WE WILL WALK THROUGH THE STORM
Like the rest of the world, we watched a terrible storm do massive damage in the South. Yvonne and I thought of storms past and what God tells us in His word. He has given many warnings to HIS people—mainly go forth before the storm. He tells us to not be like Peter in the storm but to keep our eyes on Him. Our prayers go out for all affected by Katrina, especially those who know not Jesus, and as such don’t have the knowledge to claim HIS promises. Let’s all put our hand in the hand of the man who walked through all our storms for us.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!
Once again, we have had the joy of being featured on the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast around the world. Once more, Yvonne and I met many new friends at the foot of the cross. With God’s abundant blessing, many new friends have joined the God Squad.

A true joy was bringing back to us a few old friends with whom we’d lost touch.

Because of massive over-crowding in prisons and many lock-downs, a whole lot of inmates joined us.

For our friends in Southern California, we will be at VOP on October 4 to tape another program. Getting Yvonne on a plane is becoming a bit hard-er. We both do miss California, and so many of our friends.

IT WORKED FOR YOU
I listened to Yvonne and you, Don, and really prayed. Your life and my boyfriend’s were so much alike. The only difference: you were an atheist and Bob is not.

I called and asked for prayer that Bob could make the choice you did, give in to Jesus, and give up drugs. You told me to have him call you and when he did I was really surprised. When he got off the phone, there was a different look on his face.

He said, “Let’s get down on our knees and pray as Don and I did.” His prayer was to ask Jesus to take away his addiction and accept him as he is. I then prayed, begging Jesus to help Bob.

After we prayed, we went for a walk and on that walk he threw away his drugs. Don said he had no withdrawals; Bob did. We thank God for leading us to VOP and the McClures.
GOD BLESSED ME WITH A FLAT TIRE
A flat tire is not something I think of and have not had for years. When I opened the trunk, the spare was also flat. I called for a tow truck, and while I waited, I turned on my favorite radio station, but got – a Christian Station?!

I listened to a program about leading men and women in prison to Christ. Not me! I’m a pastor, but not me?

Yvonne asked a question: “What have you done for Jesus lately?” Then I remembered one of my church members talking to me about prison ministry. I poured cold water on that idea! Why?

I listened to this couple talk that day, and the rest of the week. No salary? Paid by faith? Twenty years in the black?

My church has debt-problems! So I called the McClures and got an invitation to join the God Squad. What did it mean – Hebrews 13:3? Don reminded me that “Church” meant “called out.”

To do warfare for the Lord I had to get into the trenches. Never learned that in Seminary! Being paid by my denomination, did I meet their quota or God’s? Was my security in my Retirement Fund or laid up in Heaven? As we chatted, Don asked me if I had a drug or alcohol program in my church.

Why, no. For what reason?

He asked me if I would be surprised if he told me at least ten percent or more, of my church had a substance abuse problem.

I guess the lesson learned was, I needed to learn. The world had changed and was changing more. If I was going to lead my church to the other side, I would have to be in the boat!

Yvonne said that so many Christians are cut down by Satan, because their pastors don’t keep them informed.

Taking the advice of the McClures, I am going to attend some AA, NA, and EA meetings. If you don’t know what those initials stand for, join the club. I did not, either, except for AA.

IT ALL DEPENDS ON COMMITMENT
Lately it seems I am spending too much time trying to find out who is not writing and why. Below is part of the answer:

These all come from TV or radio responses.

(a) Mary called and requested a Pen Friend. We sent her one. Mary, a white senior, was matched with a young black inmate. She felt she couldn’t write him! She did not, but also did not send the information back and now has lost it.
(b) Janet requested an inmate and did write. She got no answer. She also forgot to return the information sheet we send. Here are two folks that lost inmate information and forgot to tell us. Two inmates are waiting to hear from someone.

Now, when we match everyone, we are adding inmate information to the computer database. It’s a lot of extra work, but worth it. George, 77 years young, was matched with an inmate serving double life. He never wrote, but sent information back and we rematched both.

WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD
Writing a stranger is hard enough; one in prison is harder. We suggest you start a file on when you wrote, what you wrote about, when they answered. Please remember that in prison today, a piece of paper, a stamp, a pen or pencil may be hard to come by. Often inmates sign up looking for a mate, and when they get a letter from a caring Christian they don’t answer. That’s a “shame on them,” but there is another inmate waiting for a letter from anyone.

Please, if you’re having any problems, be sure to get in touch with us.

LETTERS VIA E-MAIL
Many have chosen this way to write. You E-mail the letter to us. We snail-mail your letter to them and their letter to you. Start your letter with their name, number and address. Sign it with your full name or pen name. If you use a Pen Name, make it a first and last name. We suggest your first name and middle name. E-mail this to Ymeavon@aol.com, Yvonne’s address. She will cut off your E-mail address. Try not to send an attachment, as some are really hard to download. Please remember that each time you do this, it costs us 74 cents and the cost of an envelope. Those of you who are not yet Faith Partners may want to donate to the Someone Cares Mail Fund, or send stamps.

WROTE LETTERS TO MYSELF
Many years ago (21) you wrote about me in a newsletter. My name: Anthony Geralt. I was an inmate at San Quentin, serving life. I got tired of the jeering at mail call, never hearing my name called. So I wrote to myself.

Yvonne fixed me up with a Pen Friend. What a friend Jim and Janet became. They not only wrote, but also visited and we became friends. I got enrolled in several Bible studies and became a Christian. The interest paid by my new friends started an interest in myself. I finished school and took several college courses.

About ten years ago, Janet died. Two years ago, Jim died also. Their kids, Jim Jr. And James filled the void.

I was released in January of this year. Yvonne once told me if I looked down I might find loose change, but looking up I could find treasures untold.

Because Someone Cares, I am free from prison and a child of the King. The enclosed money
order is just part of the thanks I owe you all.

WHAT SAYS THE BIBLE, THE BIBLE TO ME; WORDS OF MEN OFTEN DECEIVE US, WHAT SAYS THE BIBLE TO ME?

YOUR ADDRESS LABEL
When we match a person to write an inmate, we put a “W” on the label.

If a donation was sent, we use a “D” with a number. If the number is below 1000 you donated in the last year.

A “P” means you once wrote, sure wish you would write a new inmate.

As a non-profit organization, we depend on free-will offerings. Gas prices affect our progress, and, we know, affect your giving. Our growth depends on donations—all tax-deductible. A quality used car is greatly needed.

We invite all, especially our new friends, to help a mite. We have put donated videos to use in prison and need lots more.

You can also go to our Web Page and at the bottom, we accept credit card donations in a secure location.

We wish to thank also those of you who have blessed this ministry by including us in your wills. We pray this money is never used and we all end up in Heaven soon.

JEAN’S JOTTINGS
Obeying the visiting, volunteer status, or other rules of behavior at a prison, even when “senility” takes over, is vital to the life span of our ministry there. Case in point:

It was a steamy, sultry summer morning. Check-in was going to be unpleasant because this particular guard was rarely in a good mood.

Shirley and I try our best to “cast no shadow when we walk,” as the inmates say. We have a pet name for this lady, which shall be our secret, and she’d breakfasted on razor wire soup.

The chapel is divided into two areas for two services to be in progress at the same time. The Chaplains’ offices and guard station separates the areas.

It wasn’t long before the guard came in, asking about a car, and it took a bit to realize it was mine! I flew out of the door and off to the main building without checking my “necessities,” like an ID card. So back at the main building, [nameless] was in fine form, and the fact that Stupid [me] hadn’t shut my car windows. Back out the door to retrieve the ID card, which a kind Sgt. of the Guard was bringing to meet me, bless him!

One more round with [nameless] and I was free to take care of shutting the car windows,
locking the doors, back through the check-in process with you-know-who, back across the campus, where our chapel service was closing. God has given me such a wonderful sister! And kind inmates.

We checked out, amid some teasing, and took refuge across town at church then back to second service. By that time, every guard at the facility knew about my fiasco and had great fun as I “ran the (verbal) gauntlet.” It was a lesson well learned, and stated to enough people, let me off the hook the following time we were there.

Bottom line, we’ve been told that all the guards know us by our first names, and like us for not deliberately causing them problems. We try to remain professional and pleasant at all times, even on “bad hair days.” The guard who is so bristly is on our prayer list.

