OUR RECENT NEWSLETTERS

SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY
Quietly Changing Lives

News Letter

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Someone Cares is a faith ministry, supported by God’s love and your gifts. It is a non-profit corporation; all donations are tax-deductible.

Don & Yvonne McClure
Directors

WAITING TO BE ME:
Locked away from society,
living in a cell
Twenty-two hours a day is
every man's hell.
Expected to be strong and not
shed a tear.
Wondering if love will survive is
but my only fear.
My mind keeps struggling to
keep myself sane,
Hard to do dealing with so
much suffering and pain.
So I'll move myself from
the present and not dwell on the past,
But pray for the future and
hope it will come fast.
Until it does arrive and I can
once again be free,
I'll just be another number,
waiting to be me.

RESPONSE TO "SAY IT AS IT IS":

Writing to prisoners is not like writing to a kind relative. It is more like writing to a POW who forgot which side he was loyal to, or a patient who was so abused and harassed by people in their life that they can't risk trusting anyone. Sometimes hurt people hurt, even those trying to care. Let's be honest for a moment. We have all been demanding to the point of running even our friends off, not to mention strangers. As Don commented, conditions in prison are not what we all know. Most of us will never see the inside of a prison as an inmate. We should then use compassion in our decisions to write inmates or not, and remember that to some of us this may be just a hobby, to others it's a ministry and a long term commitment; but for whatever your reason, our loyalty is to Christ and Him alone.

ALL PEN FRIENDS PLEASE READ LAST PAGE.

We need to share HIS compassion and LOVE. Jesus said that in the Last Day many would call him Lord, but those who did the will of the Father would be known as His children. So let all of us first examine ourselves and remember that to God we are no different than prisoners; nevertheless, God sacrificed his only Son while we were yet sinners.

Mary Smith

NO, NOT MY KID:

We talked about a Hotline for Youth in our last newsletter. We were flooded with letters, calls, E Mail. We live in very troubled times, my friends. Our young people have nowhere to turn. I would like to tell this story again.

A young man, Pastor's son, straight A student, graduated from a Christian school. He was a good kid, made his bed, washed the dishes, mowed the lawn and never got in trouble. Between graduation and college he was invited to a party. When he got there he saw drugs and should have left but did not. He wanted to be part of the crowd. Because he was a Pastor's son, they tried to get him to smoke a joint. They tried again and again. Finally he thought to himself, "Just a puff, what can it hurt?" A puff, no more than two seconds, and his life changed forever. The joint was laced with PCP and he hallucinated, sped off in his car and ran into another, killing three people.

Here we have a good kid like so very many in prison who made a small mistake. He was sentenced to prison. Prior to prison and before his trial he was
gang raped in jail. He did not lose his faith when he was sentenced to prison. He kept up his studies, kept close to God and tried to make good. He was raped again, and this time he was so distraught that he killed himself. Not My Kid? Where do they go but to the LORD.

YVONNE’S CORNER:

What does it mean to you or the person who is given a sentence of Life without the possibilities of parole? When a person gets to be 75 years old what good does it do to keep him in prison? Well, they committed a crime. Should we not have a prison for older inmates? The cost to us as taxpayers is out of this world. Sort of a nursing home for criminals and we all know what they cost. So many young punks are going to prison, and they prey on the older inmates. Yes I said “Young Punks,” which does not sound Christian. Those of you who have written younger inmates know how difficult this can be. The older they get the easier. I told you last year about two older inmates forced to sleep in a laundry room. No one wanted them around because they were feeble.

Many of you live in States with serious crime bills coming up. Think with your Christian heart before you vote. Here in Michigan I worked a year in a prison that had a separate ward for older inmates. We attempted to get them into the Pen Friend Program but most could not write. We were finally able to get Christian inmates to read and write for them, a neat program that died when we left. Louisiana has 457 inmates between 55-59; 200 inmates between 60-64; 92 between 65-69; 35 between 70-74; 13 between 75 and 89.

There was an inmate down South in prison for 55 years. He was released at the age of 76, and threw a brick through a bank window to violate his parole. He had no where to go and no one to go to. They lock them up and throw away the key.

The thinking of politicians needs to be adjusted. Can you help?

IF IT'S NOT BROKE DON'T FIX IT!

The growth of our ministry has been massive. With that growth has come some problems we would like to clear up. Many of you joined through our radio broadcasts, some from the emotion of the show. You requested a Pen Friend and got one, but have never written. If this is the case, send the information back, or a least drop us a note. Many of you wrote direct to the inmate using our return address. You also used a Pen Name instead of your own. We have a pile of letters we have no idea who they go to and the inmate is waiting for an answer. We beg you all to write your inmate, send the letter to us, and inform us of your Pen Name.

We cannot keep track of the rapid movement of some inmates. To get their current address, write the Chaplain of the prison where they were.

Remember, you are writing the inmate, not Someone Cares. Please do not use anything but your name/Pen Name and our address. Leave "Someone Cares" out of the address. Also first names are becoming more important as we are getting a lot of same last names.

A lot of inmates do get into our program to see what they can get. A lot, after friendship is established, do ask for money. This is not a reason for you to stop writing; just say no if you cannot afford it. If they quit, we will match you with another.

From Bobbie: I made the mistake of sending a Money Order for Christmas to my Pen Friend. I had no idea accounting would give him my address but they did and he wrote direct. This is not acceptable.

If you send Money Orders, use our return address, or if you need to, send money to us and we will get the money order for your inmate.

To answer many a question, yes you may write through us when your friend is released. We also suggest writing their family members through us.

Things sent to an inmate that are not allowed are returned to us at the inmate's expense or destroyed if they have no money.

I CAN DO THAT!

