



# Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADVENTIST PRISON VOLUNTEER NETWORK

MAY 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."*

- *Remove the  
rock from your  
shoe, rather  
than learn to  
limp  
comfortably. –  
Gary M Collins*

- *The real miracle  
of forgiveness is  
to remember  
and still forgive.  
– Len D  
McMillan*

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **A Basket Ball Game and One Sweaty Headband!**
- **Reaping Harvest - 16,000 Baptisms.**

## FROM ELDER JOHNSON

### The "11<sup>th</sup> Commandment" Revisited

**Prison Volunteer Recruiter**, would you like to increase your successful recruiting percentages? Let me kindly suggest the "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment.**"

The "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment**" is an unwritten behavioral injunction that tends to be practiced by inmates of Correctional Institutions.

The "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment**" states: "**Thou Shalt Not Hurt A Free World Visitor.**" Inmates are indoctrinated in the reality that harassment and intimidation are not to be a part of the culture of residents of the "Inside."

This "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment**" tends to be taken very seriously. Note that victims of hostage situations tend to be employees or other officials.

Many active Prison Volunteer Recruiters encounter hesitance and "flat out" turn downs when inviting people to participate in Prison Ministry, even though they are qualified in every other way. BUT, some have one paralyzing hang-up.

**The Paralyzing Hang-up.** There's a tendency to have a concern (and it's understandable) about being LOCKED into a physical atmosphere (rooms, corridors, chapel) with convicted offenders. So they tend to "pass" on the privilege of serving with Our Lord in one of the most powerful ministries possible.

The practice of the "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment**" tends to make the Correctional Institution a place where dedicated Prison Volunteers can function in the Name of Our Lord with reduced fear and have greater focus on a powerful ministry with Jesus.

**Prison Volunteer Recruiter**, you can make the "**11<sup>th</sup> Commandment**" a part of your appeal/recruiting process.

In fact, I ENCOURAGE you to PREACH it, to SHARE it, and you WILL see an increase in Prison Volunteers. God bless you.

MARANATHA!

JAJ II

## MEET THE DIRECTORS

Each issue of *Network News* will feature a Local Conference or Union Prison Ministry Director.

In this issue, you'll meet Jim Wetmore, Carolina Prison Ministries Regional Director, for Western North Carolina.

Jim, no stranger to Prison Ministry, is a very active Prison Minister. Jim says, "You might think I do this full time, but I actually work full time and do prison ministry on the side. I wish it were the other way around."

The Prison Ministry, now called "Carolina Prison Ministries" began way back in the early 70s by Ray Hudson from Hendersonville, North Carolina, when he and his ministry team made weekly visits into the Henderson County Correctional Center, until it closed down about five years ago.

Sometime in the mid 80s, Jim Wetmore was asked to direct the ministry. As time went on, Jim was able to expand the ministry going into Craggy and Buncombe units in the Asheville area. Also ministering in the women's unit at Black Mountain and in the County Jail.

Jim and the Prison Volunteers, give Bible studies, have video presentations, preach, and put on musical programs. Once a year the Drama Team from Mt Pisgah Academy and a 40-member choir put on programs in one of the units.

Wetmore and his team have been instrumental in securing passes for inmates where they are able to attend church services and other church-related programs. The Arden Seventh-day Adventist Church, Jim's home church, has an Annual Prison Ministry Day. That's when guests, and area Chaplains come share vital information to the Prison Volunteers, helping them to know how to successfully interact with the inmates.

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



## WHAT'S HOT!

A Media Center! A Printing Press! An Evangelistic Campaign! Carolyn Bland of United Prison Ministries International writes this What's Hot! Report.

