HAPPY NEW YEAR

As Christians we know that Happiness is to know the Savior. We also should know that what is past is done, and what we do now is getting closer to HIS return. 2005 was a very interesting year. We had so many Mountaintop experiences, and we have taken a few trips to the Valley.

The Pen Friend Program, a.k.a. Paper Sunshine, grew by almost 33%. From your letters to and fro, over 600 inmates accepted Christ last year. Also 27 of you formed groups going into prisons all over the United States. Thanks to several special year end donations, we ended another year in the black.

AMEN!

THE GLORY ROAD

...which leads to Heaven is paved with the caring love of so many folks that we don't even know, except through the mail. Yvonne and I never dreamt that a day would come when your efforts with us would put Someone Cares into every Prison in The United States. Those of you who have been with us for awhile know we always Plan God's work and work God's plan. We have, with you, placed this ministry on solid rock and there it will stay!

WHAT IS A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION? So many of you have joined us in the last few months through Voice Of Prophecy and Three Angels Broadcasting Network. This ministry is funded by free-will offerings from you.

- We are not, nor have we been, paid by Prison, State, or Church.
  - We do not enter into a venture unless it is paid for.
  - Yvonne and I receive a modest salary.
  - We have a Board that approves all monies spent.
  - We live in a modest, but comfortable home and drive two used cars.
  - One day we will have a honeymoon, or a vacation — one day.
  - We have been blessed with donors who give a bit more that others, and their steadfast giving keeps us going.

The widow's and widower's mites keep us growing. If all of you who donated in 2005 gave the same in 2006 we can begin working on God's plan. If 300 of you who have never donated gave $5.00 a month, we will exceed our 2005 growth.
We ended up with two new computers. Our needs for 2006 are for a quality printer (gently used is ok) and a quality used car. Please, dear friends, remember that all donations are tax deductible. Receipts will be sent with next month's newsletter.

By the time you get this, postage will be up 2 cents. To this Paper Sunshine ministry, that is a lot.

**IF IT’S NOT BROKE, DON'T FIX IT**

We have a problem we cannot seem to get a handle on. We have matched a few folks who wrote their Pen Friend and used a Pen Name, forgetting to tell us what it was. We have several dozen letters we just do not know who they go to, and your inmates are anxiously waiting for them.

Each of you who has written and not received an answer, please write again. Many letters are just addressed to Someone Cares; this should not ever be on a letter to you. If you have a computer, please e-mail us at sdapm@someonecares.org with your name and pen name. If you e-mail your friend, do not use an attachment. Please send inmate letters via e-mail to Yvonne's e-mail: ymeavon@aol.com

Start your letter with your friend’s name & NUMBER, then their address. Thanks.

**PAPER SUNSHINE**

My name is Kathy and I’m in prison. I committed a crime and deserve the time. On the bus to this prison, I was chained to another girl who was as cold as stone. Finally we had a bit of a chat. As we arrived at the prison she said "I’ve been here before and know what to expect, take this (a piece of paper), it will help.

I went through the most humiliating experience, being stripped, deloused and probed. I finally arrived in a cell, the paper put aside. My cellmate, a gang member, tried to recruit me. I said no thanks. I changed my mind, though, for safety in numbers.

After several months with years ahead of me, I took the paper and read it. It was an application for a Pen Friend. My family had deserted me long ago — a friend, a real friend? I sent it in. To hear your name called at mail hand-out is a pure blessing. Not hearing it is torture. My new friend ended up being an elderly lady who was out to give me a lesson in church right now. A note from Don said, slow her down. I had only been to church when a little girl, so knew nothing about what she was saying! I wrote telling her I did not know Jesus, was not any religion, could she be my grandma, never had one. She accepted my offer and we became best friends until she died. But before she died she had arranged for several members of her church to write me. Every time mail call came around, the Sunshine glowed in my cell.

I no longer belong to a gang and have been moved to a medium custody prison, soon to be released. Thanks.

**PAPER SUNSHINE: HOW IT WORKS**
The Pen Friend Program has become the backbone of this ministry. It started when Yvonne visited the cell of an inmate. This man had not received a letter in 17 years. Yvonne made arrangements to get him someone to write, & started this massive ministry. It works like this: the inmate requests a Pen Friend, and we send them a reply with an application. This tells quite a bit about them. They return this with a letter of introduction. These go into a pile.

When someone requests an inmate Pen Friend we put his or her information in another pile. When that name reaches the top, whoever is on top of the other pile is your Pen Friend. We send a packet, which explains some of the suggestions we make. Now it is up to you to either write or return all the info material to us. Some choose to use a Pen Name, but this is not necessary.

1. You write a letter to your inmate.
2. Address the envelope to him or her with their name and number, and their address.
3. The return address for this envelope is your name and our address. This protects you.
4. Affix postage, put this sealed envelope to your inmate in another envelope addressed to us. We take this and re-mail it in Fort Wayne; the only Postmark is ours.
5. Now, if you use a pen name, make it 2 names: your real first name and a middle name or part of last name.

We have a bunch of mail addressed to Someone Cares and a letter to someone, we don’t know who. Many chose to write and forgot to tell us the name they chose to use.

