GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU

We spend a lot of time trying to figure out how to make this ministry better. We spend additional time making sure we are good stewards of your financial gifts. God makes sure we make sure!

Over the years God has brought each of you to us. Our prayer at the end of each year is, “Please keep them with us.” Because of you, Someone Cares.

With this newsletter, or shortly after, will be a receipt for last year’s financial support. Please check this receipt to make sure it is correct. Faith partners, thanks! If each of you who donated last year equals your gift this year, we will keep on growing. We need a few more of you to support this ministry so we can grow even more.

If all of you would write an inmate, the positive results would allow God to take control of prisons. Satan rules them now. We wish we could thank each of you in person, but I am going to give you an example. You can multiply her times a bunch.

For 11 years she has written an inmate. For 11 years (132 months) she has sent $5 a month ($660) and we get the credit for the result. Thanks, Judy. Then there is Virginia. She writes, “I hope this is a very good year for you. Here is $100 to use wherever needed. My three boys are doing very good (her Pen Friends). One will soon be released. I hope you never give up your wonderful work until Jesus comes.”

We will not. I am amazed at the thoughtful things our Pen Friends come up with.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Many of you requested prayer, and we happily answered those requests. Prayer and your support has kept us going and growing. We would like to hear some of the answers to those prayers.

Mary asked us to pray for her son on his way to prison. She was afraid that he would not be able to handle prison life. We prayed and enrolled him in a Bible study and got him a Pen Friend. Mary called at Christmas and told us not only did he adjust, he completely accepted Christ and was totally changed.

Janet called and asked us to pray for her son, George. He had left home and gotten in with some very bad company. Shortly after, we got a letter from him in prison asking for help. He told us...
that his life growing up was neat. He loved his folks and his home life. Watched little TV, worked hard and lived a pretty clean life. He met one of Satan’s henchmen who got him into drugs, which led him to skipping school and stealing even from his folks and grandparents. As his drug habit got bigger, his need for money did, also. He robbed a drug store and got 15 years. Now, again, he watches little TV and his controlled life is pretty clean. He met a man who helped him with his appeal and he was able to win a large cut in his sentence. It was a learning experience for both mom and son.

THEY CALL THEM CLIQUES

We called them gangs. Young people are banding together more and more these days. In most cases it starts just for friendship but leads to mischief, then trouble. In one local High School there were 20 different cliques causing a lot of trouble. We ask, from the bottom of our souls, that parents slow down and smell the roses and teach their kids to do the same.

Scott was a pretty good kid, a very good student who earned a computer of his own. He also learned, by himself, to wander to different places on the Internet; his parents did not take the time to check. He got involved in sex chat rooms that led him into the perversion of unnatural sexual activity. This lifestyle led him to rape and prison. His addiction got him into problems in prison and turned him to homosexual activity. Now he is a he/she. His parents, who spent little time with him, have totally turned their backs on him. But God did not. We got lucky and matched him with a Pen Friend who was a teacher. She, her husband and son, led him to Jesus. He accepted Christ and changed his lifestyle back to normal. A little extra effort and his Pen Friends contacted his parents and now all is well. We cannot spend enough time telling of wasted lives caused by wasted time spent on the wrong things.

Many parents are trying to keep up with the Jones’ (whoever they are), and don’t give quality time to their kids. Kids will find time, quality or not. It all depends on us.

PRISON AS IT IS

We try to cover all the bases, but often miss some important things. Some of the people in prison will never change, no matter what we do. We match everyone who asks, but not all are good.

If your friend asks for more than you are willing or able to give, let us take over and assign you to someone else. If they ask for things you cannot afford, tell them. If they ask and you are not sure, ask us.

Men or women in prison long for the same things free folks want. Often, just because you took time to write, they misunderstand and fall, they think, in love. Always be firm and make them aware this is a friendship ministry.

If they ask for money, most will make a decision based on what you might do. Men and women in prison do not get much, so don’t get angry if they ask, but be open and honest if you cannot provide.

