

Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADVENTIST PRISON VOLUNTEER NETWORK

DECEMBER, 2005 Volume 6

"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's a way to

do it better.

Find it. -

Thomas Edison

When your

words and

actions match

people know

they can trust

you.—John

Maxwell

IN THIS ISSUE

- Network News Reaches 50,000 Readers!
- Retired Prison Chaplain Speaks Out.
- Karaoke Singer Takes Her Music On the Inside.

FROM ELDER JOHNSON

It is a pleasure to offer "Year End" and "Season's Greetings" to all of our readers. We send a special welcome to those who have come in contact with the **Network** beginning this month! Our Lord has been "mighty" good to us and we are very grateful.

On the First of June, the **Network** was launched with a vote of the North American Division Committee, and as of this issue of **Network News** there are over 50,000 on our Contact List! We are grateful for this level of spread of the "gospel" of positive support, encouragement and equipping of Prison Volunteers in North America and the world (we are blessed with members in ten nations other than North America).

Now a brief word to continue the emphasis initiated last month regarding maintaining contact with Seventh-day Adventists that we know to be incarcerated. This time I would like to emphasize the importance of assuring family members of the incarcerated that you are also remembering them with your Prayer Support.

I hear you very clearly. This can be a "risky" venture because some are ashamed and sensitive. Yes, some are. However, as we consider the "risk" Our Lord took to show his heartfelt love and support for us, we can do no less than attempt to dilute the weight borne by our brothers and sisters with a kind card, a brief non-invasive call, or an offer to ride along to a visit. Think about it and respond as Jesus directs. Remember, "As ye have done it unto one of the least of these. . . . "

Blessings on you and yours!

JAJ II

MEET THE DIRECTORS

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

Meet our friend Jim Kilmer of the Upper Columbia Conference,

Spokane, Washington. The Adult Ministries Department has worked with Jim Kilmer for quite awhile. He's a pretty neat guy, a man of determination, a man you can count on, a man who's fun to talk with and who handles well his responsibilities as Director of Adult Sabbath School, Personal Ministries, Adventist Community Services, Church Growth, and more. Here's what's on the heart of Elder Kilmer.

More and more people are being imprisoned. Society is devastated by social failures, immorality, and lawlessness. Prison often allows people time to reflect and search for meaning in life. Almost every prison has a large group of individuals who are looking for something better. Often the circumstances that surround the background of prisoners are appalling.

Many Seventh-day Adventist ministers are discovering that a receptive audience of willing Bible students awaits them in prison. Most prison facilities welcome those who would bring Christianity into the prison and prisoners have time to study the Bible. With the study of the Bible, prisoners are motivated to seek a better life. The end result many find Christ for the first time in prison and many former Christians return to Christ in prison.

Elder Kilmer sees halfway houses as one of the great needs in prison ministry to help integrate into society men and women who want to make a change in their lives.

Even though there is no official prison ministries coordinator for the conference, Jim Kilmer has a heart for prison ministry. He believes in getting the best training for the people who are in prison ministry. Many times he has brought in Chaplain Cleveland Houser, our NAD Prison Ministry Consultant, for training purposes.

Jim confesses, "I guess it falls my lot since I have a heart for the lost and for those who are involved in ministry to them." What better reason to support and to get involved in prison ministry. Thanks, Elder Kilmer.

Who'll be next? Directors, be on the look-out for your personal call from the editor, it's coming!



WHAT'S HOT!

Inmates Bottle Jailhouse Hot Sauce!

Brandon, Florida – It can be difficult to add a little spice to your life when you're in jail. But inmates at the Hillsborough County Jail are trying. The inmates had been growing

hot peppers as part of a horticulture program at the jail for about a year when one of them suggested making them into a commercial sauce.

Allen Boatman, the horticulture program's director, agreed and residents of the Falkenburg Road Jail in Brandon are the makers of Jailhouse Fire Hot Sauce. Mr. Boatman and his students spent two years perfecting the recipe, a hybrid of a Caribbean-style hot sauce

and a mustard sauce that includes habaneros, scotch bonnets and jalapenos.

