

Unball

Thanks for Your Absence!

April 2025, marks the eighth anniversary of the famous (or infamous) HFP Unball! As in previous years, supporters of HUMANITY FOR PRISONERS are invited to enjoy a relaxing evening at home. You won't have to buy a dress, dry clean your suit, or do your hair, makeup, or nails. You won't even have to pay for gas or hire a sitter (plus tip!).

Here's the deal. This is a non-event where your money spent on tickets or table sponsorships actually does something. Those dollars enable us to provide critical, ongoing support for more than 11,000 Michigan prisoners!

Due to pesky inflation, we've had to make some slight price increases. Tickets this year are \$125, or two for \$200. Table sponsorships are available for any figure you choose between \$500 and \$100,000. And the good news: all proceeds up to \$25,000 will be matched by an anonymous donor! Mail your generous order to PO Box 687, Grand Haven, MI 49417, or simply go to humanityforprisoners.org.

Prisoners join us in thanking you for your non-presence and for your actual presents!



Scan to donate

Class Action Progress for HFP Clients!

In 2019, three inmates of Michigan's only prison for women filed a class action lawsuit claiming that damp and humid conditions at WHV, along with poor ventilation, produced persistent mold that damaged their health. Krystal Clark and Hope Zentz, clients of HFP, are the named plaintiffs in litigation, along with their friend Paula Bailey, who has now been released.

From the Desk of Doug The Carter Story Like a Bad Penny!



Maurice would be so proud!
(Somehow, I think he is!)
Creating a story was the least of our goals back then. It was simple: a middle-class White man befriending and helping an innocent and indigent

Black man. That situation led to a 10-year battle and a lifetime friendship. Today, I'm pleased to report, interest in the story hasn't waned.

Out of that remarkable experience came my book, SWEET FREEDOM, frayed pages of which are still being circulated by Michigan prisoners.

Then came an amazing stage play, JUSTICE FOR MAURICE HENRY CARTER, written by award-winning Toronto playwrights Donald Molnar and Alicia Payne, and just recently selected by a major Toronto theatre festival for July performances.

Then came a powerful documentary, WRONGED — THE MAURICE CARTER STORY, by award-winning film-maker Nate Roels, recently honored by a screening on April 12 at the Central Michigan International Film Festival.

I encourage you to join with us to keep the Maurice Carter story alive. If you haven't read the book, order a copy! If you haven't seen the drama, consider the possibility! If you haven't yet been moved by our powerful documentary, consider a private showing for your church or club.

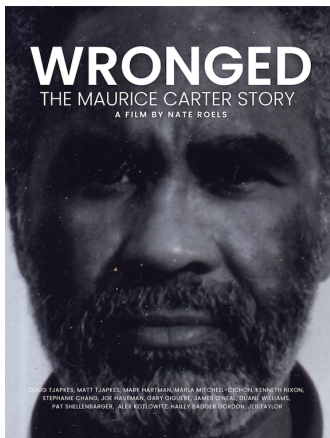
Without question you will get a clearer picture as to how and why I was nudged into forming this amazing organization. SOLE DEO GLORIA!

— Doug Tjapkes, Founder

After it was filed, the MDOC had argued that the suit should be thrown out because the women didn't properly exhaust the grievance process. Paul Egan, veteran reporter for the Detroit Free Press and a frequent writer on state prison issues, reports that, in her 38-page opinion, U.S. Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Stafford blasted the grievance process as one that obstructs, deflects and improperly rejects legitimate and timely complaints! She recommended to US District Judge Stephen Murray that the suit be allowed to proceed. Royal Oak attorney Cary McGehee, who represents our clients, told Egan that this ruling "will have far-ranging ramifications and affect the rights of all prisoners within the MDOC." HFP staffers have long complained about the troublesome grievance process.

Krystal is in bad health and her loved ones are clamoring for an immediate release. Best wishes to our clients and special thanks to Paul Egan for his fine reporting!

Festival Appearances for Maurice!




The HFP office recently received congratulatory messages regarding two outstanding productions that tell the Maurice Carter/ Doug Tjapkes story. Our film *Wronged: The Maurice Carter Story* has been chosen from a field of hundreds for a screening at the 2025

Central Michigan International Film Festival!
CMIFF's five-day event takes place April 9-13 in Mount Pleasant. Our documentary, produced by Nate Roels, will be shown on campus at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 12.

Shortly after that, we received more good news. Renowned theatre festival Toronto Fringe has announced that JUSTICE FOR MAURICE HENRY CARTER has been selected as one of four plays to be featured this summer in the 2025 Next Stage Series! Award-winning playwrights Donald Molnar and Alicia Payne report that there will be seven performances of the Carter drama. It will be staged in July at the Soulpepper Theatre, located in Toronto's Historic Distillery District.

In Memoriam

A color portrait photograph of an older man with white hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue suit jacket, a light-colored shirt, and a patterned tie. He is seated with his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a solid blue color.

HFP extends warm condolences to the family and loved ones of Frederick (Fritz) Kolk. Fritz, age 84 of Lakewood Ranch, Florida, and Grand Rapids, died in February following a home accident. Fritz was a good friend of HFP Founder Doug Tjapkes, and a longtime major supporter of HFP. Fritz and Doug were part of a small group of musicians who formed the male chorus HIS MEN in 1972. Doug proudly led a group of singers at the Kolk memorial service.

Lent: A Time for Fasting

This year, instead of focusing on food or habits, try these suggestions from Pope Francis:

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

