

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

AUGUST
2024



How do persons on sex offender registries get in trouble? By Sandy Rozek from NARSOL

By Sandy . . . Do they reoffend with another sexual crime? Yes, but rarely. Do they commit petty offenses? Yes, sometimes. Do they violate the terms of supervision or the registry? Yes, some.

Do they live normal, ordinary, law-abiding lives? Yes, the vast majority.

Do they still get in trouble and become the subjects of ridicule and condemnation for living their ordinary, law-abiding lives, and do they cause—usually inadvertently—those who would help, befriend, or love them condemnation and often worse? Yes, probably more often than we would believe.

A registrant in California was working as an umpire with a company that had a contract to supply umpires at baseball games, including Pony League games. His occupation and his working at games played by minors were completely legal. Nevertheless, the headline screamed, “Registered sex offender umpired Monterey County Pony league games, says president.” The league has “chosen to terminate its relationship” with the contractor, possibly putting the registrant’s job at jeopardy. Even if that was not the case, the contracting company lost a client because it provided employment for registrants.

In South Dakota, the headline makes the issue clear: “Teacher resigns after inviting registered sex offender to classroom as guest speaker.” Neither the teacher nor the registrant was doing anything illegal or against school or district policy. However, the teacher lost her job due to the incident. In the face of public pressure, both the teacher and the school superintendent tendered their resignations, but the school board accepted only that of the teacher. The registrant’s conviction was in 2017.

In yet another situation, this one in Rhode Island, doing something that was not illegal cost someone her job. An employee of a YMCA allowed her registrant fiancé to wait for her inside the building while she finished work. “Cranston YMCA employee fired for letting sex offender on grounds,” announced the headline. He was apparently breaking no laws in being there as he was not arrested. He wasn’t hiding or being “sneaky”; he was sitting at the entrance table right by the front door in plain view. She was promptly fired.

In a just-released report in Massachusetts, an entity no less than the state government is in trouble. “Massachusetts placed homeless families in shelters with sex offenders, report says,” details that persons and families in need of temporary housing were placed where “sex offenders live or work.” The report goes on to say that the housing agency is “in the process of removing the identified sex offenders.” A logical translation of what that process means is that an untold number of registrants, through no fault of theirs and in the absence of any criminality, are now displaced from their homes and /or fired from their jobs.

A convoluted and multi-layered situation in Alabama presents the opinion that people with convictions for historic sexual offenses should not be allowed to serve in roles that are interwoven with the very fabric of our communities. “Case of missing child sparks concerns over sex offender fire chief in Barbour County” is the latest chapter in an older controversy, that of a registrant, with his background fully known, who was appointed chief of a small town volunteer fire department. The search for a missing child—later found unharmed—was the catalyst for the more recent upheaval. A woman who says she had been a victim of sexual abuse was incensed that the registrant fire chief was “allowed” to be part of the search party for the missing child and started an on-line campaign to have him removed from his position. An Alabama legislator authored a bill to prohibit registrants from working as first responders in the state; the bill failed to gain momentum in the session just ended. The fire chief resigned his position amidst all the controversy. His conviction was in 1998.

In Ohio, a media outlet appears to take pride in “outing” a registrant and causing the priest who was helping him to be fired. News 5, an ABC affiliate, announced, “Local Catholic pastor forced to resign following News 5 Investigation into sex offender volunteer.” The pastor may or may not have used poor judgement in allowing the registrant to fill the volunteer position that he did, but no laws appear to have been broken as no one was arrested. The diocese is indicated as knowing about the status of the registrant, which would indicate the firing is the result of public pressure.

A common element, remarkably similar from story to story, is easily discernible in every story. “There have been no reported incidents and all their children are safe”; “Student safety was not compromised”; “There’s no indication that he had any interactions with YMCA members or children”; “. . . did not interact with kids” “. . . no issues from the presence of these offenders.”

People who employ, befriend, or otherwise engage those on a sex offender registry may be putting their reputations and their jobs at risk. This is at total odds with the mission statements of many states’ correctional departments that claim to support and provide opportunities for rehabilitation and second chances to those in their system.

How are these missions to be achieved if opportunities to become rehabilitated are denied? How are persons on sex offense registries to have the ability to use their rehabilitation, often even after many years, if the granting of second chances is more likely than not to be met with negativity and if every step forward is countered with two steps back?



CA: Montgomery County man gets \$431,000 for time wrongly listed on sex offender registry Source: wsls.com

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Va. – A Montgomery County man is finally getting closure after he was convicted of a crime he didn't commit.

Closure in the amount of nearly half a million dollars.

David Kingrea received over \$55,000 last year from the Commonwealth for the time he spent in jail in 2014 for a crime he didn't commit.