1. **Media Center.** On the campus of United Prison Ministries International (UPMI). For almost two years UPMI has been working to get a Media Center. This was a project done in "faith." We needed to do a lot of programming, so we stepped out on faith and the Lord did the rest. The center was opened on March 21, 2006. We've already started using the studio. It's in a good location. It's debt free! And we're praising the Lord. We're asking the Lord to send experienced people who work in media to help in production. He'll do it. He hasn't fail us yet.
2. **India – February 22, 2006.** A nine-day evangelistic campaign. 6,000 people attending. Four groups covering 50 villages in 4 meeting locations. Out of those meetings 16,000 baptized. Attendance at most meetings – 4,000 to 10,000. One meeting had over 18,000 people. The workers had the people ready for baptism when we got there. It was a "reaping harvest." A gospel worker has been placed in each village to work with the people for three years! Churches will be built in each

village. Praise The Lord!

3. **Bibles – Shoving and Pushing!** The people were so anxious for a Bible they shoved and pushed! Pushed and shoved! We were so touched that we are going to get Bibles and UPMI books printed in India so these dear souls can receive these books and Bibles in their own language.

Carolyn says, "We know the Lord will get this [His work] done, because the time on earth is short. We must, must, must get done what we can do now, now, now!"

Carolyn adds, "We go where the Holy Spirit is "raining" so we can get some of the "rain."

Contact Carolyn Bland at [Carolyn@upmi.org](mailto:Carolyn@upmi.org) to hear more and to get involved.

### **WHAT'S STILL HOT!**

**Programa Radial: Libertad a Los Cautivos #8.** Translation: **Radio Program Deliverance to the Captives #8.**

What an exciting broadcast! WWGB 1030 AM on your radio dial!

Sabbath (Saturday) April 29, 2006, I was a guest, "muy especial, en los estudios." Translation: I was a "very special guest in the studio."

It was such a moving experience for me to sit around the table with Luis Mesa, Luis Fernando and Carlos Gomez (brothers), and listen to these men invite the Holy Spirit to take over every word that would go out of their mouths, into the airwaves, then beamed to homes, prisons, cars, and also into the hearts of those who would be listening to the program – all done in the name of Jesus.

Exciting! Exciting!

Enjoy the interview in this issue with Luis Mesa and Carlos Gomez in **Meet Your Neighbor.**

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## Q & A

### Jails vs. Prisons. What's the Difference? What's the Challenge?

The comparison of jails and prisons should begin with definitions. **Jail** is a place for the confinement of persons in lawful detention. **Prison** is a place where persons convicted are confined. These definitions indicate that **jails** are largely filled with individuals awaiting trial, **prisons**, predominately, are for convicted felons.

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) reported on an average a 1,000-bed jail turns over its beds 36 times in one year, totaling a population of 36,000. Similarly, a 1,000-bed prison, again on an average, only turns over 750 beds annually, totaling a population of 1,750. This gives a clear understanding that jails are often dealing with high volume and far more turnover.

The initial admittance into jail, especially the first 72 hours, is critical. The transition from the street to jail is far more dramatic, and sometimes volatile, in comparison to the transition from jail to prison.

Immediately upon reception of an inmate, jail staff must gather information concerning an arrestee's physical health, mental health, criminal history, previous institutional history, and potential incompatibles (inmates who cannot be housed together, e.g., rival gang members, co-defendants, etc.).

Although the staff in reception areas of jails and prisons deal with similar processes, the emotional and physical health of those admitted into jail, in most cases, are extremely different from those being transferred to prison. The person is generally stable when entering a prison and the intake process can take several weeks.

**Jails and Prisons** should strive to provide as much programming opportunities as possible to reduce the livelihood of a person returning to the institutions.

Source: *February 2006 Corrections Today*. By Daron Hall, Sheriff, Davidson County, Nashville, Tennessee.

### MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to . . . preach deliverance to the captives."* Luke 4:18.

Preaching deliverance to the captives is where the name came from and it's just what Libertad a los Cautivos (Deliverance to the Captives) is doing every Sabbath (Saturday) from 4:00 to 4:30 p.m.

