

B A R N O N E

Newsletter of Bar None Prison Rideshare

Winter 2019

Bar None is an abolitionist prisoner solidarity group of volunteers based in Treaty 1 territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The prison rideshare is an ongoing project of Bar None to connect people with free rides to visit their friends and loved ones who are in prison. For more information or to volunteer, visit barnoneblog.wordpress.com

Welcome to the Bar None newsletter!

Producing a newsletter has been a dream of the Bar None prison rideshare since we began over three years ago, and we are so excited that we're finally making it happen. Our goal is to put out a newsletter four times a year; fall, winter, spring and summer. Through this newsletter we hope to let people already involved in the rideshare as well as potential collaborators, know what Bar None has been up to and invite input on our work. We also hope to share news of some of the anti-prison struggles we hear about from around the world. Thanks for reading!

The rideshare organizing committee would like to give a huge thank you to everyone involved in the rideshare project: everyone who gives their time to drive people to visit their loved ones in prison, makes those rides happen by taking a turn with the phone and email account to coordinate, or does the vital work of navigating the brutal and confusing justice system to visit loved ones who are locked up. We are deeply grateful to be working alongside all of you.



We got a van!

We have big news: Bar None now has access to a van that goes to Stony Mountain for 1-4pm visits on most Sundays. As long as we can get the van, we can almost guarantee rides for that time now. The lovely folks at Sunshine House have generously agreed to allow Bar None the use of their van to increase our capacity to give rides. Sunshine House is "a community drop-in and resource centre focusing on harm reduction, population health promotion, and social inclusion" located at the corner of Sherbrook and Logan. Big thanks to Sunshine House!

Justice for Errol Update

The inquest into Errol Greene's death concluded at the end of October 2018. Errol Greene died at the Winnipeg Remand after being denied his medication in 2016. We are waiting for the judge's report & recommendations to come out this spring and hoping to publish an alternative piece of our own, one that isn't a product of the unjust legal system. May 1, 2019 will mark 3 years since Errol's life was taken; we are working to plan an event with his family, follow the Justice for Errol page on facebook to find out details closer to the day.

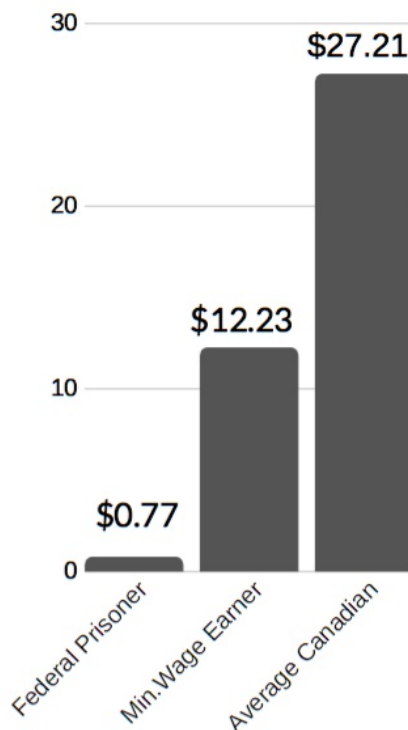
Prisoners are Workers Too!

Forest fires raging across California this past fall were well covered by Canadian news outlets. Not given wide attention were the prisoner firefighters who made up a significant part of the firefighting effort. These firefighters (reportedly doing the most dangerous jobs) worked alongside regular salaried firefighters and yet were paid only \$1 an hour to risk their lives doing this vital work. This injustice is typical of prisoner wages across the United States, where prisoners make between \$0.13 to \$1.15 an hour before deductions, or - because of a clause in the 13th amendment - are forced to work for no pay at all. Canada is no exception to the exploitation of prisoner labour. Across Canada, federal prisoners make between \$2.10 and \$4.83 per day. All wages are subject to deductions for "room and board" and prisoners must pay for essential items such as soap, tampons, Advil, paper, stamps, toothpaste and phone calls to their families. Prisoner labour provides services within the prison and to communities outside, as well as producing consumer goods for private companies.

Abysmally low wages have consistently been a focus of prison strikes. Across Canada (including Stony Mountain Institution here in Manitoba) in 2013, federal prisoners went on strike to protest a 30% cut to wages and inflated prices for necessary goods. This past fall, when prisoners across the United States went on strike to protest their wages, prisoners at Burnside Jail in Nova Scotia joined in solidarity, adding their own demands such as better health care and contact visits with family. Prisoner strikes remind those of us on the outside that folks inside are workers too. The fight for workers rights should be a fight for the rights of all!

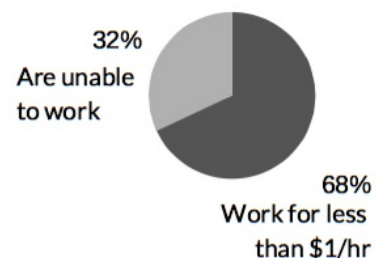
PRISON LABOUR IN CANADA

Average Hourly Wage



14425

People are imprisoned in federal institutions on any given day



\$ 1.95

Maximum daily net pay for a prisoner in Canada

1981

Most recent year prisoners' daily wage increased

Sources:

- Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator 2015-2016
- Statistics Canada Average Usual Hours and Wages
- Government of Canada Minimum Hourly Wage Rates

"To the protestors who came right down through the woods to the back of the jail, risking their freedom to stand in solidarity with us, you gave us the most liberating feeling. We want you to know, we could hear you, and we believe you: we are not alone. Thank you. We love you, and are grateful to have you by our sides."

Quote from a statement released by prisoners at the Burnside jail in Nova Scotia at the end of a 20 day strike this past fall. Read the full statement at halifaxexaminer.ca