



Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADVENTIST PRISON VOLUNTEER NETWORK

JUNE 2006

Volume 2

"Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

- *Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence.-- Successories*
- *The naked truth is always better than the best-dressed lie. Ann Landers*

IN THIS ISSUE

- **RESTPHILLY - Pennsylvania's Best Kept Secret.**
- **From Suicidal to Salvation!**

FROM ELDER JOHNSON

Hello, *Network Family!* Some classify it as a somewhat "interesting" saying, but time really does "fly" when one is having fun!

Our *Adventist Prison Volunteer Network's* method of facilitating and supporting volunteers Division-Wide was born on June 1, 2005. And Holy Ghost, VIOLÁ! We are now celebrating our First Anniversary, and serving an average of 10,000 persons per month, and beyond 50,000 per month when we link with the *Adventist Review Online Edition.*

We are grateful to Our Lord for the increased ministry capacity He has granted through this vehicle, and we will keep on moving up the road of servicing your ministry needs as you articulate them.

A note of affirmation for faithful service is due here. Where would we be without the gifted, dedicated, and efficient ministry of our Editor, Sister Carol Barron? We all love, value, and appreciate you, Carol!

Extra! Extra! In future issues of *Network News* we will begin to cover **Personal Ministries and Sabbath School Training** and **Encouragement** items, as well. In other words, *Network News* will be the monthly **"One-Stop-Shop"** for a "digest" of resources for the person ministering in these areas of Adult Ministries.

The future looks very encouraging and exciting! May Our God be with us as we move forward with Him. Thank you for all that you are doing in service. Let us hear from you!

MARANATHA!

JAJ II

MEET THE DIRECTORS

Each issue of *Network News* will feature a Local Conference or Union Prison Ministry, Sabbath School, and Personal Ministry Director.

www.restphilly.com – Pennsylvania's Best Kept Secret.

R.E.S.T. (Rational Emotive Spiritual Therapy) a Philly Project is a Faith-based Counseling Program. It's in R.E.S.T., where professionally trained members of churches, synagogues and other houses of worship work as volunteer faith

counselors to men and women in the city's prisons and their children.

"R.E.S.T.", says Dr. Rick McKinney, Founder of the Philly Project, "was founded upon medical and psychological research that suggests that faith interventions are successful, and that medical and psychological interventions work best when the spiritual component is address. The philosophy behind R.E.S.T. is based in Scripture and works on "the belief that any learned behavior can be unlearned"

The University of Pennsylvania did a study which evaluated 16 prominent National faith-based community and ex-prisoner re-entry programs. Upon its conclusion they made the statement, "The Philadelphia R.E.S.T. Program is the national model which shows the greatest promise . . . as a means of reducing recidivism among inmates. Evaluating R.E.S.T.'s impact is one of the brightest lights in the grim world of re-entry."

There's much, much more to write about. Check out Dr. Rick and his other programs, TREATMENT Inc. - Training Thousands to Heal Millions. And stop by the bookstore and preview *The Clinical Jesus*, *The Doctor Who Never Lost a Case*, and *Healing Hurting Sistas*, books authored by Dr. McKinney. His website again: www.restphilly.com, or you can talk to the Dr. Rick at drrick7@comcast.net.

Who'll be next? Directors, Regional Directors, look for your personal call or e-mail from the editor. It's coming!



WHAT'S HOT!

New Plymouth Brings Light to Ontario Prison.

The words of Hebrews 13:3 (NIV), "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering," are being put into action by volunteers from the 40-member

New Plymouth (Idaho) Church.

The New Plymouth volunteers spend each Sabbath afternoon and Wednesday night sharing the message of God's love with the inmates of the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario, Oregon, through in-depth Bible study, prayer and singing. Inmates are welcomed into God's family with kindness and forgiveness.

The church also provides the inmates with a Seminars Unlimited KJV Bible, Daniel and Revelation Seminar materials, *Steps to Christ*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, and the Adult Sabbath School quarterlies, all free of charge. The volunteers only ask that the inmates invite others to the services.

Recently, members of the Forest Grove, Tabernacle and Beaverton churches in the Portland area donated brand new hymnals for the inmates to use.

Thirteen inmates were baptized in October, and now share the Good News of Christ's gift of salvation with other inmates. Though some of those baptized were prior members, most of those baptized are new to the church.

Source: *North Pacific Union Conference Gleaner*, May 2006.

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Q & A

Girls in Gangs. Why Do Girls Join Gangs?

There is a rise, unfortunately, of girls joining gangs. In 1999, Chicago Crime Commission researchers put the estimated number of female gang members in the Chicago area at 16,000 to 20,000. Mostly associates in the established male street gang.

