
Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross  
[bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org](http://bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org)



## Have you ever thought about the origins of prisons? By Pepe

One day I was staring out the window with a smirk on my face as I looked across the farmland that surrounds the prison on all sides. Another inmate came over and asked what I was laughing at. I responded with a question of my own, "Have you ever thought about the origins of prison?". He said no, and I told him I was laughing at the irony of this prison being built in the middle of farmland.

For most of our existence, we humans were hunter/ gatherers. Basically this meant our food came from hunting wild animals and gathering wild plants. We would follow the herds, and growing seasons of plants, as we moved across the land in pursuit of them. Such a nomadic lifestyle required us to have few possessions, because as our food source moved, we had to pack up and move with them if we didn't want to starve. Humans have spent several million years living this way. Until about 10,000 years ago a major shift in the way we obtained our food occurred, and it dramatically changed the way we lived. This shift was the invention of farming, and since then, things have never been the same.

Now we no longer had to travel across the land, hunting and gathering our food. With farming, we could simply grow what we wanted to eat. So we gave up the nomadic lifestyle and settled in one place and became agriculturists. This was the birth of our modern civilization. But, something happened that likely no one had foreseen. Having control over our food supply meant that we could grow more than we needed. And that's just what we did. For the first time in our existence, we had an excess of food, something that was not possible with our nomadic, hunter/ gatherer past. But, when you have an excess, you have to store it somewhere; and if it can be stored, it can be stolen. And if it can be stolen, you need someone to guard it. This could be seen as the origins of policing. And then you need to do something with the people these guards caught. This is the origin of prisons. It's something that most of us don't think about, not even those of us stuck spending years in a prison.

Of course, this is an overly simplistic description of events. An entire book can be written on the subject, and many have. But for now, as I sit in my bunk and stare out the window, I can't help but laugh at the irony and placement of this prison.

### Letter from Thomas Meyer-Falk 8/2/21

Hi Rob,

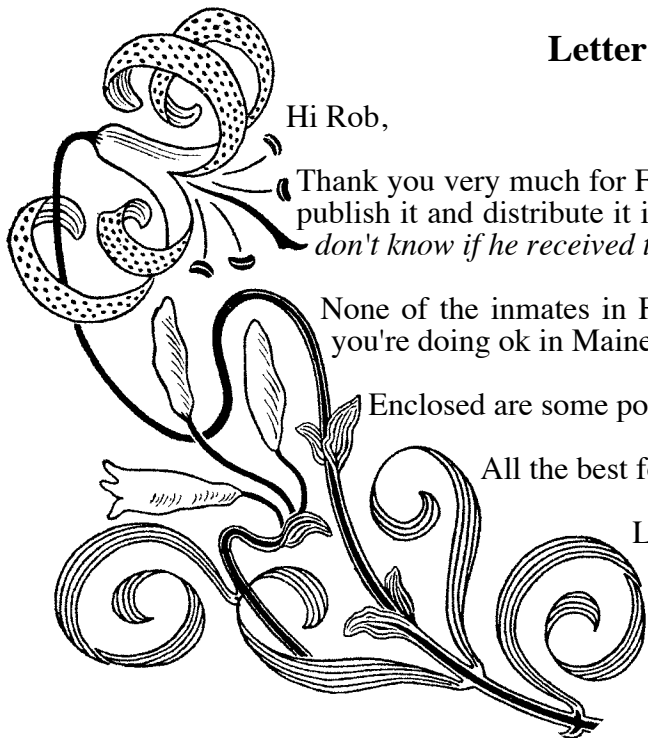
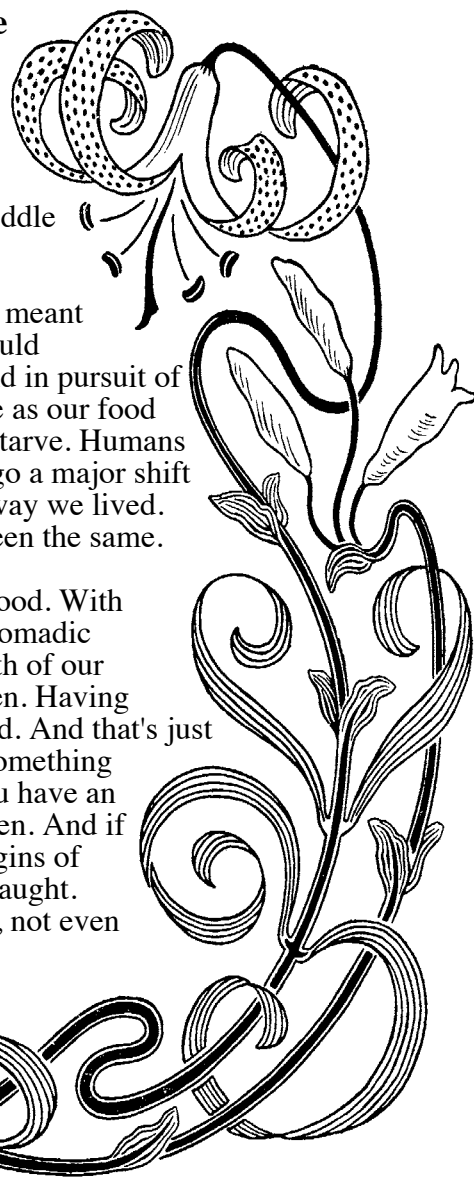
Thank you very much for Fire Ant #6, and to all of the comrades that made it possible to publish it and distribute it in the US and overseas. *[editor's note: we sent issues 7-9, but don't know if he received them, yet.]*