**PROBLEM ONE!** We have tried over the years to ignore racial tension but it often rears its head. We have matched folks of different races, and prejudice has prevented an answer. The following is an example:

“I am very sorry, but I have a problem with my Pen Friend. I grew up in a Black ghetto, raised with racial tension. Never knew my father, not sure my mother did either. I have a letter I received from a very nice lady who will never be able to understand where I came from, and will never understand where she thinks I may go.

(The application we send the inmates does ask if they mind writing anyone who is of another race. They say no, but don't mean it. This is not as much a problem if the inmate is Christian. I said all that to say this: we will try to match you with someone who will be compatible with you.)

**PROBLEM TWO!**

Lack of education is one reason many are in prison. The following Is an example.

“I am writing this for Freddie. He signed up for a Pen Friend and you matched him in a heartbeat. The person who wrote sent a letter even I do not understand: lots of big words. I am going to ask this person to be my friend [they accepted] Please get him someone else.”
We have taken many folks into prison with us. We have trained hundreds of Volunteers. A first in the order of learning is: don't try to bring them to where you are. Try to understand where they are coming from.

IGNORANCE IS BLISS

I'm a certain religion; what faith are you? Any ministry should be about leading others to Jesus, trying to lead them to the cross so Jesus can take over. We all have some faith, and we belong to different churches. Let’s go to God's word. We are told each has a Measure of Faith. Measure is a degree, amount or quantity.

We see in the Centurion of Matthew 8, "A man of Great Faith."

Then we see in Peter — Matthew 14: "A man of Little Faith." Here is one of the best examples, as he took his eyes off Jesus.

In Acts 6 we see Stephen, "A Man Full Of Faith;" In 1st Timothy 1," a Man of Sincere Faith" and later in verses 18,19, "Shipwrecked Faith."

Then, in James, we see Doubting Faith. Here we also see that if our Faith doubts, we receive nothing from the Lord.

These are some of the reasons we say: “Please don't let your doctrine be a barrier, but a bridge to Jesus.”

YVONNE'S CORNER

The start of a New Year, I guess that means something different for each of us. For me, it means reflecting back on the past year, and seeing where there were only two foot prints in the snow, for those of us who don't live in California. It is so reassuring that, as I review my journal, I can see why Jesus was carrying me.

It is so refreshing, when we receive the first snowfall, how beautiful and white and clean everything is. The snow literally glistens when the sun shines on it. I pray that as the New Year starts, each of us will glisten from within so that others may see Jesus in us.

A few years back we were visiting a prison. An inmate walked up to me and said "Are you a Christian? you look like one."

I replied, “And what does a Christian look like?” Now I was curious.

He shuffled his feet and said, "I didn't mean any disrespect by that, you just look like one of those that go to church."

I have to be quite honest with you, I really wanted to have some fun with this, but the time was just not right.

I replied: “Yes, I am a Christian and I do go to church.”
He smiled and said, "I thought so."

What a nice way to meet someone. I look forward to starting a new journal, as it is a great way to keep up with the year and little things that happen each day. If you are a pen friend, it is a great way to keep track of your letters. It is a challenge that God has given us, and a new beginning. May God Bless each of You This New Year!

JEAN’S JOTTINGS

B-r-r-r! Michigan winters aren’t fun; the cats have agreed to disagree, and the dog is the only cheerful one on the ranch, despite all her ailments of old age.

The following poem, author unknown, is a good one to follow Surfeiting Season, and remind us to whom we owe allegiance.

Happy New Year!
On the table side by side
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is well worn but cherished with pride, (Not the Bible, the TV Guide)
One is used daily to help folks decide. No! It isn’t the Bible; it’s the TV Guide.
As the pages are turned, what shall they see? Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV.
Then confusion reigns, they can’t all agree, on what they shall watch on the old TV.
So they open the book in which they confide, (No, not the Bible, the TV Guide.)
The Word of God is seldom read. Maybe a verse as they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be, Not from reading the Bible; from watching TV
So, then, back to the table, side by side, Is the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
No time for prayer, no time for the Word. The plan of salvation is seldom heard.
Forgiveness of sin so full and free, is found in the Bible, not on TV.

Don always has a heart-grabber, doesn’t he? The inmate who was writing for another, who couldn’t do that for himself, got to me.

Somewhere back toward the beginning of this young man’s life, he was cheated out of the education he needed to communicate in this world, or acquire the skills he needed to fill out a job application, or how to dress when looking for work.

And if he’s of another race, he would automatically start at a minimum wage that wouldn’t put quality food on his family’s table so they could have less illness.

I’ve been fortunate, over the past four years, to have a black friend and mentor, who has given me a lot of education. It’s been a two-way street, and we’ve tried to be gentle with the sandpaper we used to polish our understanding of each other’s cultures.

His insights have made it so much easier for my partner Shirley, and me to do our jobs as prison ministry volunteers. Our group currently consists of five black men and one who’s white. When we’re in the Chapel, it doesn’t matter what color any of us is, we’re there to meet with Jesus. Each one is special, and one will be released soon. We’ll miss him, but when he graduates from college, as we hope he will, he’ll be a dynamic speaker, on fire for Jesus. We CAN make a
difference in their lives, by giving them confidence and hope.

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