Why Do Girls Join Gangs? Girls join gangs for the same reason most boys do – multiple factors and circumstances that have existed throughout their lives: financial opportunity, identity and status, peer pressure, family dysfunction, and protection. However, some girls readily admit that they join because they are bored and look to gangs for a social life; they are looking for fun and excitement and a means to find parties and to meet boys.

Regrettably for those who naively join expecting harmless social rewards, they may find out too late about the actual violent nature of street gang existence. Still others join simply because gangs are there in the neighborhood and are viewed as an everyday way of life. And perhaps the most disturbing impact of female association with street gang members is that eventually the relationship results in the birth of children – children who then grow up indoctrinated into the gang way of life.

Source: April 2006 *Corrections Today*, by Mars Eghigian and Katherine Kirby.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

"When I first entered cell side – Lockdown and Death Row – I felt nauseated. I felt like going home and not coming back again. It was as though I had entered the valley of the shadow of death." – Prison Minister, Peter Lim, yahron@gmail.com.

"But with a whisper of prayer, I sailed through death row on my first visit to the Arizona State Prison – Eyman Complex. From then on, each week, leaving the prison doors and gates behind me, my heart is filled, bubbling with peace and joy from on high."

Those words were spoken by a man who goes into the bowels of the prison with the ministry "Cell Side," visiting prisoners in Lock Down and Death Row.

Since Peter isn't allowed to take in Bibles, or materials, he walks with three items: (1) a notebook, (2) a slip of paper, and (3) a small Sign Series leaflet.

The notebook is to take down inmates' names, DOC and cell numbers for requests for Bible lessons or a pen pal. The slip of paper to give them advice on where to write for free Bibles. And the leaflet serves as an entering wedge to speak of Christ, His suffering, His love for all mankind, and His soon coming.

More than 100 inmates from both prisons for Amazing Facts lessons. He says, "There's no place to study with them, and not enough time to study. The men get the Bible and Bible Lessons in the mail, study during the week, and when we get there on Sabbath, Bible lessons and Bibles and cheerfully being waved showing them to me. There are also inmates who have confessed their belief that the seventh day is the Sabbath and not Sunday. Praise the Lord!"

Peter said that with so many cells to visit, he practically has no time to preach or give Bible studies to everyone who is interested. He said the inmates are hungry for the Word of God, and many of them want to be prayed with and to pray for their loved ones. They have so many questions they want answered.

Currently, they are working to bring Communion Service to cell side, as there are five inmates requesting this service. But for those in Lockdown and on Death Row, Baptism and Communion may be a long time in coming.

“INMATE SPIRITUAL COUNSELING” CURRICULUM SEGMENTS

“Inmate Spiritual Counseling” with an emphasis on Volunteer Prison Chaplaincy, is the new training curriculum for those who are very serious about updating their Prison Ministry skills. The 46-hour course is offered by the North American Division Academy of Continuing Education, and will be conducted in association with the International Institute of Christian Ministry of the General Conference Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department, which has a direct relationship with Griggs University. Continuing Education Credit is a possibility for college credit in the future.

Curriculum Segment Highlights: Qualifications and Selection Criteria for Chaplaincy. Persons are incarcerated, whether they are guilty or not guilty, justly or unjustly, the bottom line is they are in need of spiritual help and hope, and a Chaplain can be the bearer of this Good News.

Qualifications and Selection Criteria for Chaplaincy will help the student to understand the essential preparatory requirements to engage in Correctional Chaplaincy Ministries.

This Module introduces fundamental concepts and expectations of Chaplains from wardens and local managers of Department of Correction Facilities. The student will be introduced to the minimum standards of correctional hiring that institutions require of Chaplain applicants.

Some of the learning outcomes of **Qualifications and Selection Criteria for Chaplaincy** are:

1. To expose the student to the work and the expectations of Chaplaincy.
2. To gain a knowledge of religious policy and the criteria for Chaplaincy.
3. To gain insight into a culturally diverse community.
4. To be exposed to State and Federal selection criteria for Chaplaincy.
5. To be exposed to preparatory standards for pursuing Chaplaincy.

Each issue of **Network News** will feature a segment from this 17 Module Curriculum. We, at the North American Division Adult Ministries Academy of Continuing Education, encourage our readers to enroll. Call Carol at 301.680.6430 or click on to www.adventsource.org for registration information.

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Heading Home: Offender Reintegration Into the Family. *Vivian L. Gadsden.* Many people assume when offenders return from prison, their life picks up as if nothing has changed. This is far from the truth. The incarceration process affects the offender and their family. How can you best prepare both parties for this reunion? *Heading Home* has the answers. #856-WS6 - \$29.95 – no discount. Order by fax - 301.918.1886. **The Holy Bible.** Great reading! Sixty-six chapters of excitement. Available at most book stores. Prices vary.



HAPPENINGS

Ronald Ellis, editor of *Breaking Shackles*, a newsletter put out by The Little Flock Seventh-day Adventist Church, housed in the Maryland House of Correction, Jessup, Maryland, shares some interesting insights.

