

B A R N O N E

Newsletter of Bar None Prison Rideshare

Summer 2019

Bar None is an abolitionist prisoner solidarity group based out of Treaty 1 territory, on the land of Anishinaabeg (Ojibway), Ininew (Cree), Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. We view our commitment to prison abolition as related to the dismantling of the ongoing occupation and theft of these lands. The Prison Rideshare is an ongoing project of Bar None to connect people with rides to visit their friends and loved ones who are in prison.

Get involved in Bar None

Bar None is completely volunteer run and there are many ways to participate:

- If you need a ride to visit a loved one who is in prison, get in touch with us and we will do our best to find you one. Rides are free of charge.
- If you have a little extra time (occasionally or regularly) to drive and have access to a vehicle, contact us to become a volunteer driver. Drivers are reimbursed for gas.
- If you are interested in helping to coordinate rides, organize the rideshare, or helping out with Bar None's other projects, call or email for more info or just show up to one of our regular meetings. If you already participate in the rideshare as a rider or a driver you are more than welcome to also get involved as an organizer! Regular meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 231 Isabel (the Central Neighbourhoods building) at 6:45pm. Cab fare/bus tickets and snacks are available as is onsite childcare (it's necessary to contact us at least one week ahead of time to arrange for childcare).

Ann Hansen in Winnipeg

Bar None hosted author, abolitionist and activist Ann Hansen at two speaking events this March. Hansen was in Winnipeg to promote her latest book, *Taking the Rap: Women Doing Time for Society's Crimes* (Below the Lines Press, 2018).

Hansen was imprisoned at Kingston, Ontario's infamous Prison for Women as a result of her involvement in Direct Action, a radical group active in the 1980s. *Taking the Rap* shares Hansen's experiences with women's imprisonment in Canada across her more than seven years on the inside and two decades on parole.

Bar None News

Alternatives to Calling the Police Workshops

Bar None has begun holding "alternatives to calling the police" workshops. These are collaborative, discussion based workshops where facilitators and participants brainstorm together how we can respond to every-day scenarios in constructive and caring ways that do not involve the police. We understand that police are often responsible for the violence in our communities and escalate situations unnecessarily. We all have different insights, experiences and tools and together we can come up with less harmful ways of interacting with each other. If you are interested in participating in one of these workshops, get in touch over email or facebook.

Book Sale Fundraiser

On May 25th at Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthews Community Association, Bar None and the Prison Libraries Committee held our annual spring Giant Book and Bake Sale. \$3,030 was raised and split between the two groups to support our work. Thank you to everyone who volunteered and supported us by buying books and baking! See you next year!

At the Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre on March 9 and the University of Winnipeg on March 13, Hansen read excerpts from the book and shared reflections on the context for women's imprisonment in Canada. This context, argues Hansen, is based on intersections of capitalism, colonialism and racism that leave poor, Indigenous and racialized women at greatest risk of imprisonment. As she writes in *Taking the Rap*, "There are many of us who have come to the conclusion that a just and equitable society can never exist within a capitalist framework. And so, we struggle to abolish capitalism and its social control mechanism: prisons."

"If we think about the scale of funding that the police get, from last year to this year the police budget increased by ten million dollars...For \$500,000 a year, the West End 24-hour safe space could operate a safe space that has a social worker, a public health worker, other frontline staff there. There could be 20 of those safe spaces for the amount of money by which we increased the police budget last year."

Bronwyn Dobchuk-Land on CBC's "Up To Speed", March 27, 2019

August 10th is Prisoners Justice Day

Since the one-year anniversary of the day that Eddie Nalon bled to death in segregation at Millhaven Prison in Kingston, Ontario in 1974, Prisoners Justice Day has been recognized each August 10 as a day to remember all those who have died behind bars and in custody. On this day, prisoners fast and refuse work, while supporters on the outside organize vigils and solidarity events in the memory of all those killed by the prison system. Learn more at PrisonJustice.CA

Justice for Chad Williams, Machuar Madut, Sean Thompson, and Randy Cochrane!

Communities are rallying around the loved ones of four people murdered by the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) so far this year. Chad Williams was a 26-year-old Indigenous man, a carpenter, and a beloved brother to nine siblings. He was unarmed when police murdered him on January 11 after “acting suspicious” near Sargent Avenue and Sherbrook Street. Williams’ family, friends, and supporters shut down Sherbrook Street in January and occupied streets in front of City Hall and the WPS HQ in February. Machuar Madut was a 43-year-old Black man, father of four, and much-loved member of the city’s South Sudanese community. He was unarmed when police murdered him on February 23 in his own home on Colony Street near Broadway, after supposedly responding to a call about a break-in. The Council of South Sudanese Communities of Manitoba and Black Space Winnipeg organized a demonstration at WPS HQ in March, demanding that mental health crises be met with healthcare professionals, not bullets. Sean Louis Thompson was a 30-year-old Anishinaabe man, a construction worker, a

father of three, and a caregiver to his mother. He was arrested by WPS officers responding to a call about a break-in on June 26 on Burrows Avenue and murdered shortly thereafter. One hundred family and supporters demonstrated in front of the WPS HQ in July. Randy Cochrane was a 30-year-old father of three from Fisher River Cree Nation. He was chased by the WPS near Flora Avenue and Parr Street because he “appeared to be armed” and died soon after. Organizers of the rallies connected the murders to one big picture: police hunt down and kill Black and Indigenous people with impunity in this country and around the world, and they have to be stopped. The so-called Independent Investigations Unit (IIU) is a group of former cops that stonewalls families and has no real power over the WPS. We can support Williams’, Madut’s, and Thompson’s loved ones by showing up for them at demos this summer and contributing to their fundraisers at <https://ca.gofundme.com/funeral-cost-and-headstone-for-chad-williams> and <https://www.gofundme.com/support-the-madut-family>. Chad Williams’ family asks people to join the Facebook group, “enough is enough from police brutality here in Winnipeg against Indigenous,” to keep up with future actions.



“Prisons and policing are cruel and racist and classist, and really just do a lot of damage overall. We are interested in working on alternatives to that generally, but also in looking at the ways that prisons and policing are harming our own communities right now, and what we can do to try to limit the harm they are causing, until we find alternatives to them entirely.”

Rowan Moyes, Reducing the harms that prisons do while working to abolish them, Talking Radical Radio, April 30, 2019 Full Interview: TalkingRadical.CA/2019/04/30/trr-bar_none_winnipeg/