



Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADVENTIST PRISON VOLUNTEER NETWORK

JULY 1, 2005

Volume 1, Number 1

*"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."*

- There is a better
way for
everything.
Find it. Thomas
Edison*
- If better is
possible, good is
not enough.
Anonymous*
- As long as
you're going to
think anyway,
think big.
Donald Trump*

From Elder Johnson

We are thrilled that you are reading the first issue of *Network News* the monthly eNewsletter of the North American Division Adventist Prison Volunteer Network, voted into existence by the North American Division Committee on June 1, 2005.

The "Network" (as we will refer to it), represents the comprehensive vehicle with which the Adult Ministries Department will serve the Prison Volunteers of our Division, in closer collaboration with the Local and Union Conference Prison Ministry Directors the NAD Prison Chaplains, and our Prison Volunteers.

Network News is the monthly "voice" of the Network, sharing greetings from me, introductions of Prison Volunteers and the ministries they are involved in. We will introduce Local Conference Prison Ministry Directors, training information will be shared, and responses to questions will be offered. We will be interactive. You ask it, and we will do our best to find the answer! We will share information about your upcoming events, and recent events, and more!

Who can be a member of the Network? Anyone who wants to! One does not have to be an active Prison Volunteer to be a part of the Network. One can be willing to pray for the Ministry – that is good enough!

How much are the dues? There are no dues. How can a person join the Network? Send your e-mail address to carol.barron@nad.adventist.org or call it into 301.680.6430. Very soon you will also be able to send that information to our new Adult Ministries Website, www.nadadultministries.org.

That's all for now. My prayer is that *Network News* will be a blessing to you and the Ministry that you serve through, and to you personally.

JAJ II

Meet the Directors

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

Please meet Harry B. Rimer, a multi-talented gentleman who has been serving at his present assignments (yes, assignments) with the Kansas-Nebraska Conference for 16 years. Of the many hats that he wears, one is the Adult Church Ministries Director and Ministerial Secretary and under that comes the responsibilities of Prison Ministries.

Prison Ministry and Elder Rimer are friends having traveled that road together starting in the Chesapeake Conference, at the prison at Jessup, MD, where he and others saw "a fair amount of baptisms" - moving along the Baltimore/Washington corridor where they would average 12-15 baptisms, on to Hagerstown, MD, where Rimer and faithful laypersons worked in five prisons;

down to Birmingham, AL, working with Richard Bland.

Elder Rimer's goals and aspirations for prison ministry are that the work will go forward and spread. Prison Ministry is not like other activities that can be used or participated in sporadically. He believes a person that works in prison ministry has to be dedicated. "One of the reasons why I'm excited about this new NAD Initiative," says Rimer, "is because, I believe Prison Ministries throughout North America need a kick-start. I see this [initiative] as a means where we can step back and have a new initiative that could bring on and bring into the mix new people, new ideas and also give us an opportunity to reevaluate where we are and where we're going."

Who will be next? Directors, look for your personal call from the editor, it's coming!



What's Hot!

The Reformation Prison Ministries of Teaneck, New Jersey, under the leadership of Oswald Goulding.

This ministry is actively involved in conducting the work of pointing prisoners to the only One who can restore them in body, soul, and mind -- Jesus Christ. The testimonies of the inmates at their church services have created new interest and encouragement in the work, especially when inmates register to take prison ministry training to work on the prison ministry team. Inmates take correspondence courses, Twentieth Century, Good News for Today, Amazing Facts. On completion of the course, the inmate graduates and receives Certification of Completion. In fact, Sheriff Gordon Johnson had the honor of awarding the certificates to the graduates. I (Carol Barron) was visiting the Teaneck Church when a former inmate received her certificate from Sheriff Johnson. She is now actively inviting other ex-inmates to attend the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and other churches. Ladies weep over their condition after hearing the Spoken Word and covenant with God not to return to that former life that was destroying them and their families. That's Hot!

Bible Studies is definitely Hot! Weekly Bible studies are conducted at two correctional centers, Bergen County Jail and East Jersey State Prison in Rahway. Enrollment at Rahway began with 8 inmates, but as the studies progressed attendance increased and in two to three weeks 25 male inmates were in regular attendance, while at Bergen County (jail for women) attendance stands at 15 to 20. Many inmates look forward to these meetings and results are exciting. Men and women have given their hearts to Jesus and have testified that "without this ministry they would have lost hope." If an inmate speaks Spanish, an interpreter is provided so they will have a clearer understanding of the Scriptures.

Hats off to Oswald Goulding and the Reformation Prison Ministries Team of Teaneck, New Jersey.

Director: J. Alfred Johnson II

Jalfred.johnson@nad.adventist.org

Editor: Carol Barron

Carol.barron@nad.adventist.org

Consultant: Cleveland Houser

clevelandhouser@bellsouth.net

Published monthly by the North American Division Adventist Prison Volunteer Network.