Little Flock Calvary Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This congregation is made up of a very special group of men. These men have come together to have their individual and collective needs met through the study of the Word of God. Even in diversity there is a commonality - they love God, and they are members of **Little Flock**, the church which operates wholly on the infallible Word of God.

Philosophy of Little Flock. Ronald Ellis is also the Personal Ministries Coordinator for **Little Flock**. Ellis says, "No church is any better than the needs they serve in their Outreach Ministries." Following the belief of what personal ministries is all about; the **Little Flock** members have made charitable donations to the Adventist Disaster Relief Agency (ADRA) and projects for Hurricane Katrina.

Outreach. 2005 our church facilitated the giving of Thanksgiving Baskets to a small number of inmate families. Our Thanksgiving Basket Project is what we need assistance in expanding. Prayerfully, we want to meet the needs of more inmate families in the Baltimore/Washington Metropolitan area.

MINISTRY BLESSING/SUCCESS STORY

"Do You Think It's Right to Commit Suicide?"

By Peter Lim

I was alone! It was February 2006. I was visiting the Eyman and then the Florence Complex Prisons. I decided to visit cell sides at CB 7. I knocked, the first inmate was asleep. In the next cell, a young inmate was vacillating when I knocked at the door. I gave him a Sign Series Leaflet which said, "Where Is God When We are Suffering?" He brightened up and asked, "Are you a Chaplain?" No, I replied. I'm just a religious volunteer. Is there anything I can do for you?

He looked up and hesitatingly said, "I have a question." Go on, I urged him. He said, "Do you think It's right to commit suicide?" Suicide? Why? I asked. He said, "I have this manic depression that often drives me crazy and I've attempted suicide."

Sensing the urgency of this man's desperation, I raised my voice and said to him, suicide is a sin. When you commit suicide, God cannot save you and you will not have hope of being saved. Life is given by God. It is precious to Him, and no one has the right to take it away, whether it's your own life, or the life of someone else.

Why do you want to commit suicide? I continued. He looked at me and said, "I have this manic depression -- I killed a friend. Now, I have this guilt feeling so I tried to commit suicide."

Quickly I told him that no problem of man is too big for our God that He cannot help. He [God] sent His Son Jesus Christ to come and die for us 2,000 years ago, and whatsoever sin you have, God has the power to forgive through Christ. I asked him if he wanted to be forgiven and experience God's forgiveness. He said he did. We knelt down by the cell door and prayed.

After we prayed for forgiveness and asking Jesus to take over his life and give him peace and rebuke the evil one, the inmate was smiling and joyous. I encouraged him to pray and call on the name of Jesus whenever he felt the cloud of depression coming, and to spend time reading his Bible.

I added, you have all the time in the world, spend it wisely reading this wonder book that will change your destiny. I then enrolled him in Amazing Facts.

He may have received a life sentence from the court, but he's now a lifer for Jesus Christ, preaching about the truth that has set him free.

Peter Lim is based in Arizona. He's a volunteer prison minister. And loves it!

BEST PRACTICE TIPS

Ways Prison Ministry Promotes Church Growth (By Phil Van Auken in *Growing Churches*, 1998)

- 1. Prison Ministry does wonders for revitalizing the spiritual lives of volunteers and churches.** There's nothing like sharing the gospel to open ears; teaching the Word to thirsty minds, and praying for people with broken hearts to "rev up" one's spiritual life and commitment.
- 2. Prison Ministry enhances the church training effort** by preparing volunteers to minister to the unique needs of incarcerated Christians. What is learned about sharing their faith, counseling and doing Bible studies applies to the "free world" as well.

EDITOR'S P.S.

Have you ever wished you could be "everywhere" at the "same time?" At one time or another we all have. It wouldn't surprise me one bit if someone isn't out there right now, trying to figure out how to make being "everywhere" at the "same time" happen.

Although Elder J. Alfred Johnson II, our Adult Ministries Director, would love to be "everywhere" at the "same time" – it's just not humanly possible. But we have good news! Here's where the function of **Network News** comes in.

Network News will become a vehicle not only for those engaged in Prison Ministries, but also for Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. A big "Yes!"

Because of the new spin to **Network News** is taking, Elder Johnson will now be able to be "everywhere" - encourage "everyone" – and all at the "same time!"

To "hear" Elder Johnson and other writers, who will be sharing tidbits on Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, all you will have to do is log on to our website www.nadadultministries.org and pull up and print this great newsletter which will be jammed packed with interesting and exciting helps in these areas. Stick with us! Keep reading! The best is yet to come!

I'm out of here.

CB

Congratulations Are In Order!

The Arizona 3 Angels Prison Ministry was the church-based Prison Ministry to respond to the \$500 grant offered by Network News.