Thanks for the chance to write these gentlemen. All three seem to be very interesting people. I had been interested for quite awhile in corresponding with prisoners ever since I saw an article on how lonely they are. The Lord showed me His message in Matthew 25 about visiting prisoners & I knew I could write letters. That's an easy ministry I can do that. But without you I would not have known where to begin.

Betty

How about YOU? POWER OF THE PEN

There is one prison in the United States, only one, that will not allow our Pen Friend Application into the Prison because someone read an article in Ann Landers. We would ask all of you to write the Warden of this prison especially if you are already writing someone there. Write:

The Warden, Parchman Correctional,  
Parchman. MS 38738.

Tell him you are part of Someone Cares and what your experience has been, writing through us. It is a very large prison.

WE CARE, THEY CARE:

I am sorry to write such a devastating letter telling you of the passing of my Dear Friend and Pen Friend, Dorothy Brooks. I feel the pain for Pam & Jennifer, her granddaughters whom she loved so dearly. She really loved her art, always drew butterflies and birds, and shared their history with me. I used to beg her to write warm things she felt as it made me feel better. I feel so blessed to have had her for a friend. She became the grandmother I lost as a child. I will always remember what she taught me and pass it on to others. I shall be looking forward to seeing her face in Heaven.

Willie Banner
WHERE WOULD HE GO?

I again will thank you for my ministry through you. My prisoner was not sure when we started writing whether to become a Muslim or a Christian. Now he has become a strong Bible-believing Christian and it is such a joy to write him. I am so blessed because he has no family or friends on the outside.

Margaret

I'LL GO WHERE HE LEADS:

Enclosed is my pledge for this month. Thanks for all the hard work and sacrifices you make each day for the inmates!! My nephew just got out of prison. He is now a converted and confirmed Christian. He and his wife wish to work for the men and women in prison. His wife, Dawn, ministers by singing and telling her story of abuse and conversion. They have their own CPR business. Please communicate with them letting them know what your Ministry consists of; they may be able to assist. Both are beautiful people who trust the Lord.

Jackie

WORD OF THANKS:

Just a quick note thanking you for the two cases of "Free On The Inside" Bibles. We already have permission to distribute the Bibles to prisoners. As a Chaplain I really appreciate your ministries, both Pen Friend and the Word. If you have any more materials we can use, please let me know.

Chaplain Wyma
Ionia Maximum Security,
Michigan

RULES FOR THE COOL

My Dear Friends, when we match you with an inmate, we do the best we can.

Once the match is made and you write, the responsibility is now on you. If your inmate does not answer after three letters, drop us a line and we will rematch you. If you want to find out about an inmate not answering, write the Chaplain C/O their address and say you were assigned to an inmate in their facility, and is he/she there, and do they wish to write.

Sending money: The only way money can be sent is by money order or cashier's check made to: Trust Account of [inmate's name and number].

Every prison has different rules. If you need to know, write the Warden's office and ask for the policy of that prison. Twenty prisons in one State can have different rules. Two sections of one prison might have different rules. It takes an effort on your part, folks.

FORGIVE ME

Forgive me, Lord,
if I have walked
so fast along the way
that I could not
observe the needs
of folks I passed each day.
Forgive me if my thoughts
have been
concerned with only me,
when others had their burdens,
too,
and griefs I failed to see.
God, slow my pace a bit today
that I may kinder be,
that in my haste I may not fail
another's needs to see.
And let me look
the whole day through
for signs of loneliness,
that I may drop a word, a
smile,
and leave some happiness.

- Josephine Millard

JEAN'S JOTTINGS

A gentle spring rain has washed the earth, daffodils and goldfinches shine brightly against the dark, wet greens of earth and trees. That's the kind of light we can shed inside the concrete dungeons of our Pen Friends.

Willie Banner, the inmate who is mourning the loss of his dear friend, will surely miss the beauty of nature and the Christ-like love she brought him. Her drawings and word pictures may have been the only light besides one bare bulb in his lonely cell.
We can reach out to the children in our neighborhoods to let them know they are loved and prayed for every day. It's easy to forget how lonely those teen years can be, feeling mixed up about who they are, sometimes being forced into someone else's mold when they're coming to terms with who they are. The first poem, Waiting to be Me, is a reminder of those years.

This week has brought to my heart the realization that there are also people outside, imprisoned in sin and grief, walled in by their circumstances and choices. Some are third generation cells occupied by people who don't know God and do not know how to cope. Much as it breaks our hearts to be unable to fix them, we can put them in our Creator's hands, let them know we love them with all our hearts, and that He loves them even more.

It seems the children who are close to God are the special ones Satan works the hardest on. If only he can tempt them for that one moment to do wrong, he can roll on the floor laughing at the boy who took his first drag on a PCP-laced joint and the tragic consequences that followed. Or the girl who is deceived by her boy-friend into an act that changes her life forever.

Our children are taught in school to keep secrets from their parents; to empty their minds and be led by spirit guides; they are taught on TV that there are no consequences for their actions. Kids like themselves romp through cartoons as they wish, not responsible to anyone but their gang, their world peopled by creatures that recreate themselves at will, with names like "Transformers" and "Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers." Who alone can "morph" us from the dust of the earth, made in His image, or "transform" us from a life of sin into a child of the King? Jesus!

Ask any inmates who have met our Lord and learned to walk with Him. The transformation is like a brightly-colored daffodil, or the flash of a yellow goldfinch, after the reign of sin in their lives.

Some say they aren't cut out to be Pen Friends. Some would not give up that calling. There are ball gowns, and blue jeans, and lots of outfits in between. Each is important, Lord to Thee, Who gives us gifts that we might be, Salt and light where e'er we go, That we might serve Thee here below.

Agape,
Don & Yvonne