I got a call from a lady who was really upset. “The man you matched me with never answered
any of my letters!” I contacted the prison and found out he was in a facility that did not supply anything. He could not answer. We take a 37-cent stamp for granted; inmates give away meals for a stamp or envelope to write. Pens and pencils don’t just lie around. I will always remember an inmate at San Quentin, who wrote a lot, down to the very stubs of pencils. We are used to a letter written, we get a letter back. They can’t. Although some inmates, who have jobs, write too much, slow them down. Also, please let your friend know they can write when released. This is important.

**The Prison:** Prisons are rated by levels from one to six, six being the worst and one being low custody.

**Administrative Custody, (Ad Seg)** These are special housing units for the protection of inmates, or the worst inmates are put there for more security.

**The Hole** is where an inmate goes for doing something wrong. Going to a Level Six prison means you are bad and go to a special prison.

**Lockdown** is usually done because of something that has happened, or may happen in the prison, such as gang activity, a fight, stabbing or suicide. During this period you are kept in your cell 24/7. You eat there, usually one hot meal and two sack lunches. No shower or yard time.

Usually, Level 4, 5, 6 inmates are housed in single cells, but with the overcrowding, that’s not so now. In lower levels, the inmates are in dorms.

**The Cell:** Most are double-bunked one on top of another; a toilet and sink combination; might have foot lockers; bars or solid doors.

Prisons are either walled or razor wired or both. Gun towers cover the whole area. Higher level cell blocks have gun rails where guards walk to keep control.

At San Quentin, where Yvonne and I spent a long time in “C” Section, this area had five tiers with 50 single-man cells. Across from each set of cells was a gun rail where guards walked all day and night.

**Kite:** A kite is a prison letter from inmate to inmate, or inmate to staff.

**Shank:** A homemade prison knife; most inmates have one.

**Maximum security inmates,** when moved out of a cell for any reason, back up to the door or bars, and are cuffed before leaving the cell.

If you have any questions or input, ask and we will answer.

**THE BELLY OF THE BEAST:**

One reason Someone Cares grew so fast and was so effective is that we spent most of our time either on the yard or in the cell blocks. Chapel is a luxury and to many inmates it is a place they don’t want to go. We have had trained volunteers to hold Bible studies in the Chapel. The fun Bible studies were those we started on the yard and moved to the Chapel. What we did is not
done by many. Let’s spend a day in “C” Section at San Quentin. We would always start at the Chapel, where we had prayer. Then we would both load a case with Bibles, writing material, greeting cards, magazines and such, and take the long walk to the cell block. We entered through two sets of steel doors. Once inside, looking to the left, five tiers high, were the cell blocks with gun rails to the right, across the way.

The stench gets to you almost right away. Yvonne and I would usually stay on the same tier — she pushing her case from cell to cell, after awhile using it as a chair. These were the hardest of the hard core inmates. Yvonne learned early that eye contact was important, as the state of dress was often undressed. The inmate’s cell (called his house, never his home), contained the toilet, often not in working order. The smell of sweat, fear and hate permeated each block.

Once we were well known, the men (with great respect) were dressed and off the toilet. We got the nickname “God Squad” here, and this we called out when we entered so the men could be presentable. We then stopped at each cell, giving out what we could and talking, always trying to have prayer. The blessings we received in the 2-1/2 years we worked in there were massive.

As we got to know staff, we were given a few liberties. In special cases we were able to take a man out of his cell to a special room where we could chat in private. It was in “C” Section where members of the Black Gorilla family (BGF) made Yvonne and I honorary Blacks, a very high honor. Gang members became friends and many, because of our efforts, left the gang for a better way — God’s way. Every inmate there knew we could be trusted. We had told each of them, “What you tell us we will keep, unless it might cause harm to another inmate, a staff member, or the prison.” This was respected. It was also here that the Pen Friend Program got started. I had made arrangements to bring certain materials to inmates on the third tier, so Yvonne went to the fifth tier. After a very long time we met and she told me of a man she had met who had not received a letter in 17 years. She promised him a letter and we arranged for folks to write him. Forgetting we had done that, we went on our way, returning to that area several weeks later. The man had received the letters and shared them with others. All want letters. That started the Pen Friend Program and our marriage with Voice of Prophecy. We have had over one million inmates complete Bible studies as a result of Yvonne saying “I’ll do that for you.”

