WHAT A JOY DIVINE:

We again wish to welcome a “whole lot of new folks” to our ministry. Once again, we want to thank Voice Of Prophecy and Three ABN for featuring us and this ministry. Our growth is amazing as God’s Grace. We are going to do a refresher and invitational newsletter. Since the Pen Friend Program has become a huge part of this Ministry let’s chat.

PRISON LETTERS:

I’ve seen a prisoner get a letter,
The first in many months or years.
I’ve even seen them
break down in tears;
So proud someone had written,
And shown they cared.
Sharing that letter with others,
So fragile, so fragile from handling,
Just about to tear.

How long since the last one, or until the next? I do not know for sure, but I do know, God loves that person who took the time to show they cared!

This poem reminds us of the first person we matched, so very many years ago, who had gotten no mail in seventeen years! He then shared the letter with everyone on his run (block of cells). It also brings back a note written by a young girl after attending many Prison Ministry meetings at a Camp Meeting years ago.

If you don’t care how the problems get solved,
You can shake your head later that you never got involved.
The call came ringing from the throne of gold,
But you never got the message ‘cause your mind was on hold.

That girl, then about 13, is now grown, married, with children, and is a big part of this ministry.

A LIVING SERMON:
There isn’t a word that a preacher can say,
   No matter how lovely or true,
Nor is there a prayer that those eager lips pray,
   That can preach such a sermon as you.
You vowed to serve Christ, and men know you did,
They are watching the things, the things that you do:
   There isn’t an action of yours that is hid,
Folks are watching and studying you.
   You say you’re no preacher;
Yes, but you preach, a wonderful sermon each day,
The acts of your life are the things that you teach,
   It’s not the thing that you say.
If Christians are Christians, as they do profess,
   Your lives are for others to view.
You’re a living example, folks praise you or blame,
   And measure all Christians by you.

HOW BIG IS BIG:

So many years ago when God called us to start this ministry, we never could dream how many it would affect. With our start at Soledad in California, we never thought it would someday reach every prison in The United States!

We were taught early on to embrace all ministries and try to unite them in common bond. The union with Voice of Prophecy and then Three ABN keeps the snow ball growing.

Over the last few weeks Yvonne and I have gone through all our paper work to try finding an answer to a real problem. We ask those of you who are new, to really listen.

When we get an E-mail, a phone call, or a letter, asking to be a part of this ministry, we believe it. We match everyone as soon as we can. We also believe that this match is something that is going to happen!

We are so sad to say that of almost two hundred folks we matched, many never wrote the first letter, or were Christian enough to return the information. I took twenty names who had E-mailed us for a Pen Friend. We had kept their original E-Mail so we sent a message, did you get the name are you writing? Only three responded! Of this group seventeen inmates are waiting for a letter, to hear their name called, to no avail. We, of course, will rematch all. Jesus Wept!

Because of an overload, part of the problem was trying to do too much. We send each new Pen Friend a Blue form and ask for it to be returned with the first letter. Many did not. We asked all to inform us if they used a pen name to inform us; many did not. We have a box of mail, all of which we are going to respond to, we don’t know were to send it. One lady sent us her Pen name and then decided she did not like it and changed it without telling us. We now have the pieces put together.

THE GOD SQUAD GROWS.
Our Grandson Jake and his mother are now part of this ministry. We ask your prayer for Jake and Ronna. We will, at the end of this, have the names of unclaimed letters please go through it. If you go through your paper work and see a blue form, send it or E-mail the information it asks for. In fact, everyone with a computer, E-mail us with your name, pen name, and who you are writing. This will give us your e mail address. If you use a pen name make it two names, please.

**BECAUSE HE LIVES:**

God has shown us the way for almost thirty years. HE has led us to the right people every time there was a course to change; One person HE led us to was Chaplain Harry Howard, three-time Chaplain of the year, and a man of God whose ministry was shared by his wife.

This has not made us so joyful: “Your newsletter was so good that I will share it with my Bible Class tonight. You two are Veterans of Prison Ministry plus you have helped many others on the way do the same. It is not easy work but you two have been very faithful. You two are what Campus Crusade call Fat Cat Christians. (F)aithful (A)vailable (T)eachable).

Chaplain Howard at San Quentin and Chaplain Stanley Read at Soledad taught us well.

**HE TOUCHED ME:**

Many years ago I sat in a cell thinking of killing my-self. I was in prison for a crime of molesting a youngster. It was just touching but I did do it. Don, your timing at my cell saved my life. You and Yvonne took the time to share your Love for Jesus with me. Your counseling made me realize that I had committed a sex crime but was not a sex offender, even though I will carry that label for a long time. When you left California, the Pen Friends you fixed me up with kept my faith growing. I was released from prison in 1998.

