

H A R L A N   R I C H A R D S

March 27, 2017

My First Electronic Message

How long has email been around and available to the public? 25 years? It has now become so pervasive that it is noteworthy when someone doesn't have it. And many people have gone far beyond email to texting, snap chat and so on, that they consider email obsolete. I've never sent an email or text message and never owned a cell phone or a computer. That's because I've been in prison since before those things became part of our technological culture.

I have written a couple of blogs about upcoming email services for Wis. prisoners - first I was optimistic, then I was pessimistic and then had to concede that email was actually on its way. Well, it's here. Kiosks were installed in the housing units a few weeks ago and they were activated on March 13th. I have an account and a bunch of pre-approved people I can email. The major difference between prison email and free world email is that messages cost us 5¢ to send.

I need to order credits on canteen to deposit into an account and every time I send a message I am billed 5¢. People who want to message me must also open up an account and pay 5¢ per message. By the time this blog is posted I will have already sent my first message.

This is a momentous event, something to be recognized, honored and celebrated. As I was writing this, I decided that I would write a poem to send as my first message. Maybe something to show my gratitude and appreciation for having so many people I can message (there are many guys in here who have no one to email). I'll send my poem to everyone on my list as my first message.

Anyone who reads my blogs and wants to message me, send me your name and email address and I'll submit you for approval.

Happy Messaging :)