

Lifer's Club of Tennessee Collection

Collection Summary:

Title: Lifer's Club of Tennessee Collection

Summary: Notes, correspondence, reports, and official documents relating to the Lifer's Club of Tennessee, as well as other non-profit organizations for long-term offenders, dating between 1975 and 1990.

Physical Description: 1 linear foot, 2 boxes.

Language: English

Stack Location: MSS-5-6

Repository: Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville & Davidson County, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN, 37219.

Scope and content: Consists of notes, correspondence, reports, and official documents relating to the Lifer's Club of Tennessee, REACT, SCOT, the Seven Steps Foundation, and TOMAT. In addition, the collection contains business, employment, and policy information for Ricks Handyman Services. Correspondence includes the Tennessee Department of Correction, Coalition for Criminal Justice, the Legal Aid Society, Department of Education, and the Metropolitan Government of Nashville-Davidson County. Official documents include charters, constitutions, by-laws, and amendments. Reports consist of records for community service, inmate council meetings, prison transfer, work release, and parolee travel permit.

This small collection gives insight into social issues surrounding former inmates, as well as a unique perspective into the Tennessee prison system during a time when Tennessee's prisons were experiencing major issues with reform, overcrowding, and the implementation of work-release programs. Researchers should also consult Record Group 320, Prison Clippings – News Channel 4.

Biographical/Historical note: The Lifer's Club of Tennessee, Inc. was first established in 1975 by a group of prison inmates, along with some citizens of Davidson County, in order to provide a program for long-term offenders who had been sentenced to twenty years or more in a correctional facility. The predominant goal of the program was to aid long-term offenders in effective transitions back into society after release by building job skills and establishing support systems for its members. In effect, the Lifer's Club sought to provide work and educational/vocational training for offenders, ex-offenders, and potential offenders.

The Lifer's Club of Tennessee was headed by former inmate Jerry Thomas Ricks, and it dissolved in 1989.

Jerry Ricks was born in Mississippi in 1946. In 1967, he was convicted of first degree murder and two counts of robbery with a deadly weapon and sentenced to 85 years in

prison. During his incarceration, he associated himself with and acted as an officer for organizations similar to the Lifer's Club of Tennessee, including Second Chance of Tennessee (SCOT), the Twenty or More Association of Tennessee (TOMAT), Residents Engaging Actively in Changing Themselves (REACT), and the Seven Steps Foundation. Upon his release on parole in 1983, Ricks continued to participate in the Lifer's Club of Tennessee as well as operating Ricks Handyman Services, in which he employed offenders and ex-offenders to provide home repairs for low-income clients. Jerry Ricks died in 2007.

Restrictions:

Restrictions on Access: In library use only. Access is available by appointment during Metro Government Archives' open hours, which can be found at http://www.library.nashville.org/locations/loc_all.asp. Please inquire in advance of visiting Metro Government Archives as items are in closed stacks.

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Administrative Information:

Copyright: Metro Government Archives of Nashville & Davidson County retains intellectual property rights to this collection. Some restrictions may apply.

Provenance: Created by Jerry T. Ricks, found with the Katherine Sparks Collection.

Processing Information: Processed and arranged in 2013 by Kelley Sirko, Archives Assistant.

Detailed Description of the Collection:

Box 1: Business Matters, Correspondence, Official Documents

- **Folder 1:** Business Matters – Contract Agreement, n.d.
- **Folder 2:** Business Matters – Fisk University, n.d.
- **Folder 3:** Business Matters – History of the Lifer's Club, c. 1980s
- **Folder 4:** Business Matters – Meeting Agendas, 1989
- **Folder 5:** Business Matters – Notes, 1983-1987
- **Folder 6:** Business Matters – Proposal and Letter Drafts, n.d.
- **Folder 7:** Business Matters – Ricks Handyman Services, 1984-1990
- **Folder 8:** Correspondence – American Express, n.d.
- **Folder 9:** Correspondence – Cleveland, Eld. G.H., 1987
- **Folder 10:** Correspondence – Coalition for Criminal Justice, 1985?
- **Folder 11:** Correspondence – Coleman, Roxie Elaine, n.d.
- **Folder 12:** Correspondence – Curran, Pat, 1987
- **Folder 13:** Correspondence – Fortune Society, The, 1982