None of the inmates in Freiburg prison, Germany, have been vaccinated. I hope that you're doing ok in Maine, and that no one gets really ill from the virus.

Enclosed are some poems I've written, and an article too.

All the best for you.

Love and respect,  
Thomas



## **Do Prison Lives Matter? by Michael Kimble**

In recent years, we've witnessed the explosion of the prison movement. We've seen unprecedented and massive rebellions in the form of work strikes, hunger strikes, riots, sabotage, and other forms of revolt.

We've seen a huge rise in support and solidarity from allies on the outside getting involved. We've seen the trajectory go from simply better conditions to abolition. Then came the calls for a national prison organization to coordinate these rebellions from the specialists in revolution.

We are overlooking the contradictions in the prisons among the prisoners themselves, and, I think we will be fools to continue to look past these contradictions.

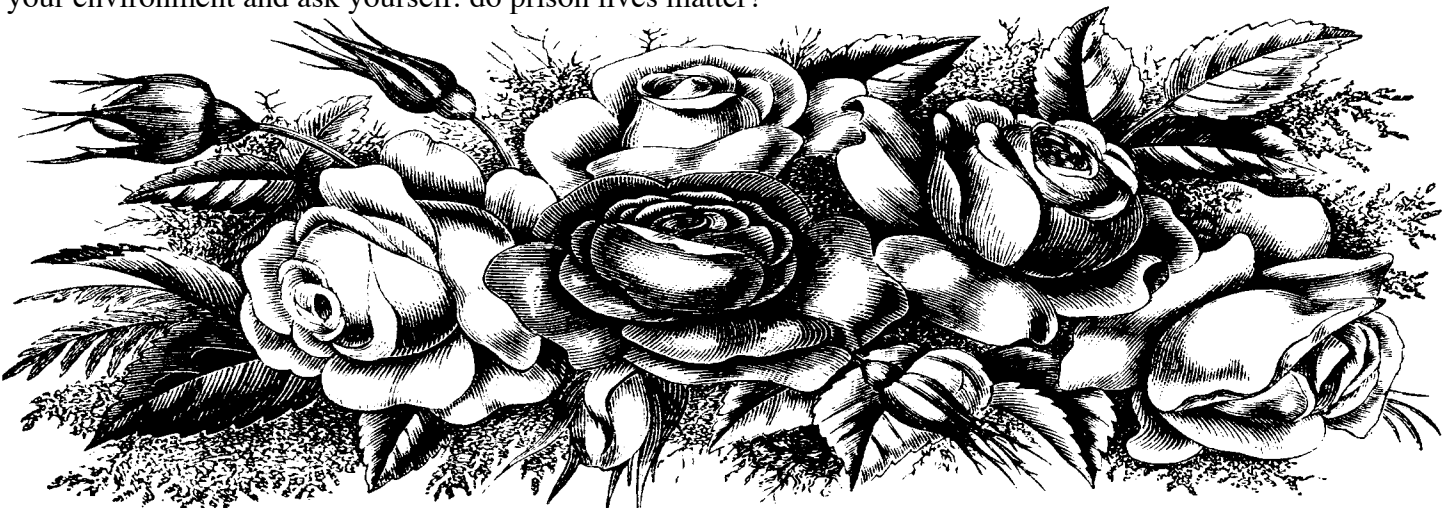
If the spontaneous, self-organizing actions have caused the chaos to the prison industrial slave complex we see today (they are hurting), why would we try to gain control of it?