The rest of the Correction Officer staff is generally very pleasant and professional. They see to it we obey the rules, but have the finesse to make us want to do what’s right. Sort of like our relationship to Jesus, who is so kind it makes us want to please Him.

If you’re a new visitor, you might feel intimidated at first, but by watching what goes on when you check in, being pleasant to those in authority, have a spirit of cooperation, they’ll be glad to see you because you lighten their burdens.

You will need your visitor clearance from the state at first, a valid ID (driver’s license or state ID), change for the vending machines in the visiting room. Rules may differ from one facility to another.

Use the restroom before beginning your visit!

Inside the visiting room is a guard’s desk, a seating area, and the food machines. If your visit may cover a “count,” (all inmates are accounted for) be prepared to stay in place for perhaps an hour (more or less).

Ladies, dress modestly, for obvious reasons! If you are visiting a male family member or Pen Friend, you’re there to nurture a friendship with Jesus, not attract the attention of the rest of the room.

I’ll leave Yvonne some room to share her wisdom with us. Don and Yvonne are REAL PEOPLE with a realistic, trustworthy base from which to give very reliable advice.

**YVONNE’S CORNER**

**DO YOU HAVE TIME TO PUT A SMILE ON SOMEONE’S FACE?**

The time has finally come, as I lie here in my cell,

For I have waited all day long, Just to see if I got mail.

It won’t take much time,
I don’t ask that of you. Just write me a line or two.
Is all you have to do.
A few sweet words of comfort, Would really make my day,
And let me know I’m thought of, with each long, passing day.

So put a smile on my face,
As I lay here in my cell.
Let them call my name
When they pass out the mail.

Even though I may not deserve it, I’m told about second chances. It would be neat if one came my way today.

By that act of kindness you could lead someone to Christ. How about it?

BECOME A PEN FRIEND TODAY!

CAMP MEETING 2005
For many years Yvonne and I had a Prison Ministry booth in the Santa Cruz, California Mountains at Soquel Camp Meeting. We often spoke and held many meetings on Prison Ministry. This year we were able to revisit via TV (not the same), but a joy. We were able to see, and would have loved to talk to many friends. It bought back memories of my first visit to a Camp Meeting so very many years ago.

I was not a Christian. In fact, I was an atheist. Yvonne took me, pushing me there with a promise of the beach after. We finally found a place to park and walked onto the campgrounds. No sooner had we arrived, when Yvonne was stopped by many of her friends, preachers’ kids.

During a very long chat I was not interested in, I lit a cigarette. A thousand eyeballs popped my way! What had I done? It was not fun for me, but Yvonne had a ball.

I had taken Yvonne from her lifestyle into the fast track I followed. Had someone said at that time I would someday be a minister working for Jesus, I think I might have belted him or her. But God planted and watered a seed there in Soquel that would soon blossom. It was a lesson I learned that would be used sooner than later. God directed my life, teaching that the purpose of ministry was leading men and women to Christ, not all the do’s and don’ts.

While writing this, I just heard that Peter Jennings died. He was a powerful reporter who had quit smoking twenty years before 9/11, then started again, causing lung cancer.

I pray that next year we can go again to Soquel, have a Veggie burger or two, and talk about Jesus. If you have never been to a Camp Meeting, try it. You’ll like it.

WAS I THAT BAD?
Now a Christian, and a Chaplain with my wife at Soledad Prison, we had the chance to take an inmate, Pat Drug, to Soquel. I spoke and then Pat sang. He not only sang, he sang from the foot of the cross and the bottom of his soul! After his song in the main auditorium there was many an “Amen,” but no one applauded. Pat asked, “Was I that bad?”

We told him, No, folks showed they loved him by Amens.
We next went to the Youth tent where we spoke and Pat sang. This time the Youth almost split the seems of the tent with applause. Pat stayed on cloud nine until he got out of prison.

WHY WE ARE LOSING OUR YOUTH

Our friend Michelle told us she loved it when we said “Don’t give up, give in.” (Thanks for avocados.) When we put our attention on Jesus and His guidelines, we are very safe.

