JESUS ON THE INTERNET
A simple statement,: “Sure, you can write an inmate via E-mail” opened a big door, and has bought a new wave of Christians to Someone Cares. Also a couple of problems. When you write using E-mail, you must start your letter with the inmate’s name, number and full address. You also must end with your “full” name or Pen Name. We will cut off your E-mail address that appears at the top of the sent page. Also, many write short E-mail messages and thus make short letters. Please --- write a longer letter. We need the above information, as we then snail mail your letter to your inmate, and their letter back to you.

OUR GOD IS REALLY NEAT
Due to the massive increase in exposure, we have spent less time in prisons and too much time at a computer. I have a few pounds to lose!

Speaking at women’s groups and at schools has re-kindled an old idea. We worked for a year at Paso Robles Boys School, a prison for gang youths (see below). We sure wish we still had Mark Retzer with us, as we are taking the plunge again.

Fort Wayne has a Youth Authority with no Chaplain, and no budget for one. “If ever asked to do anything in the name of Jesus (thanks Daryl), say “I’ll be happy to.” Here we go again. Growing up as leader of a street gang has given me the credentials. The Boys’ School gave us a real education dealing with 12-year-olds and up, killers and robbers. We ask for your prayers once more, as we will need help and volunteers. We just got back from an interview and an education. The 100 young men, are a mixture of punks, kids, and dysfunctional family members. They had 3 guitars, but no one to teach guitar. Several of the boys showed us things they had crocheted; now they have a van full of wool but no one to teach the art. The location of this place is near us but far away from their homes, so they get no, or few, visits. We visited 4 of the boys and said “Thank You Jesus.” Ninety percent are in for some kind of substance abuse crime. They have tons of books on 12-step programs, but no one to teach the class. None of the boys we talked to go to church or read the Bible, but they will.

PASO ROBLES BOYS SCHOOL
Way back when, Yvonne thought it would be neat to put on a Christmas party at the School. Remember Templeton Hills? With much prayer and special clearances, we got a crew together.
It was decided to take on the dorm holding the worst of the worst. Local pizza places donated pizzas, church members made tons of food. Under escort we walked in. The boys looked on as we entered, some snickers, but we took control. We started out with prayer, then Christmas Carols. At first some of the young thugs did not want to “play,” but all ended up joining in. We were surprised that most of them knew the words.

Most of these boys were predestined to a life in jail and prison---most on death row. In my mind’s eye I went back to my gang days. Our weapons were bare knuckles, rolled pennies or dimes in our fists, brass knuckles, bats and once in awhile home-made zip guns. Today, these kids are better armed than the police! When we stopped to eat, a young boy of 14 named Tony joined me. He was from the streets of L.A and his goal in life was going to prison, but a prison with a rep and a prison with a name like San Quentin. He did not expect to live very long, as none of his friends had. I asked him one question that made a big change in his thinking.

I asked, "Tony with all your friends how many have visited?"

None!

How many have written?

None!

How many had promised to send cigarettes and money?

All.

How many had kept that promise?

None!

We worked at the school for a year and I spent a lot of time with this young man.

Mark, Yvonne and I had planted a seed that would grow. The Chaplain informed us he finished school and had a total change. We moved on and our paths did not cross.

A year ago I got a call---Yes, from Tony. Tony was released at 18; he’s now 28. He returned home, but not to the gang. He joined a church and went to a city college, working two jobs. He hooked up with Youth For Christ and became a real tool for Jesus. He helped his family move out of California and is going to college to become a pastor. Amen!

WHAT DOES GOD WANT FROM YOU?

Some are called, some are sent; some just got up and went.

Each of us has a job to do for Jesus. Many have no idea what and most do not ask. I laugh, and Yvonne roars with laughter when we think of my conversion. I was on fire but had no idea what I was going to do. Those of you who were with us from the start know how God directed us to HIS calling for me. My Help Mate, my wife, came along for the ride and ended up driving when needed. As a result of this ministry, God called us to 117 men and eleven women who have gone
into full time ministry. Almost a thousand of you have been writing inmates for years, and several thousand have tried and moved on. Almost 40 have started their own Prison Ministries. Amen!