But that's not where David's story ends. There was more money to come for the eight years Kingrea wrongfully spent on the Virginia Sex Offender Registry.

"Being on the registry itself has been a death sentence," said Kingrea.

While on the registry, Kingrea was barred from parts of his son, Dylan's life.

He couldn't visit Dylan at school, take him to the playground or even be apart of parent-teacher conferences.

Kingrea will receive about \$431,000

from the Commonwealth for his time on the sex offender registry.

"It's half a million dollars. You know no amount of money can ever pay for time. Time is so precious. And that's a fact. It can buy a lot of things, it can't buy that but it can make things right for tomorrow," said Kingrea.

He plans to spend the money helping his nine-year-old son, Dylan.

Dylan has autism and cerebral palsy, making him non-verbal and in need of around-the-clock care.

"It means even so much with having my son Dylan. Just being able to get him what he needs. That's what I live for. And that's because I love that boy. It's been hard," said Kingrea.

The money comes from the bill unanimously approved by the General Assembly, after it was introduced by Delegate Rip Sullivan.

"This is a person who was found not to

have committed the crime, but is mistakenly included on the sexual offender registry," said Del. Sullivan.

The University of Virginia's Innocence Project has worked to reform the way people, like Kingrea receive money for the time they unjustifiably spent in prison or on the sex offender list.

"It's impossible to put a value on a person's life and we previously advocated for different amounts and I don't know if I'll ever think a dollar amount is satisfactory," said Juliet Hatchett with the UVA Innocence Project.

Kingrea is set to receive his money in a lump sum in July.

When the money hits the account finally, that will erase it all. That will be the resolve. Because I will actually be able to move forward," he said.

NARSOL cases in Illinois and Wisconsin moving forward

By Mark . . . On May 31, 2024, the parties filed their opening summary judgment briefs in *Antrim v. Carr*, 19-cv-396 (Eastern District of Wisconsin), in which plaintiffs challenge the constitutionality of Wisconsin's statutory scheme requiring that certain individuals convicted of sexual offenses be forced to wear a GPS monitoring device for life, even after they are off of any criminal supervision. Attached below are each side's opening summary judgment briefs. Response briefs in the case are due July 5, 2024. NARSOL is intimately connected to the litigation, having subsidized the full costs of the plaintiffs' two expert witnesses — Kate Weisburd, a law professor at George Washington University School of Law, and Kelly Socia, Professor in the School of Criminology and

Justice Studies and a Fellow for the Center for Public Opinion at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

In a second case, on June 6, 2024, the United States District Court dismissed with prejudice Plaintiffs' claims in the *National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws et al, v. Latoya Hughes*, in her official capacity as Director of the Illinois Department of Corrections, 24-CV-50025 (Northern District of Illinois). NARSOL is the lead Plaintiff in the case. The case challenges the constitutionality of a statutory parole restriction that prohibits individuals on mandatory supervised release ("MSR") who have been convicted of sexual offenses from using or possessing erectile dysfunction medication. Dismissal of the case by the district is exactly what Plaintiffs sought. That is

because existing Seventh Circuit precedent currently prohibits plaintiffs from challenging a mandatory condition of MSR under §1983 and requires that constitutional challenges to MSR conditions be brought in a habeas corpus petition. Plaintiffs seek to have this precedent overturned so that this and other unconstitutional parole restrictions can be challenged under the civil rights laws, which will make them much more vulnerable to attack. Only the Seventh Circuit can overturn its own case law. Hence, Plaintiffs will bring the case to the proper forum and make the case that existing precedent should it be overturned.



Extreme Grace and the Hanoi Hilton

By Sandy Zalecki

Many of you are old enough to remember the Vietnam War and the Hanoi Hilton. If you aren't, the Hanoi Hilton was one of the most notorious prisoner of war camps ever. It was known for its cruelty, torture, and inability to escape the bonds of its heartless captors. Perhaps you don't remember the stories of the Hanoi Hilton, but you remember the Chuck Norris movies of human bravery during torture and daring escapes. But those movies didn't portray the reality of life at the Hanoi Hilton.

How do I know this? I was never a prisoner of war. I am an Air Force Veteran and when I was in Basic Training in 1978, I was privileged to hear a lecture by a man that endured seven years, four months, and 27 days imprisoned at the Hanoi Hilton. The Drill Sergeants in charge of our Flight of 35 women chose five of us to go and hear this amazing lecture. They chose four of the leaders and me. At the time I couldn't figure out why they chose me. I know it was Jesus that chose me to listen to this man of amazing faith give the real story of his imprisonment.