When Carlos Gomez went to Jessup to preach – the first Sabbath in April, Libertad a los Cautivos had already been on the air each Sabbath. He asked the inmates who was listening to the program. Many hands went up. Then he asked for testimonies.

Raul Varela, an inmate, has a "Radio Church" on the inside. He's one of the few that has a good radio. He gathers other inmates who are interested around the radio and together they "go" to church, Sabbath afternoon via the airwaves. Some of the men don't speak Spanish, but they said they are willing to learn so they can listen. They like what they hear. Libertad a los Cautivos is having a powerful impact on the lives of these men, and the community also.

The men love the sermons. The music is excellent. Mesa and Gomez take turns preaching the pure and powerful Word of God each Sabbath, bringing hope to the listeners. Raul Varela's desire is to get the sermons on tape and play them for

the other inmates. Sharing Christ is what he wants to do.

As Mesa and Gomez stated. "With the radio program, we're letting the people of the community know that we love them, God loves them, and we're helping them, through God, to make a change, and a difference in their lives and in the lives of their loved ones who are incarcerated, by providing positive messages of freedom to the soul.

They have a live call-in. People call for prayer. People call asking for help to find a family member. The community is beginning to see there is someone out there who is interested in helping them and their incarcerated loved ones.

Take time to listen to the program – that's in the Maryland, Washington, D.C., area WWGB 1030 AM – 4:00 – 4:30 p.m. each Sabbath (Saturday) Eastern Time. Then get in touch with Luis Mesa or Carlos Gomez, giving them some encouragement at: [flako\\_us@yahoo.com](mailto:flako_us@yahoo.com).

### **"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: Prison Subcultures.** Every prison has its own personality and subculture. Prison subcultures may differ in degrees from one prison to another, but the underlining prevalence of activities and make-up will have a common denominator. Subcultures, being a city within a city, exhibit the same sociological anti-social vices as any other cultural clusters worldwide.

The aim of this Module is to expose the student to the sociological components of the prison community. The student will be exposed to the peculiarities and the impact of social adversity that promote behaviors that are not part of the social norm.

**The Prison Subcultures Curriculum** will help the student:

1. Gain a fundamental knowledge of the intricacies of inmate behavior behind prison bars.
2. To understand the anatomy of a prison subculture.
3. To be able to make the analogy of sub cultural activities and vices behind prison walls to that of mainstreaming culture.
4. To understand the psychological and sociological effects of subcultures on prison inmates.

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](http://www.adventsource.org) for registration information.

### **RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**9 to 5 Beats Ten to Life: How to (Re) Enter Society.** *Mike Davis.* Written for adult offenders. Topics addressed include how to prepare for a job while

incarcerated; where to get career counseling; assessing your interests, talents and personality. Guideline and tips are given for responding to ads, creating your résumé, completing job applications, and interviewing. #558-WS6 – nonmembers \$15.00 – ACA members \$12.00. Order by fax – 301.918.1886. **As Free As An Eagle.** Daniel J. Bayse. **As Free As An Eagle** is an excellent survival guide for inmates and their families. Written in easy-to-understand language. It examines the complex issues and problems families must cope with during incarceration and after release. This self-help guide teaches the offender how to establish productive relationships, develop problem-solving skills, and reenter society upon release. #211-WS6 – nonmembers \$20.00 – ACA members \$16.00. Order by fax – 301.918.1886. **The Holy Bible.** Still holding its own as good reading. Available at all book stores. Prices vary.



## HAPPENINGS

### **Visionary Inmate Project (VIP) or Transforming Lives With Letters (TLWL).**

The **Visionary Inmate Project** or **Transforming Lives With Letters** is a unique prison ministry.

The “norm” in Prison Ministry is for people on the “outside” write to people on the “inside” encouraging them. With **VIP/TLWL** it’s just the opposite.

The methodology of this non-profit foundation, however simple it may sound, was patterned after the demonstration of Jesus relating to the Samaritan – the “Woman at the Well.”

