

## Things I never would have seen, had I not been on MFT - Inside of county jail

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Krispy Kreme donut place open all night, where you can watch the donuts passing along the conveyor belt. Anyway, was out back one night to see if I could fundraise the bakers. I'm by the loading dock with racks of donuts on carts, when out of the shadows zips a young guy, snatches up a tray of Krispy Kremes, and vanishes into the night.

At a small machine shop in another town jumped up on the loading dock to fundraise the machinists. One lanky guy looks around, leaps off the loading dock next to his car. Not wasting one movement, he reaches in the open window, grabs a bottle, takes two swift glugs, caps and replaces bottle and leaps back up onto loading dock. Total elapsed time, seven seconds, maybe less. He'd clearly had a lot of practice. If it was an Olympic event, he'd be a contender.

At the Kenosha AMC auto plant, security was tight, so I was figuring to fundraise to the workers as they were leaving. Young and dumb enough to be standing near the front door when the end of shift bell rang. The door burst open, and a horde of sprinting, frantic men flew out, racing to their cars like it was the Le Mans Grand Prix. My plan to fundraise to them evaporated. It was more like trying to catch speeding bullets.

I met people who lived in a one room shack roofed with tar paper. Their clothes were mounded in the corner and they had a wood stove for heat. They were very gracious and have two dollars for a box of candy to help the church.

I know I'm going to remember more, but I'll finish for now with this: in black areas in small town Tennessee, the yards had nothing growing in them, the houses had peeling paint or bare, weathered boards. But inside, bright new sofas covered in plastic with matching coffee tables and easy chairs stood on deep plush carpets. Tall vases with dried flowers, pictures, curio cabinets. You would never match the insides of these houses to the outsides.

If a child answered the door, I'd explain I was fundraising for my church and ask if their mom or dad were home. They'd close the door for a moment and I'd hear whispered "Momma!"

"Who is it?"

"Issa white man!!!"

I learned that in these areas, the only white people who ever came to the door were the mailman or the insurance collector coming by for the monthly policy payments.

I talked to a lot of very surprised people in those areas.

I'm pretty sure the white people in town thought the black folks' houses were as shabby on the inside as they looked on the outside. Which I suspect was their plan.

What are some things that you never would have seen if you hadn't been on MFT?