His name was General James Robinson Risner or Robby as he was called. General Risner was a bit of a daredevil, often volunteering for dangerous missions. On September 16, 1965, he was shot down after volunteering for a very dangerous Hunter-Kill Mission and captured by the North Vietnamese. He was sent to the Hanoi Hilton where he was tortured and spent more than three years in solitary confinement.

I thought he would tell stories of his torture and how badly he was treated. Although he told some stories of torture, they were woven in only with his stories of great faith. He told a story of being chained so tightly for days that he couldn't move or go to the bathroom. He prayed and the chains fell off so he could relieve himself. He also told a story of when the Vietnamese were blasting propaganda in his cell so loudly that he was shaking uncontrollably because of the noise. He and others prayed, the sound system went out, and never worked again.

He was also instrumental in devising a form of "resistance." It wasn't some daring plan of escape, but a "tapping code." The "code" was Morris Code and the prisoners were tapping out scripture on the walls to give each other hope, optimism, and faith during their captivity. He and other leaders in the camp organized to present maximum resistance. The resistance was that every time two or more prisoners were gathered together, they would have a praise and worship service.

In his book, *The Passing of the Night: Seven Years as a Prisoner of the North Vietnamese*, General Risner said:

To make it, I prayed by the hour. It was automatic, almost subconscious. I did not ask God to take me out of it. I prayed he would give me strength to endure it.

When it would get so bad that I did not think I could stand it, I would ask God to ease it and somehow I would make it. He kept me.

One of the statements that impressed me the most was he said that by the end of his imprisonment he said that the prisoners were feeling sorry for those who held them captive. The prisoners were free in Jesus, but the prison guards were held captive by Satan. They felt so much love for their captors that they didn't know what to do. General Risner never said if any of the prison guards were saved. This must have been what the Apostle Paul felt when he was in prison in Rome. The extreme grace of our Lord Jesus Christ can change things in even the most horrible places on earth.

I was surprised that day that I was chosen to listen to this amazing story. I was struggling with sin and addiction at that time in my life. Looking back on it, this day was a divine appointment. It was very instrumental in my salvation. It wasn't until years later that I gave my life to the Lord, but I always remembered this story. Robby died in 2013. Many times, while he was alive, I tried to find him and tell him how much his story touched my heart. It never happened, but I have a big hug for him when I get to heaven.



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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

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Message from Don and Alice

We hope everyone had a good July. In Albuquerque New Mexico we have a nice display of fireworks at the Balloon Park. We decided to go this year but went too early and got tired waiting and left early. We did find a good new Chinese restaurant on the way home to the mountains.

The 4th of July we celebrate freedom. I think of a time I was not free. When I was in prison or on drugs, I did not feel free. It wasn't until Jesus taught me what freedom really meant. To me freedom in Jesus means that whom the Son has set free he is free indeed. What does this mean by this freedom? Everyone seeks freedom. Especially in the West, freedom is the highest virtue, and it is sought after by all who are, or consider themselves to be, oppressed. But freedom in Christ is not the same as political or economic freedom. In fact, some of the most harshly oppressed people in history have had complete freedom in Christ. The Bible tells us that, spiritually speaking, no one is free. In Romans 6, Paul explains that we are all slaves. We are either slaves to sin or slaves to righteousness. Those who are slaves to sin cannot free themselves from it, but once we are freed from the penalty and power of sin through the cross, we become a different kind of slave, and in that slavery we find complete peace and true freedom.

For one you are free from your condemnation of your past sins if you accept Jesus

as your Lord and Savior. Not Guilty. That comes through accepting Jesus Christ's death on the Cross as the payment for our sin. As we submit to Christ, sin loses its power — Christ's power takes over. As we choose to trust and follow Him, our sinful habits, thoughts and attitudes lose their control. Guilt disappears, and peace of mind dominates. Right habits become the norm. That's freedom in Christ — true freedom!

Jesus was not setting us free to do whatever we wanted; He was freeing us to do what we ought to do. He was liberating us to walk in relationship with God and to be the kind of people He created us to be.

At the same, in some sense a Christian is free in that they are "no longer a slave, but a child" of God (Galatians 4:7, similarly Romans 6:22). Jesus said that "if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). By this he meant that a free person will no longer be "a slave to sin" (verse 34).

But what is freedom from sin?

When Paul speaks of being freed from slavery to sin, he says that we should become "slaves to righteous living so that [we] will become holy" (Romans 6:19). So part of being freed from sin means that we will intentionally seek to live a righteous, holy life.



Circle of Concern has gone ZOOM

Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community, and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma they face. The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on **August 18, 2024** at 3 pm—4 p.m. MST (Mountain Standard Time). We will meet on Zoom. We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at **(505) 315-7940**. He will send you the link to join by computer or phone. You can contact him at the number above or email him at donmagicjohnston@gmail.com