**VIP/TLWL** takes Jesus’ example and asks the inmates a simple question, and a simple favor. “Would you write a letter of encouragement to widows, orphans, and the homeless and terminally ill children?” The inmates’ response? An overwhelming “Yes!”

For two years, **VIP/TLWL** has been piloted at the Coffeewood Correctional Center, near Culpeper, Virginia. Hundreds of letters of encouragement have been written by prisoners to people on the “outside.” Because of this interaction, whenever **VIP/TLWL** goes to a prison and has church services, there’s “standing room only.” Barry Katzer: [barry@vipfoundation.com](mailto:barry@vipfoundation.com).

## **MINISTRY BLESSING/SUCCESS STORY**

Winner On A Losing Team  
By Solomon McCullum

“Sorry,” said a big prisoner from the Indiana State Penitentiary, as he looked at the hair in his hand, hair that had come from my head.

“No problem,” I assured him. It had been a rough game for everyone, but especially for me. I was the small forward on the Andrews University *Cardinals* men’s basketball team, and this particular day we were playing prisoners at the State Pen. The man I was supposed to guard was six-foot-nine and weighed around 250 pounds, while I was six-foot-three and just under 200 pounds.

I took my place at the foul line and the referee passed me the ball. It had been a rough season, too. Andrews is in the beginning stages of building a basketball team and those of us on it had endured some sacrifice. There were always class conflicts and scheduling problems. In addition, we all had to pay for our own uniforms and shoes. Because the program was so new, it lacked organization, and we lost a lot of games that season.

The first shot rattled out and the looks I received from my teammates reaffirmed

that the feeling was mutual. We were all tired of running, and hearts were faint from the losing season. It was almost over, and we were trying to win one more game.

The second shot went in, and we played out the remaining 12 minutes. At the end of the game, one of the prisoners approached me.

"Hey, man, can I have your headband?" he asked. His question startled me because I couldn't imagine anyone wanting a **sweaty headband**. I had never thought to give it away, but he seemed eager to have it.

Each member of the team was wearing a headband with Isaiah 40:31 written on it. The coach had given them to us before the game. Coach enjoys playing games like this because he sees them as a witnessing tool to reach people who don't get to hear about the love of God. Sports evangelism is his specialty. The team hasn't always had the right attitude about sports. Many of the guys used to be so driven to win that nothing else mattered.

Isaiah 40:31 says, "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Lots of prisoners walked away wearing this verse on their foreheads, and carrying a copy of *Happiness Digest*, or one of the other books we brought with us to pass out. As we gave them away, we could see that even though we lost the game, we won their friendship. Their eyes lit up whenever we gave them a book or a headband.

Many times we are focused on winning we don't see what is really important. God does not have winners and losers. He will bless anyone who waits on Him for their strength; sharing that knowledge helps us fulfill His purpose.

*Solomon McCullum is a senior at Andrews University and is majoring in religion and communications. (Reprinted by permission from the Lake Union Herald.)*

## **BEST PRACTICE TIPS**

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

- 1. Prison Ministry breathes new life into church evangelism and outreach programs.** Sometimes doors are shut in your face, invitations rejected, and the same prospect cards are recycled. In prison ministry, spiritually hungry inmates come to the Christian volunteer, often in bountiful numbers.
- 2. Prison work can be a real shot in the arm to your church or small group ministry.** Class members can pray for inmates on a personal level, participate in "Pen Pal" correspondence, pray for and encourage those who actually represent the class behind the walls.

### **EDITOR'S P.S.**

**Prison Ministry is EXCITING!** Every now and then I get "wind" of some ministry that gets my attention. I've got "wind" of Heaven's House of Recovery, a halfway house in Mesa, Arizona. Anyone know any thing about it? E-mail me, if you do. I, too, will do some searching.

The Network still wants to help an active **Church-based Prison Ministry**. The first Prison Ministry to respond to our office by **e-mail**, will receive a \$500 grant.

I'm out of here.

CB