A 5-ounce bottle sells for \$3.25. The revenue goes back to the Inmate Canteen Fund and to Culinary and Horticulture Programs for inmates.

Prison Food May Lead to Weight Gain! - Salt Lake City, Utah. Men at the Utah State Prison gain an extra 34 pounds, on average, after a year behind bars. Inmates get a 3,000-calorie diet and exercise little, while the Food and Drug Administration recommends 2,000-calorie diets for active people.

Warden Clint Friel doesn't want to change the prison menu, saying, "Cutting back on food, sweets and snacks, could incite a costly riot".

(The Washington Times, November 15, 2005.)

Touch of Love Prison Ministries was founded 18 years ago (this coming January 2006) by Elder Michael Ashley. **Touch of Love** has teams serving all the major men's and women's prisons in California, and some in Arizona. They also have teams serving the L.A. County Jail System.

Touch of Love provides excellent training for all volunteers. Every volunteer must be fully trained before they can go into any facility. They are looking soon to have a halfway house.

James Wieck is the leader of the team at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lancaster, CA. In his e-mail to me, James told me that they provide services twice a month at the "Challenger Memorial Youth Camp in Lancaster. The ages are 12 to 18. Most of the kids come from gangs, and are serving time for crimes ranging from drugs to theft to murder. Some of them will transfer to an adult facility when they reach the age of 18.

The kids come to the church services of their own free will. On any given Sunday there may be from 2 to 50. The camp has six dorms with 500 kids total. All the camps are kept separate from each other due to gang affiliations. There's only one camp that has girls. These camps are run military style.

On the first Sunday of each month the format is a regular worship service with live music, Scripture, prayer and a sermon. On the third Sunday of each month we do a group Bible study in place of the sermon. We feel we are in a unique position to be messengers for Christ at a point in these kids lives when they need Him most.

James Wieck can be contacted at jwieck@rbbinc.com if you want to know more about their exciting work at **Touch of Love Prison**Ministries.

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Q & A

How important is the Chaplain to the Prison Ministry Volunteer?

Very, very important! The Chaplain is the liaison between the Volunteer, Prison Administrators, and Security. The Chaplain will assist you in your needs, questions and inquiries relative to providing service for the inmates.

Whenever discrepancies arise between the Volunteer and Security, do not become involved in any heated discussions with Security. Discuss your concerns with the Chaplain. He will institute initiatives to bring about resolutions to the problem/s under discussion.

The Chaplain will assist you with special programs, services, distribution of literature and other humanitarian services that you would like to provide for the inmates.

What steps should be taken if you have a problem with the Chaplain?

If you have a problem with the Chaplain, always try to resolve the problem with him/her before proceeding further. If the problem is not resolved with him/her at the lowest level, proceed to the Chaplain's Supervisor. If no favorable resolution occurs, then proceed to the Warden, the Commissioner of Corrections, and then to the Governor of the State, respectively.

However, remember that if the preceding action occurs, most Chaplains are going to be looking for a way to terminate your service as a Volunteer and perhaps the whole Volunteer Program.

It is recommended that you seek to establish the best possible working relations with each institutional Chaplain, and pray that the Holy Spirit will remove all stumbling blocks so that the work of God will proceed as it is outlined in His providence.

Source: Prison Ministries Handbook, publisher, AdventSource.

VOLUNTEERS

The year 1988 will always stand out in the memory of Dorothy Bennett, Prison Ministry Leader in the Raleigh Seventh-day Adventist Church, Memphis, Tennessee. That was 1988 when Dorothy was invited by a prison minister, who at that time was holding services in the West Tennessee facility, to "come along and sing for the service." Accepting the invitation, Dorothy gathered her Karaoke and music and off to the prison she had business – singing and sharing the love of Jesus. "Along the way," she says, "we parted company, and it all fell to my charge." Dorothy says she's not a preacher, but "I share things from the Bible and use my voice."