A Ministry of the Adult Ministries Department to the Prison Volunteers, Conference and Union Directors of the North American Division.

**North American Division
Adult Ministries Prison
Volunteer Network**
12501 Old Columbia Pike,
Silver Spring MD 20904

Phone
301.680.6430

Fax
301.680.6464

E-mail
Carol.barron@nad.adventist.org

We're on the Web!
Nadadultministries.org

Q & A

Is incarceration the best offer for public protection?

The truth of the matter is most inmates in prison are not dangerous. It is increasingly apparent that inhumane treatment, injustice and harassment are deliberately inflicted upon inmates who are unable to fight back. Society has invested millions of dollars over the years in a financial quagmire in an effort to maintain a failed system of prisons. Whenever inmates are confined a feeling of safety abides in the minds of the public knowing that certain offenders will be incapacitated for an extended duration.

However, this period of peace is a transitional peace because it is applicable to designated offenders for designated periods of time. For each passing day offenders are being incarcerated and more hardened and professional criminals are being released. Not all offenders can be incapacitated at one time. Hence, do prisons offer us the best protection?

The answer appears to be a definite "NO" when one views the prison population as a whole.

"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 30-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: Introduction to Volunteer Chaplaincy introduces fundamental concepts and expectations of Chaplains from Wardens and local managers of Department of Correction Facilities, in an everyday setting. This Module exposes the student to the ministry of Chaplains to incarcerated individuals, as well as to the staff, and establishes parameters of service to a culturally diverse community with emphasis on Cultural Pluralism.

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 www.adventsource.org for registration information. Keep reading—until next month!

Resource Recommendations

Prison Ministry Handbook, prepared by the Adult Ministries Department of the North American Division, is a complete guide for Prison Ministry Coordinators and Directors. Helpful information on How to Work with Security, How to Work with Inmates, How to Communicate with Inmates, How to Organize Your Prison Ministry, and so much more. Contact AdventSource, 800-328-0525.

Corrections Today magazine – the official publication of the American Correctional Association – it's like the Who's Who of the Correctional world - is jammed packed with conference information, Legislative Issues, Research Notes, Surveys, Job Bank, Feature Articles such as Reentry – Engaging the Community: An Essential Ingredient to Offender Reentry. Contact ACA at 301.918-1800.



Happenings

American Correctional Association 135th Congress of Correction, August 6-11, 2005 at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland. The NAD Adventist Prison Volunteer Network will be exhibiting at ACA.

Meet Your Neighbor

Want know about some exciting, happening prison ministries? Log on to <http://prisonministry.net/vohpm> and check out the website of **Vision of Hope Prison Ministry**. VOHPM is an outreach ministry of the Parkersburg, WV Seventh-day Adventist Church, providing spiritual guidance to incarcerated men, women and children. Chaplain Clair Luckabaugh is CEO. Go extreme north to Teaneck, NJ and check out the **Reformation Prison Ministry** under the capable and successful leadership of Oswald Goulding. We're talking serious prison ministry here - baptisms, Bible studies, training/certification classes (for former inmates, also). Contact them at 201.837.0165. Pen Friend needed? E-mail Don and Yvonne McClure at **Someone Cares Prison Ministry**: sdapm@someonecares.org. Auturo Talamante is leading the exciting **JAJ Spanish Prison Ministries** based in Moreno Valley, CA.; jahMinistry@aol.com, web: www.JahPrison.com.

Ministry Blessing/Success Story

Lynetta sits quietly at her desk taking care of business - "my little ministry" as she calls it. It all started when a favorite relative of hers was arrested and imprisoned for a failed murder/suicide attempt. This experience changed her thinking about every person who is imprisoned is a hardened criminal. Her cousin was sentenced. His cell mate was a "born again Christian" who prayed for the cousin, encouraged him, inspired him and helped to pull him out of his desperate depression.

Lynetta was able to visit her cousin in jail and while there decided to visit his "cellie" also. The result of that visit was the beginning of a ministry of corresponding and collecting religious books and magazines sending them to inmates.

Fast-forward. The "born again" inmate has not yet been converted to Adventism, though he has stated that he might one day believe in and keep the Sabbath. A couple of years ago, by request, an inmate received some Adventist magazines through Lynetta's correspondence and literature ministry to inmates. After letters of encouragement, the inmate wrote to Lynetta and said, "I am being baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist, and you are partially responsible!"

Best Practice Tips

- When ministering in a jail or prison, obey all the rules and regulations of that particular institution.
- Be dependable.
- Be natural.
- Dress appropriate.
- Don't become involved in transacting personal business for prisoners.
- Don't give or take anything from inmates.

Taken from *Women in Prison: Ministry Handbook*, by Sunny M. Lockwood.