Now we need all of you not writing to please try being a Pen Friend. Please. Mail call in prison is a terrible time for many; some write to themselves just to hear their names called.

**SOMEONE CARES 2005:**

We are starting off the year with a TV show on Three Angels Broadcast Network the end of this month. Then another broadcast on Voice of Prophecy. The Pen Friend Program, in its upward and outward growth pattern, will grow. So will our expenses. We ask those of you not regular supporters of Someone Cares, to give a donation of $25 to jump start the year.

We intend to spend much time developing the Two Care Program, getting folks to visit inmates being written to by others. Too often we are asked if we can get someone to visit an inmate and we try calling Pastors with no results. We do not want any stone left unturned. We want to get the Video done as soon as possible, and I have a book to finish. If all who donated in 2004 keep on, we will do just fine. In fact, with God In charge, we will do just fine anyway.
WE DO SAY AMEN

Don and Yvonne, the enclosed check for $313.01 is from a group of kids in our area. They wanted to do something for the disaster victims of the terrible storm that killed so many. They got together toys, clothes and anything else they could. The garage sale went well and over $900 was raised.

Quite a bit of stuff was left over, so our kids decided to have a Prison Ministry Sale. One of our kids writes an inmate who feels he is left over. They did not sell much, but a man gave them $200, saying he had been in prison and someone helped him find Jesus and he wanted to help. Neat!!

Our prayers go out to all affected by that terrible storm, leaving so many in a different kind of prison.

But His word says to ask and we shall receive.

YVONNE’S CORNER

Have any of you ever felt like just giving up?? Maybe you feel like you’re just not getting through to the Pen Friends you write, or maybe they don’t answer when you think they should. Never Give Up!!!

Connie, who writes to a lot of inmates, really took a challenge when she said she would write Debbie. Women in prison are difficult, they miss family and sometimes children, but they usually hold it to themselves, knowing that they are not alone. Connie felt convicted to write Debbie, who she received in a round about way. We just received an Email from Connie, and she is going to start Bible studies with Debbie. We Praise God, as before this, Debbie was not really a strong Christian; in fact, she wouldn’t talk to people who would come to her cell to talk about God. Connie, through her kindness and patience, has broken the hard shell that Debbie had put around herself. We will give you a report on this from start to finish, as God put these two together.

Connie, we will all be praying for you as you continue your ministry in writing the inmates. Connie has even recruited people to write also. Keep up the good work, Connie. Won’t it be grand to meet some of these folks in heaven, in whom you have planted that seed, and the seed matured?

Thank you, Chuck Fulmore, for the song you wrote “Never Give Up.”

JEAN’S JOTTINGS

It’s quite a shock to hear one of your grown children admit, via letter from a prison quarantine (entry level processing) unit, that he has not only been using and abusing, but also selling drugs since high school!

Somewhere we missed the class called “Parenting 101: All You Never Wanted To Know About
Drugs.”

Being thrown in jail for not only selling, but making the stuff was not supposed to be part of his culinary education. But I had dared to pray “Lord, whatever it takes to bring my children to You,...” Isaiah 49:25

That is a very, very powerful prayer, not to be sent unless you really mean it with all your heart.

God has a way of getting our attention, with all of His huge heart, for He loves us and our children far more than we can ever imagine. How devastated He must have been when Adam and Eve fell. He has caused a shift in a human child’s behavior on this planet, by sending him to the Bible; to face the reality of his actions not only on himself but on others. His children are affected. His grandchildren will be affected as he counsels them in the future. He can tell them first-hand what it’s like to lose one’s freedom by disobeying God. His sister and mother and their friends have been impacted by his actions. His fiancee has had to postpone wedding plans because of his actions. The ripples have become a tsunami.

Prison ministry has always been a blessing. I’m anxious to see what this “assignment” will bring to my life. Let us pray for each other, as I will for you.

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