Prayer Partners and supporters are a number counted in Heaven. Each morning I stand at the foot of The Cross and ask Jesus to direct my day. We also ask Him to touch the hearts of all this ministry touches to become some part of this vital work.

GETTING THE NEWSLETTER

We are in the process of going through our mailing list name by name. Some of you have written inmates and stopped. We would love to know why. Some of you have supported and we sure wish you would continue. Some of you, we are not even sure why we are sending the Newsletter, but Praise God, we are. The Newsletter has its purpose but we would like to hear what you would like to hear about. God directs our growth and dedication and we try to be good stewards of all we do for HIM. We often get notes saying, “I just don’t know what God wants me to do.” ASK! He’ll be happy to tell you what He needs of you.

Read the book of James, looking to find yourself, amazed at what you might find. If nothing else pray for us, as the challenges ahead are massive. No, we will not do more than we can handle. I just had a birthday and the number is getting higher, I’m as old as my tongue, and a little older than my teeth. My bride is a little younger.

WHO, WHAT WHY?

My name is George and I’m in prison and have been for a long time. Today I got a letter from Martha, the first letter I’ve gotten in many years. Now, Martha says I filled out an application and sent it to you with an introduction letter from me. Folks, I’m not a Christian, I never filled out an application or wrote a letter. (It seems a guard did). I’m writing you to say I cried for the first time in my life, knowing Someone Cares. I guess someone here in prison felt sorry for me and did this, and I’m thankful.

I was locked up at age 11 for car theft. I have spent a total of 38 years locked up and I will die here. But reading Martha’s caring letter opened pockets in my mind. I’ve been to church, even to the Chapel here. The Chaplain is a drunk and more cop than Minister. Mostly I stay in my cell, once in awhile go out to the yard or to a movie in the Gym. I have an old TV my mom bought me before she died. My life until now has been a waste. I did get a Jail-house education but until now I never cared about tomorrow. I don’t know were this all is going but I am a little excited. Please thank who ever did this for me, and thank you for Someone Cares.

NOWHERE TO GO

My name is Jethro and I’m an inmate serving the last of a twenty-year sentence. I am writing this to see if there is any way you can help me stay in prison. Of my sixty-two years, I have spent most of them in jail or prison, juvenile or adult. I have no friends or family, no job or place to stay. Last time I got out I slept in an old house but could not get a job, so busted a bank
window and came back. [We have some folks visiting him but,

It is such a shame. We spend thousands of dollars to make sure they pay for their crimes (20 years for breaking a window), and not a dime to get them started. Prisons are overcrowded, and the news tells us crime is growing no better.

**PEN FRIEND PROGRAM**

We seem to be growing faster than the National Debt! Folks, there will be times, to save delay, when we will just forward letters to you without them being read. If you have any problems, please contact us at once.

On any mail to us, please put your name and address on the envelope. If you use a Pen Name in writing, put that on envelope to us, plus your real name/Pen name and your address.

It is summer and hot all over. Inmates will ask for things they can’t have, or may be expensive. I just got a call regarding sending a used typewriter. NO!

We told the caller to call the prison and ask if there are typewriters or computers for inmates to use. Every prison has a different policy. Before you send anything (money or item), make sure you understand the policy of the prison. Do not send hardback books!

To shift some of the load off my computer, if you would like to write your Pen Friend by Email, we are making a change. E-mail your letter to Yvonne’s; her E-mail address is ymeavon@aol.com. Start your letter with the inmate’s name and number, and full address, and end it with your full name nd/or Pen name. Your E-address at the top will be removed before forwarding to your inmate, to keep the system secure.

**WE ASK EACH OF YOU TO TAKE ONE MORE PEN FRIEND PLEASE.**

**YVONNE’S CORNER**

Some of you might be asking yourselves, “What in the world are they doing, going to a Juvenile Correctional Facility!” Well, all I can say is that Don and I are both looking forward to going back to those who are so isolated from the outside world.

There is a rule in prison that if you say you are going to do something for them, you’d best do it! They deal with broken promises all the time, but when you follow through on what you say you will do, it gives them hope. We thank each of you who writes for your commitment. Each one of you makes a difference!