No matter what church you belong to, Jesus should be the center and the Bible its base! Being high on Jesus is neat -- better than the drugs and booze I did so many years ago. With a Jesus high, there’s no hangover, just peace and peace of mind. I learned as I studied God’s word that I did not want to do the things that were not good for me. I have preached at over 500 hundred churches and often, looking out from the pulpit, wondered why were the people here?

The song I Have The Joy, Joy, Joy in my heart doesn’t mean a thing if I have a frown on my face. It’s only expressed with a huge smile that lights up the room.

Repeating a story of long ago, we were invited to a church to speak. I asked the Pastor if it would be O.K. if I dressed down and showed up looking like a bum. He said OK.

Well I showed up and the greeter did not greet me. When I sat down, the folks got up and moved. Then the Pastor introduced his guest speaker and I got up and told them about the joy of caring and sharing, and loving Jesus. There was Joy... Joy down in my heart!

A blast from the past was when I took a pastor friend of mine to a bar to witness! He was uncomfortable, but I was at home. “No, Sam, I don’t drink any more. Why? Because Jesus would not! Once after my conversion, Yvonne and I went to a piano bar I used to practically live in. It was around Christmas. The piano player had not shown up and the owner asked Yvonne to play. She did all Christian songs and they all sang the familiar melodies. Not much booze was sold that night. To God Be The Glory!

NO, NOT MY KID

Again, to repeat a story from long past. A Pastor friend of mine called and asked me to go with him to visit his son in jail! Seems the boy had been invited to a party after High School graduation. He wanted to be like his friends and belong. Peer pressure is so tough these days! Because he was a Pastor’s son, they all pressured him to take a hit on a joint. Simple English: a puff on a marijuana cigarette.

He said no many times but wanted to be accepted. He took just a puff--a second to do. What he did not know was that someone had laced that joint with PCP. His mind was foggy, he got in a car and soon hit another car, killing two people. He was arrested and tried. This straight-A student got a long sentence in a very bad prison.

He was raped in jail while awaiting trail, and again raped in prison. He took his own life. Satan won another victory. We say no to drugs but then what?

Do your children have a TV or Play Station or computer in their rooms? Do you know were they
go on line? What chat rooms they visit? Jesus on the Main Line ... Satan waiting on the computer. You can’t turn on a radio or TV without hearing of sexual predators. Lock them up and throw away the key!

**HATE THE SIN, LOVE THE SINNER**

Friends, we, like all of you, do not like any crime. We really don’t like criminals! Our job is to lead men and women from crime, no matter what, to HIM. Going back again in time:

A man marries a woman with two teenage daughters. A good Christian man, he sets down new rules that are unfamiliar to the girls and disliked.

Mom is happy. She has found a good man, a Christian, a churchgoer, which is viewed as threat by the girls. They make up a story that he molested them, in a state that does not require a physical examination. He is found guilty and sent to prison. In prison, guilty or not, there are no programs for sex offenders. In fact, a real sex offender goes into hiding in prison.

Now this man’s young accusers tell the police they made up the story. Three years later, after a total of five in prison, he is released.

If sexual criminals were separated from general population and put into several well known 12-Step Programs, or Christian programs of any kind, re-offending would drop a lot. Even if it did not work, an attempt to rehabilitate by regeneration would sure help. States that require sex offenders to register cause sex offenders to go elsewhere.

Yes, there should be registration, but also required programs are a must. For the more serious, medical programs should be offered. If not accepted, sentences should then be longer, still with mandatory programs that cannot be done in general population. Also, the only protection for young inmates is the massive gang connections everywhere.

**IT’S NOT BROKE, BUT NEEDS FIXING!**

Someone Cares: Help! I wrote to you for a Pen Friend and was matched with the neatest couple. For the first time in my whole life (39) years I met someone who really cared. After writing for a couple of years, being taught about Jesus, becoming a Christian, the truth killed our friendship and almost me.

I felt, after prayer and much thought, it was safe to tell these friends why I was in prison. I had molested a young girl while on drugs. You, Don, caught the letter and sent a note with my confession. You nor I ever got a letter again. [I wrote the couple and tried to see if I could rekindle the friendship. I finally matched them with some new friends and all is well.] We have about 40 couples that have written for a while and just quit. Same reason? I’ll find out.