Twice a month, for the past three years, Dorothy and her team of volunteers have been going to the Hardeman County Correctional Facility. The volunteers have put together a format of joyful singing, good preaching, and lively discussions. When a minister isn't available to come and preach, Volunteer Victoria Russell will lead out in a discussion with the men from the book *Purpose Driven Life*. (Copies are given to each inmate, courtesy of Prison Ministry.) On alternate weeks they use the Next Millennium Seminar series by Dwight Nelson, and the Search for Certainty Bible study, by Mark Finley.

The Sabbath School Lesson is one of the highlights for the inmates. It's taught by a volunteer who has been doing prison ministry for about 10-15 years – a

seasoned prison minister and speaker by the name of Roscoe Howard Sr. Prison Minister Howard's son is the Secretary for the North American Division, Roscoe J. Howard III.

Not everyone feels comfortable going on the "inside" but there's a lot that can be done for the inmates from the "outside." Dorothy has her "behind the scenes ladies." These are the ladies who grade the Amazing Facts Bible lessons received from the inmates and mail them back. These "behind the scenes ladies" are the Pen Friends to some of the inmates, bringing a ray of sunshine and hope into a not too sunny environment. During one visit an inmate said to Dorothy, "I wish everyone in your church could be a pen pal name." We do too!

As Dorothy stated, "On a body there are eyes, hands, feet, legs and other parts all functioning to make it work – we, prison ministers, need to function just as the body does - together." Our hats are off to Dorothy Bennett and her team of Volunteers. Be encouraged. Dorothy would be tickled to hear from you. She's at dbennett1937@hotmail.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: Introduction to Volunteer Chaplaincy. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary cites various connotations for the word Chaplain. It's French, Chapelain, it's a noun, and it's a derivative of the word chapel. According to Webster a Chaplain is a clergyman (or woman) in charge of a chapel; a person chosen to conduct religious exercises; a clergyman (or woman) officially attached to an institution. Well, Introduction to Volunteer Chaplaincy, will take you a few steps further into what it is to be and work as a Chapelain.

First, the course will introduce the fundamental concepts and expectations of Chaplains from Wardens and local managers of Department of Correction Facilities, all the while exposing the student to the ministry of Chaplains to incarcerated individuals, as well as to the staff.

Second, this Module exposes the student to the fundamental expectations of Chaplains who are called to be servants to an ostracized community. The student will gain insight into religious programming and the range of service that Chaplains provide to inmates and staff.

Third, standards and ethics for correctional Chaplains will be examined along with looking at the cultural and pluralism in the correctional community.

Fourth, the student will be exposed to the uniqueness of Chaplaincy Ministries.

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.

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 Communication with Inmates, How to Organize Your Prison Ministry, and so much more. Contact AdventSource, 800-328-0525. Study of Gangs and Security Threat Groups in America's Adult Prisons and Jails. As anyone in corrections can attest, the gang population in the nation's facilities is at an all-time high. These groups bring an array of security concerns to correctional administrators. The National Major Gang Task Force completed a survey to examine the population of gang members in jails and prisons and what methods are used to supervise these individuals. This resource will provide you with a better understanding of just who these individuals are and how you can best manage them. Order by phone 1.800.222.5646, ext. 1860 - \$12.00 - #944-SF5. The Holy Bible – available at all book stores. Prices vary. Boot Camps in Corrections Video. This highly informative video explains what boot camps are and who is eligible for them, and the goals of such programs. Staff, cadets and graduates discuss the methods boot camps use to ensure success during and after the program. Order by Fax - 301.918.1886 - \$69.95 - #289-SF5. Dictionary of Criminal Justice Terms. This essential reference provides short, informative definitions for more than 1,300 criminal justice terms. Practitioners, students and those just starting out in corrections will gain a better understanding of the situations, conflicts and individuals they face. Order Online - www.aca.org - \$12.00 - non members - \$9.60 - ACA members - #207-SF5.



HAPPENINGS

Boot Camp. Karthaus, Pennsylvania. It's lunchtime at Quehanna Boot Camp. One inmate in the food line grabs two napkins and places them on his tray. The Sergeant in charge "jumps" all over him.

