



Dear Friends:

As the weather finally gets cooler around the country, we are hoping that we can all return to some form of pre-pandemic “normalcy” soon. Unfortunately, that does not seem to be happening as quickly as we would have liked, and that certainly includes visiting at most federal and military prisons. Thankfully, PVS visitors are staying in touch with the people they visited via letters and with each other via Zoom – not the same, but welcome nonetheless. Here in Philadelphia, the PVS team continues to hold virtual trainings and events – see below – and prepare for the day that we can put the “visiting” back in PVS!

Thanks for all of your support along the way,

Molly

PVS Team Meets with Bureau of Prisons Director

In late August, PVS staff and Board members met with BOP Director Michael Carvajal and Assistant Director Sonya Thompson to discuss the working relationship between our organizations. The meeting was both positive and informative, with Director Carvajal asking us to let all of our visitors know how much the Department values PVS and the work they do. He was very familiar with PVS, given his nearly two decades as a Warden at various prisons, and knows that we make a real difference.

We raised a number of the issues we’ve heard from visitors over the past year, from pandemic-related concerns to the difficulties now that some prisons are re-opening (i.e., scheduling, vaccination rates, inability to hear and/or socially distance). Director Carvajal promised that he would take these concerns, all of which he was aware of, seriously, and into consideration as they work on broader reopening plans. That being said, he reiterated that the health and safety of prisoners, staff and the community were paramount. Wardens are now using a matrix to make reopening decisions, based on community infection rates, community vaccination rates, and those rates inside each facility, which can be found on the home page for each prison at www.bop.gov. Reopening plans have definitely slowed again due to the Delta variant.

The meeting lasted a full hour, and we were grateful to have that time to talk about some longer-term issues, including the extension of letter writing and the potential for joint efforts in volunteer recruitment and outcomes research. It is important for us to be a trusted partner of the BOP so that we can continue to visit people who are isolated and without support.

Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE!

**"THE POWER OF VISITING"
WITH
SUAVE GONZALEZ**

Activist, Artist, Podcaster,
Formerly Incarcerated

*THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2021
7:00 PM EASTERN TIME VIA ZOOM*

PVS
PRISONER
VISITATION
& SUPPORT

To benefit PVS
\$15 suggested donation
www.prisonervisitation.org/suave

David Luis "Suave" Gonzalez

PVS Welcomes New Board Member Liz Leshar

Liz Leshar joined the PVS Board earlier this year, and is a charter member of our new Communications Committee. Though she is retired, Liz is busier than ever! She has been a PVS visitor at FCI El Reno in Oklahoma for six years, but has been visiting prisons much of her life as the daughter of parents who visited while she was growing up in England. You may know Liz from the recent PVS Connections Zoom meetings, informal bi-monthly groups for visitors to get together and -- visit with each other! It's been a great way for visitors, especially newer ones, to meet others and ask any questions they may have in a smaller group setting.



Liz says: "As a PVS Board Member, I look forward to being in a position to support PVS in urgent consultation with the new administration, addressing the heightened level of distress – faced by both prison staff and prisoners – at this 'dark' time of incarceration."

Other Ways You (And Your Friends) Can Support PVS!

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

Do you or anyone you know work for the federal government in any capacity? If so, donations can be made to PVS through the Combined Federal Campaign!

This is a great way to participate in a workplace giving program while helping PVS continue its mission to provide visitors (and letter-writers) to people incarcerated in federal and military prisons.

PVS is Donor #10005 and more information can be found here:

<https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/welcome>

Tell your friends!

Susannah Makes



At [Susannah Makes](#), find one-of-a-kind handmade jewelry at reasonable prices – and 100 percent of the purchase price goes to PVS.



As a PVS visitor or supporter, you can use the code **PVS** and get free shipping anywhere in the U.S.

What type of jewelry? So many. There are trade beads over a century old, Roman era glass, granite beads from Mali hundreds of years old, and beautiful gemstones. Susannah also makes sculptured torch-fired enamel pendants and earrings. Every piece is unique. Have fun choosing!

Donate now

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