A Pastor wrote and said he would write if I could match him with an inmate who had not done anything serious? I’m glad Jesus did not question the crime of the thief on the cross, or better yet, me!

Yvonne and I get discouraged when folks are matched and don’t write, but God gets it handled.
Many times we have gone to churches, not really wanted by some Pastors who do not believe in Prison Ministry. Then we speak and have such a neat acceptance.

Writing convicts is hard, but Jesus never said getting to the other side would be easy, either. But when He said it and we believe it, we will get there. We keep on growing and God provides our needs through so many of you. Sure, it’s tough sometimes, but with God’s Glory, the sheep on a thousand hills are within reach. We don’t need to move a mountain, just have more Mountain Top experiences.

Please join Yvonne and me, and hundreds of others, sharing the experience of directing or helping growth in Jesus. I have the advantage of knowing what prison is really like: lock-downs, gangs and fights, fear you would die, scared you might live. The thing I still remember most is the stench!

I traded in a prison shank (knife) for the sword of the Lord. A question I often ask Jesus: If you needed to use me, why not a comfortable church in Beverly Hills? My wife sure would have liked that. His answer is always the same.

“Before I created the earth, your future was predestined.”

When I reached the road marked HELL, He sent Yvonne to hold my hand and lead me in the right direction. God and Satan fought, as many of you remember. Giving up and giving in was not easy, but it sure is fun. When Don Hawkins died, he said: “I’ll see you and Yvonne under the tree of life.” Amen!

GIVE YOUR PROBLEMS TO GOD. . . . .not your Pen Friend.
Those in prison, no matter how much they deserve it, have enough of their own. The concept of Pen Friend is friendship. A lesson I learned from a wise man was: be Christ-like to bring Christ in.

I can tell a person not to drink, smoke, do drugs watch the wrong things, but sharing the life and ministry of Jesus and the rewards that His life gives, turns the hardest of the hard; it sure turned me.

I once met a man who was at the end of his rope -- looking, I think, for a rope to end his life. I could not make yesterday go away, but I could help make today a little better. In the hands of Jesus, step by step, day by day, the man gains skills to make it through the rest of his life.

Now out of prison, that man has a Street Ministry dealing with those in a life he came from. I told a wise minister once, “You have good breeding, a great education and a solid relationship with Jesus. Don’t go to prison to minister, as there you must get down were they are instead of bringing them up to where you are. Amen.

YVONNE’S CORNER
It is true that Don and I have been through a lot together, and we are total opposites, which is a trip all by itself; I am always cautious and take my time to evaluate different situations, making sure what the risks could be.

Don is just the opposite. If someone new moves into the neighborhood, Don is the first to go introduce himself and welcome them.

We should nick-name him the Welcome Wagon. He never meets a stranger and likes everyone, which I am sure is the way God wants all of us to be.

Yes, God does tell us in His word: Judge not that ye be not judged. If some of you are a little more like me and cautious, and trying to evaluate different situations around you, that is all right. Just remember, God is patient and understands each one of us. Remember, every time we meet someone in the name of Jesus, the heavenly choir sings. Listen.

JEAN’S JOTTINGS
Don and Yvonne never cease to amaze, with their skills. If they hadn’t given me this job, and a real-life situation or two that God gave me, my heart for this type of ministry might never have happened. He taught me to “Give up and give in” years ago. It’s an exciting trip that one day I may be able to share with you. God is a God of surprises, so we should learn to enjoy each one.

The ol’ Pinhead, the devil, loves to find a comfy shoulder to sit on, like the dermatophyte in the toenail commercial, and whisper doubts in our ears. Then we can know it’s time to get out God’s Word, and with some gospel Q-Tips, flick Satan off his perch. Remember the old quartet hymn? *A Little Talk With Jesus Makes It Right.*

The Pastor who said he would write to an inmate as long as he did nothing serious really boggled my mind. In our ministry, Shirley nor I ever ask why they’re there or what they did; only that they come to the chapel and participate in the service. Our “parishoners” amaze us with their knowledge of the Bible, and enjoy singing immensely. They also look forward to the inspirational handouts.

Someone Cares Home Page