"How many napkins are you supposed to steal? He demands. "One," the startled inmate replies. "You're not

supposed to steal any. You're entitled to retrieve one."

Quehanna Boot Camp operates in a desolate section of Clearfield County. Some 3,300 prisoners, ranging from ages 16 to 35 have "graduated" from the boot camp since its inception. As a group, they have committed fewer crimes and been reincarcerated less often than other parolees.

One requirement of boot camp is that high school dropouts must study a full load of academic courses to try to obtain a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). One-third of the 235 inmates now in the boot camp did not graduate from high school. They spend six hours a day in a classroom, studying algebra and geometry, grammar and composition. White shirts and black neckties are their prison uniform when they are in class. Each time they speak, they must address their teachers and everybody else as "sir" or "ma'am."

The inmates must rise at 5:15 a.m., each day. Marching, exercise, work details and counseling sessions fill their day. At 9:30 p.m., the lights go out!

About 75 percent who go through the academic program at boot camp pass the equivalency test and are paroled with a diploma. Eighty-six percent of those who

start boot camp complete it. The rest cannot handle the school work, the orders or the in-your-face style of the correctional officers. Those inmates opt for prison where their sentences are longer, but they can sleep in, and classes may run an hour a day instead of six.

Steve, 25, a heroin dealer from North Philadelphia, said the hardest part of being incarcerated was adjusting to his "teammates," some of whom were skilled at taunting. Steve is less than two months away from completing boot camp. Married and the father of four, he said he intended to make an honest living in the Philadelphia suburbs when he is freed.

(Source: Post-gazette.com.)

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

He's an ordained minister of the gospel. In his 41 years of denominational work, he was a school principal, an evangelist, and an administrator at the Headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Then he retired! But retirement didn't last too long. In 1996 he became a Chaplain at the Avon Park Correctional Institution, a maximum security facility housing 1,300 inmates. This is where the once "retired" Elder, came out of retirement and became Chaplain Russell Bates for nine years.

As Chaplain, Bates' duties were many and varied - from arranging programs, church services, counseling, baptisms, performing marriages to bringing about reconciliations. New challenge met him every day. Just planning the religious services had its challenges. For example, in the Jewish Community, with its various holidays and services, the Chaplain had to make sure that the amenities and materials and refreshments were in place in order for the services to be carried out properly. Along with making sure time and space to carry out their religious services were worked out. Jews, Muslims, Methodists, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, you name the religious group, Chaplain Bates was their Chaplain.

There were times when it was hard and difficult even for the Chaplain. When the loud speaker would blare out "Inmate _____ report to the Chaplain," the inmate knew that something terrible had happened and it was Bates' duty to tell him. Sometime it was the news of a loved one being shot on the street and died. Someone had to be there for the inmate – it fell to the Chaplain.

Or the joys that come from receiving a letter from an inmate saying, "Chaplain, this is the first time I've known what it's like to have a 'father figure.' You were a father to me." Or to sit by an inmate's bed to encourage him, or go to where they work, or just to 'hang in there' with them.

Chaplain Bates said he learned many lessons from the men he 'pastored.' "I learned to accept the men where they were, and to bring them to where I thought they ought to be. And if the men had any particular expertise that they wanted to share, I would arrange for them to have a service so they could be heard. Listening is a very important component in being a Chaplain."

Because of their crime, an inmate's family will reject him. "When I would see that the inmate had made a change, I would write to the family and encourage them to come and visit him and see for themselves the change in their family member."

One mother told the Chaplain she was afraid of her son and didn't ever want to see him again. Chaplain Bates encouraged her to come and see her son. Come and see the 'change' in him. She came. When she saw her son, she knew

immediately he was a changed person. What a reunion!

It is really Retired Chaplain Russell Bates? Now that Chaplain Bates is truly, retired, he refers to his wife Marion of 55 years as his "new wife" and his new role as a "stay-at-home" hubby; they spend time together, chatting, taking walks [through the malls] and falling in love all over again. Taking life at a more leisurely fashion. No more deadlines to meet. Chaplain stays busy in church, teaching Sabbath School class, Bible studies. More time to spend with God and in studying His Word.