- **Folder 14:** Correspondence – Hall, Helen, 1989-1990
- **Folder 15:** Correspondence – Hardnen, Samardo, 1986
- **Folder 16:** Correspondence – Legal Aid Society, Vanderbilt Law School, 1979-1981
- **Folder 17:** Correspondence – Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, 1987-1989
- **Folder 18:** Correspondence – Middle TN Rehabilitation Center, n.d.
- **Folder 19:** Correspondence – Monroe, Gil, 1980
- **Folder 20:** Correspondence – Myers, Jerry, 1986
- **Folder 21:** Correspondence – Nashville Orthopaedic Associate and Volunteer State Associates, 1987
- **Folder 22:** Correspondence – Norris, Steve, 1986
- **Folder 23:** Correspondence – Sims, Mary, 1979
- **Folder 24:** Correspondence – Tennessee Department of Correction, 1982-1990
- **Folder 25:** Correspondence – Tennessee Department of Education, 1985
- **Folder 26:** Correspondence – Tennessee Department of Personnel, 1988
- **Folder 27:** Correspondence – Tennessee Department of Public Health, 1978
- **Folder 28:** Correspondence – Tyree, Randy, 1979
- **Folder 29:** Correspondence – Unidentified, 1984
- **Folder 30:** Correspondence – U.S. Court of Appeals, 1981
- **Folder 31:** Official Documents – Amendments, 1980
- **Folder 32:** Official Documents – By-Laws, n.d.
- **Folder 33:** Official Documents – Charter, 1976
- **Folder 34:** Official Documents – Constitution, n.d.
- **Folder 35:** Official Documents – Organization Guidelines, c.1980s

Box 2: Policies and Procedures, Printed Materials, Related Organizations, and Reports

- **Folder 1:** Policies and Procedures – Agreement Policy, n.d.
- **Folder 2:** Policies and Procedures – Employee Policies, n.d.
- **Folder 3:** Policies and Procedures – Lifer’s Club Function & Job Descriptions, n.d.
- **Folder 4:** Policies and Procedures – Participant Guidelines, n.d.
- **Folder 5:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Adult Education Programs, 1986
- **Folder 6:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Announcements and Events, 1985-1987
- **Folder 7:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Citizens for Richard Jones, n.d.
- **Folder 8:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – “Jubilee,” 1986
- **Folder 9:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Nashville Urban League, n.d.

- **Folder 10:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Power for Living, n.d.
- **Folder 11:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Project Return, 1987
- **Folder 12:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – Reconciliation Ministries, 1989
- **Folder 13:** Printed Materials – Brochures and Newsletters – TN Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 1987
- **Folder 14:** Printed Materials – Clippings – Erma Bombeck Article, n.d.
- **Folder 15:** Printed Materials – Clippings – Prison System, 1981-1985
- **Folder 16:** Printed Materials – Form Letter – Lifer’s Club of TN, n.d.
- **Folder 17:** Printed Materials – Form Letter – Metropolitan Public Schools, 1983
- **Folder 18:** Printed Materials – Form Letter – Nashville Firefighter’s Association, 1987
- **Folder 19:** Printed Materials – Form Letter – Nashville Record, The, n.d.
- **Folder 20:** Printed Materials – Form Letter – Reconciliation Ministries, 1987
- **Folder 21:** Printed Materials – Forms – Application for Employment, n.d.
- **Folder 22:** Printed Materials – Forms – Employee Time Sheet, n.d.
- **Folder 23:** Printed Materials – Forms – Lifer’s Club Reports, n.d.
- **Folder 24:** Printed Materials – Forms – TDOC Visitation Forms, 1983
- **Folder 25:** Printed Materials – Forms – TN Consolidated Retirement System, n.d.
- **Folder 26:** Printed Materials – Forms – Youth Aid Programs, n.d.
- **Folder 27:** Related Organizations – R.E.A.C.T., 1982-1986
- **Folder 28:** Related Organizations – Second Chance of TN, n.d.
- **Folder 29:** Related Organizations – Seven Steps Foundation, 1978
- **Folder 30:** Related Organizations – T.O.M.A.T., 1981
- **Folder 31:** Reports – Gov. Alexander’s Interim Report on Corrections, 1981
- **Folder 32:** Reports – H.U.D. Monthly Bulletin, 1984
- **Folder 33:** Reports – Inmate Council Meeting, 1982
- **Folder 34:** Reports – Inmate Grievances, Fort Pillow State Farm, n.d.
- **Folder 35:** Reports – Jerry Ricks Community Service Contract, n.d.
- **Folder 36:** Reports – Jerry Ricks Prison Transfer Form, 1978
- **Folder 37:** Reports – Jerry Ricks Work Release Records, 1982
- **Folder 38:** Reports – Jerry Ricks Travel Permit, 1983

Folder 39: Reports – Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 1984