**THE INSIDER;**

Many of you know that I write this from prison, so if I miss a month now and then, you will understand. There is an inmate here who is serving a sentence of 50 to 75 years. I have often wondered if he knew God. I often thought of sharing with him, but didn’t. Just recently his Mother passed away. I saw him out on the yard just walking around alone. Being the good Christian that I am, I thought the least I could do was go out and try to console him. I told him I
was sorry about his Mother and he said “Thanks,” but just a few days before his Mother died she had accepted Jesus as her Savior.

Well, now my tongue was stuck to the top of my mouth. I was speechless. I finally asked how that happened. He told me that he had a pen friend that had been writing and how he had accepted Christ. He told me that he had tried to talk to some of the Christians but they didn’t seem to want to talk about the Bible with him. I found out that his pen friend was through Someone Cares (most of you know that I am their son-in-law) so If you send this newsletter to your inmates, maybe they might want to respond, or write about their experience. I am now sharing when I can.

JEAN’S JOTTINGS

HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY, DON! June 8, 2005

So you’re old as your tongue,
Don’t walk with a crutch;
    Well, so am I,
But not quite as much.

You have your own teeth?
    Amazing, my friend,
Mine are much younger,
    And easier to mend.

Yvonne writes her corner
    Each month faithfully;
She brings us God’s insight
    To set inmates free.

As for our Pen Friends,
    Who bring hope and cheer,
They draw those they write to
    Toward Jesus, so dear.

    Thank you for being that
    “Someone who Cares”
Who’s been there for all of us,
    Someone who shares

    From the depths of your heart,
    From the “real” of the streets,
Leading the wayward
    To Dear Jesus’ feet.
    JW

Yes, Don & Yvonne, you teach us well that we meet our inmates “where the rubber meets the road;” where life is real.
If we’d never met, my dear sister and I would never have had the hearts for prison ministry. If a family member had never been falsely convicted (later confirmed by the prosecutor), the ripples would never have made us reach out in understanding to those who needed it.

We’ve been enabled to use that “real” perspective in our ministry, and somehow the inmates know at an instinctive level that they can open up to us. There’s a wonderful, holy energy in the room at the chapel as we struggle to keep up with these avid Bible students. We wouldn’t miss Prison Ministry for anything. We’re wrapped in the warmth of God’s love and blessings after every meeting.

There are many deeper ways that Pen Friends can do a spiritual work with those to whom they write. It takes time to establish the kind of trust shared by true friends. It’s been my experience that you will receive more blessings than you give. A Pen Friend will likely keep you searching the Bible for answers to his or her questions. In the process, you will learn a great deal and thus draw closer to the lovely Jesus.

On another note, all the creatures here have been entertaining me – a great blessing in the morning. On a “down” day, a beautiful bird will land on a branch outside the window, or another will sing around the corner. Recently, a bird with a raspy voice fit for a sore throat commercial, was calling rather urgently about something disturbing. The bird had to be a peacock or a sandhill crane. Two deer, that live up in the orchard on the hill behind the house, had ambled across lots down toward the bird. The brush is rather thick in that area so it must have been that the bird stuck up for its territory and frightened the deer, as there was a loud crashing, and two streaks of copper, like freshly polished kettles, bounded up the hill toward their hangout. Nature is so beautiful.

The recent storm this week did a lot of damage in the area, but the house was kept safe, and the fields were re-charged with nitrogen. They’re greening by the day.

Now that we’re having a humid heat wave, it makes us appreciate the snow more. Did you know that it’s good for you to go outside in your bare feet and walk on the grass? Fact!. Children know this by instinct.

In your church, in your family, in your neighborhood, who do you know who needs a hug, a call, a trip out to the store? Shut-ins are in a “prison” as well.

At our church, we had an evangelist who was fearless in the pulpit – guiding the lost to give their hearts to Jesus. Wow! We thought he’d be the ideal person to relate to our inmates. Oops! We asked him to join us in our ministry, and told him he’d be blessed beyond measure. We were very surprised to learn that he was actually afraid of those “bad people” we call our friends! Just because they’re locked up, they became an even more precious family to us.

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