The Chaplain talks about being debt free in retirement. He counsels people to be prepared for this time in life. Retirement should be the time in your life when it should be as stress free as possible. No bills to stress you out. He says that you should be in a position where your money management begins to work for you now -- at retirement. There should be a level of contentment that you ought to be experiencing at this juncture in your retired life.

I asked Chaplain Bates if he **really** enjoyed working as a Prison Chaplain. Boy! I could hear (and almost see) the laughter and excitement in his voice, coming through the telephone, as he gave me a resounding "Oh, I did. I really did. In fact, one day I told the Warden, I should pay you for this job. Of all the jobs I've ever had, this one was the most enjoyable."

"Now that I'm in retirement" Bates continues, "I jokingly say, retirement should not be this joyful. I should call 911."

With 41 years of denominational service, plus nine years spent ministering to inmates, I can see why II Timothy 4:7 is so meaningful to Chaplain Russell Bates, and why retirement is so sweet. Through it all he truly has fought a good fight, and he has finished his course, and he's kept the faith.

Continue to enjoy your retirement, Chaplain. Readers, if you want to talk to this "stress-free" retired prison chaplain, he'll be glad to hear from you, and will answer you when he returns from his stroll in the mall with his wife. Reach him at rbatesb@peoplepc.com.

MINISTRY BLESSING/SUCCESS STORY

When the Warden at San Quentin Prison turned down Yvonne and Don McClure's request to start a letter writing ministry in his prison, Yvonne's bold question to his refusal was, "Do you know who my Boss is?" The Warden, assuming it was the two of them, said, "You and your husband work together." Yvonne responded, "No. My Boss is God! Now, if you don't let us start this program, we're going to 'sic' Him on you." The Warden looked at them, thought for a quick minute, and said, "Okay!" We smile, but it worked. That was 1978. But let me back up the story which led to Yvonne's bold statement about her Lord, and how the Pen Friend Program coming into existence.

It was a very soggy day in San Quentin Prison. Don and Yvonne McClure (Someone Cares Prison Ministry, also known as the Advent God Squad) – were doing cell ministry in San Quentin's infamous C-Section. Don says that C-Section is administrative segregation where 250 of the worst convicts, coming from all over, are held. It's five tiers high with 50 cells to a tier. It was at C-Section that my "wife and I got separated from each other." Yvonne was on a higher tier than Don. They "found" each other, and on their way home that day, it was then that Yvonne said to Don, "I made a promise to an inmate that I would get someone to write to him." This promise was made to an inmate who had been locked up over 17 years with most of the time spent in C-Section.

Don sort of cast it off. Arriving home he made a couple of phone calls, got a couple of people to commit to write to this inmate and promptly forgot about it. "We had done what Yvonne had promised." It wasn't until a couple of weeks later when they went back to San Quentin and C-Section, where this inmate lived. He excitedly showed the McClures the letters he had received and told them how he had shared them with everybody on his 'run.' (Run meaning the 50 cells on his tier.)

After the inmates saw the letters they too wanted a pen pal. That's when the McClures decided to start a letter writing ministry. They asked the Warden, got a "no", and that's when Yvonne spoke up boldly saying, she would "sic her Boss on the Warden". The Warden quickly gave his "okay" to the program. Pen Friend Program had its beginning.

The following year Don and Yvonne were invited to the Media Center (at that time located in Thousand Oaks, CA, now in Simi Valley) where they made a Prison Ministry presentation. After the presentation they were invited to speak at the Bible School (the time when the Voice of Prophecy, Breath of Life, and It is Written were under the same roof). It was there that the McClures discovered that although many Bible lessons were being sent out, only a few responses were received.

The Bible School and the McClures put their heads together and came up with a doable suggestion. For every Bible lesson sent to an inmate, include a Pen Friend Application. It worked. Each time an inmate asked for a Bible lesson they were also enrolled in the Pen Friend Program. Someone Cares did the same thing for the Bible School. Each time an inmate applied for a Pen Friend, they were enrolled in the Bible School. A marriage was formed between the two ministries.