These are just my thoughts and opinions, but if we do organize a national prison organization with a constitution, bylaws, codes of conduct (centralization, hierarchy, and control), etc., we will only be setting up for failure, not abolition, but reform. Are we for reform or abolition? Most prisoners are not for abolition of the prison industrial slave complex. They believe in the system. They just want better treatment and conditions within it. They instruct the system on how it can be better. Most prisoners are authoritarian and can't see, or imagine, a world without prisons. Most prisoners who are fighting to change this current system do not question authority; only who wields that authority. Are the conditions of prison more important than the existence of prison? This is the question we have to ask, and answer.

I can easily sit back, do everything that these pigs say (conform), don't complain about anything; but that will do violence to my soul. I can sit back, mind my own business; but most likely another prisoner will not allow me to do that. There's a real possibility that I can lose my life in this prison by the hands of these pigs, but most likely it will be lost at the hands of another prisoner. Look at how we are living in these prisons. Here in Alabama the US Dept of Justice released a two-part report on its investigation into Alabama's men's prisons. You can find both reports at [anarchylive.noblogs.org](http://anarchylive.noblogs.org). Their findings were just horrific. Rampant gang violence, prisoner on prisoner deaths, stabbings, assaults, extortion, rape, etc. This shit is crazy because it's all true. And prisoners think this is something cool.

We're treating each other worse than the pigs do. We have 60-plus year old men sleeping on the floor because someone younger, bigger, stronger, or connected, wants a bottom bunk, or a bunk by the window. It's also true some have sold their bunks for drugs, but most are on the floor because they are afraid to get on their bunks without reprisal. Then you have guys staying in prison intentionally, refusing work release and parole, just to make money. If you're queer, you're considered weak, an abomination, and an object of hate. And we're talking about building a national prison organization?

I think we need to build new relationships among each other, with each other. Until we forge new healthy relationships based on respect not fear, with love and not hate. Prisoners lives definitely don't matter to the prison industrial slave complex. That's understood, or should be. Until we forge new relationships, nothing is going to change for the better, and, definitely, abolition is not going to happen. Prison lives should matter, but look at your environment and ask yourself: do prison lives matter?



## Letter from Sean Swain 7/5/21

Robcat!

I can't recall the last time I got an issue of Fire Ant, or notice of withholding.  
*[editor's note: We have sent him every issue, the last 4 have been sent back without explanation. This time they sent a form saying that he can get no more than 3 pages, double sided.]* If you send copies and don't hear from me, feel free to email operations manager Christine Bryant to ask where your publisher mail went (christine.bryant@vadoc.virginia.gov).

I go up for parole in August.

Lauren, my partner, moves into our apartment this month. We get married August 4th. We retained lawyer Eric Allen, who sued the parole board twice and won; and paid him thanks to donations on Instagram (@swainiac1969). We will still have to pay more, but covered the retainer. I'm grateful. Lots of folks donated.

Soon, @swainiac1969 and seanswain.org will post the photos that police withheld at my trial, that prove there was a break in and I acted in self-defense. I've done 30 years for what wasn't a crime. Folks supporting my parole can call 614-752-1200, or email joseph.walters@odrc.state.oh.us.

I have guaranteed income for my first year after my release, and I'm arranging employment with a non-profit now. An interview is now posted at [archive.org/details/mke-lit-supply-ep-1](https://archive.org/details/mke-lit-supply-ep-1). Also, check out [spiritofmandela.org](https://spiritofmandela.org), an effort to hold the US accountable for human rights violations. I'm going to be part of that.

Hope things are good on your end. Wish me luck. The truth is dangerous. Stay dangerous.

Freedom,  
Sean

*[editor's note: Sean was denied parole this time, and got a 5 year hit (he can't go up for parole again for 5 years). His legal team is appealing the decision.]*



## Poems by Thomas Meyer-Falk

### Untitled

pulled back  
inside myself

on the paths  
of the past  
into the future

to wherever

the soul  
is  
blown out



### Reflections in the Night

my  
friend  
the silence

pure  
radiant  
like cherry blossoms

nothing  
no one  
satisfied

tranquilized  
behind  
bars

## Fire Ant Food Autonomy Project by Robcat

In the spring of 2020, we tripled the size of our gardens to help provide people in need with fresh vegetables and fruit. We have expanded the gardens again this year. We strive to make the world a better place today, and not wait for some imagined future utopia.