Because of my crime it was tough, and it should have been. I got a job, met a neat woman and got married. Have 3 step children. An active member of my Church and active in the community. Friday I stayed home, as I was sick. I turned on the TV and there you and Yvonne were. I called and we talked and I again was blessed. Please use the enclosed to help others as you helped me.

**HERE IS HOW YOUR LETTER SHOULD GO:**

First, address an envelope to us with your real name and address in upper left corner.  The second envelope should have the inmate’s name, number, full address and zip. In the upper left of this envelope, put your name or Pen Name and our address. This goes inside on the other envelope to us. “Someone Cares” should not be on the second envelope to us.

**HE WALKED WITH ME  
HE TALKED WITH ME:**

When you write, please keep in mind that the purpose of this ministry is a friendship that will
lead to Jesus. But walk slowly. Many, on their applications, claim to be Christians but don’t know Jesus. Some of you are coming on with guns blazing and scaring your Pen Friend. Let their letter be a guide. Ask questions. Share your interests and ask about theirs. If all they do is ask for things, that is all they are looking for. We will rematch you and take the inmate ourselves.

Many are not very educated; try to assist them. Show you care. We would love to hear of some of your experiences. Some of you mistake the message of the Bible, When it says, “Put on the full armor of God, He is telling us HE will do the battle and the Armor is for our protection.

When a man writes a woman, or visa versa, emotions are affected. If you are around inmates all day, the break away from this makes the mind work in the wrong direction. Stay in control.

If you are not sure, E-mail us or call. If your friend is a sports buff and you are not, asking a friend to help might get someone involved.

**YVONNE’S CORNER:**

The summer months are difficult, as we all try to get some family outings in before school starts back up again, but please remember, your pen friend doesn’t have any place to go and is just waiting for his or her name to be called at mail time.

Please try to keep your letters friendly and find some common ground, I know that isn’t easy to do, but it is necessary as you also want to witness and share Jesus but you must first become their friend and gain their trust. If all of you with computers would E-mail us with your name, Pen name and who you are writing, we may put this puzzle together.

God Bless each and everyone of you!

**HELP US PLEASE:**

David McIntosh writes Becky.
Jonathan Hair writes I Belle,
Ralph Martinez writes Mary Brele,
Charles Killingworth writes Simon Braun
Ken Jones writes Nova Brown
Chris Bunch writes Karen Drake
Billy writes Johanna Durham,
Mark Harris-to Eliz Cleo,
Jason Wayo-to Lee Fuller,
Garrett Williams to Christiana,
Chuck Knight to Pat Guthner,
G Longoria to Carlee Lacob,
M Ortega to Kevin Johnson.
John Leach to Leah Daniels,
C Coverdale to Jean Kelly
Wm Cummings to KIM (we have nine Kims)
Rita Davis.to Kim Ann,
Rick Castilleja to Laurie,
Des Bray Mary Lee,
J Peters to Linda,
John Parrish To Linda,
Terry Moore To Julie Mae.
Oldfield to Marj and two dozen more

Please let us know to whom you are writing; and that the names are spelled correctly,

JEAN’S JOTTINGS:

Don and Yvonne have a grueling schedule, as any-one who works all day on the computer will attest.

It’s also difficult to keep a temperamental machine up and running (they have two). Mine seems to be afflicted with Alzheimer’s lately, hiding files, hiding the “filing cabinet” or where it has stored a file that’s vital to my small part in this newsletter. etc. It reminds me of a magnet on my refrigerator:

I like my bifocals,
My dentures fit me fine;
My hearing aid is perfect,
But, Lord, I miss my mind!

The other one that mocks me says, “Organized people are just too lazy to look for things.”

When my sister and I did prison ministry last weekend, we were running late, torn between “church and state.” We were given peace of mind while we ministered to our inmates.

One of our gentlemen has begun to help with song service, including everyone’s favorites in the choices. It saves us time, and lets him promote the continuity of the service. This inmate has gentle leadership skills.

We had one extra that day, who was standing near a corner, and Shirley recognized him as one of our former inmates. We were delighted to see him as a person, but as an inmate, it was sad that he’d had a parole violation and was back with us. He looked a bit apprehensive, as Shirley had told him when he was released a number of months ago that if he came back, she was going to turn him over her knee.

Since we’re not allowed to touch a prisoner, he had to settle for a scolding. He accepted it in the spirit in which it was given.

God is so good to us; He furnishes inspiration, leads us to choices of handouts to be read back at their unit, and read aloud as we take turns. Skills are improving at each meeting with the help of their trusted peers. It’s difficult for those who grew up among gang wars, anti-social vocabulary, school drop-outs, few job opportunities, plus racial discrimination. Most of us can’t relate to going to bed at night with gunfire all around instead of chirping crickets. Help lead a Pen Friend
to Jesus today.

Someone Cares Home Page