With this "marriage" came several miracles—the biggest being Someone Cares Prison Ministry now has over one million inmates who have **completed** – note the key word here - **completed** a Seventh-day Adventist Bible study of some kind—be it from It Is Written, Voice Of Prophecy or Breath Of Life.

Don says, "We received a letter about five or six years ago, from an inmate saying, 'Don, I want to thank you guys so much for what your ministry has done for me. I signed up for a pen pal, got **not** what I wanted, but what I was **supposed** to have. You matched me with a Grandma on the East Coast and a seventh grade class on the West Coast. I got my first ever Christmas cards – 28 of them. I got my first ever Birthday cards – 27 of them – someone forgot, and between the Grandma and the kids, I met my new Friend, Jesus!" The inmate continues, "Today, Don, I got a letter that I've been expecting for a long time. It was my signed Death Warrant. (The inmate was on death row in Louisiana.) Don't cry (they did) – thanks to Someone Cares, a Grandma and a bunch of kids, the next thing I'll see will be Jesus."

One More Pen Friend Success Story – Don says about eight years ago he received a phone call from a Seventh-day Adventist pastor's wife. She wanted to thank him "a whole lot" because when he and Yvonne had spoken at her husband's church; she signed up for the Pen Friend Program. In her own words she says, "The end result was, having been a Seventh-day Adventist since 'the womb' and married 25 years, the inmates you matched me with led me to Jesus."

The Pen Friend Program is totally risk free. Don explains how it works. The people we match to an inmate send their letter to us - Someone Cares, and after we read the letter, we forward it to the inmate. The inmate's response letter comes back to us - Someone Cares - and we read it to see that there are no

manipulation, no sexual overtones, and to make sure everything is straight.

We have young people writing to child molesters – leading them to Christ. With the parents' permission, young people in academies, Sabbath school classes, and youth groups – groups where everybody is responsible for everybody else, sign up. We just matched a Sabbath school class – a youth group with 14 kids – writing to seven inmates -- all with their parent's permission. Everybody knows what's going on – it's called safety.

We have kept track of 50 men through the Pen Friend Program who have accepted Christ. Of the 50 men only seven returned to sex crimes.

Readers, you can start experiencing what these two people have been enjoying, for the past 27 years, along with others of the Advent God Squad, the joy of writing letters to inmates who would otherwise, never receive any mail, the joy of making someone happy, and joining in with heaven's excitement and praise in seeing souls turn their lives over to Jesus.

The McClures believe in and know that the Pen Friend Program is God's program. If you want to start a Pen Friend Program in your home, church, youth group, school, wherever, the easiest way to start it is to contact Don and Yvonne at sdapm@someoncares.org, or write to them at Someone Cares Prison Ministry, P. O. Box 15338, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46885.

BEST PRACTICE TIPS

Words of Wisdom from Retired Prison Chaplain Russell Bates.

- Recognize whatever the inmate's religious conviction; you're there not to judge but to encourage.
- Never be critical of the inmate.
- If they ask your opinion, make sure your answer is Bible-based and not what you think.
- Listen to them. They do have something to say.

HELP THE NETWORK GROW

Calling all our readers! Please ask your friends to sign on to *The Network*. Feel free to forward the newsletters to people on your e-mail list. The newsletters are archived on our Web site www.nadadultministries.org - just keep us posted on how many people you forward *Network News* to. Thanks for keeping *The Network* growing!

EDITOR'S P.S.

Where did the year go? And so fast! Six issues of **Network News** have come out of this office and this December issue will bring us to the end of 2005. That's right; it will be January 2006 when you will receive your next newsletter.

Exciting articles. Interesting interviews. Good, helpful networking. That's our goal and purpose of **Network News**. And we hope, with your continued help, dear Readers, to keep "moving on up" to higher heights. Thanks for hanging in there with us. See you in 2006.

I'm out of here. Until next month!