We have been giving food to family, friends, comrades, and strangers. This is not enough. We must teach people to grow their own food and learn wild gathering. Without food autonomy, there is no autonomy. We need a world of reciprocity. We need to learn to take care of each other and the Earth. We need a world of love, not hate.

The goals of this food project are the following:

- Help people in need with free, healthy food and herbal medicines.
- Help people learn to grow their own food, learn wild gathering, and make their own herbal medicines.
- Use gardening as a tool to educate people about anarchist prisoners and how to support them.
- Create a network of radical farmers and homesteaders, Indigenous food projects, African immigrant food projects, and others for mutual aid and survival.

We dedicate this food project to all our imprisoned comrades worldwide. To help out with this project, if you can, acquire a shovel, rip up your lawn, grow food, and share! Or, acquire a jackhammer, rip up the pavement, grow food, and share! Or, acquire buckets, fill with soil, grow food, and share! Build community.

### Fire Ant T-Shirts For Sale!

Fire Ant shirts available at [TheFinalstrawRadio.bigcartel.com](http://TheFinalstrawRadio.bigcartel.com) designed by, and benefiting, anarchist prisoner Michael Kimball. Thank you to Final Straw Radio taking on this project!







## What is Time from a Prisoner's Perspective? By Thomas Meyer-Falk

A prisoner is either paying with their time for something they have done, so-called correctional imprisonment – or for something that they might do, so-called preventative custody.

Years ago, I called a female judge from the District Court in Mannheim a “text book example of a fascist slut to justice”. Leaving aside the question as to whether this description was accurate or not, a colleague of hers thought it was worth a seven month incarceration (section 185 of the German penal code; that is, libel. Punishments range from fines to one year in jail).

In the end, the sentence was cumulative – based on different rulings on the charge of libel and harassment through letters – five years, three months and three weeks. Almost 2,000 days, or just over 46,000 hours of incarceration.

Converted into the schedule of an employee working 42 hours a week and 28 weeks a year, it works out as the equivalent of 22 years of employment – just to give you an idea of the proportionality. Because in capitalist society, working hours are equivalent to what we are then able to buy from the market after being paid.

But what does that mean to a prisoner, in real terms? Those who are in prison for life only have an incomplete idea of life outside the walls. ‘Inside’, life moves at a slower pace; as a saying goes: ‘Prison preserves’.

Like a lazy, monotonous river life flows here. Only by relating to other events do you get any feeling for the months, years, decades. I myself realise how much time has passed particularly when friends and comrades report on their children being born, learning to talk, to walk, starting school, going to secondary school.

But apart from that? Something that happened 5 years ago may seem like only yesterday to a prisoner.

Time takes on a different quality here; who “outside” could really say what they might be doing for example in two years on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, 2011? Prisoners can! The 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, 2011 is a Monday, so the cell will be opened at 6.15am, at 6.40am we go to work. At 11.45 lunch will feature rice, since we have rice for lunch every Monday. And on the next day, a Tuesday, everyone will receive 1 litre of milk, like every Tuesday. At exactly 5pm to 7pm we will be having sports, and at 7.20pm we are locked up in the cells for the night. The succession of mealtimes is broken up by two visits a month, as well as two shop times during which we can get pre-ordered foods or body care products.

Good citizens will now cry, “That’s your fair punishment!” Do we really need punishments? Do they do any good beyond maintaining a prison industrial complex?!



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## SOLIDARITY WITH ANARCHIST PRISONER BORIS



Boris has been in an induced coma in a hospital burns unit since the morning of August 7, 2021 following a fire in his cell. His condition is life-threatening, his respiratory tract being highly damaged by smoke and ash. A first skin graft operation will be carried out as soon as his state of health allows it.

Imprisoned following his arrest in September 2020 for having set fire to two relay antennas in the Jura region on April 10, 2020, Boris was sentenced on May 19, 2021 to four years, two of which suspended, and a fine of around one hundred thousand euros.

Fire Ant expresses total solidarity with Boris & the struggle against technological control.

