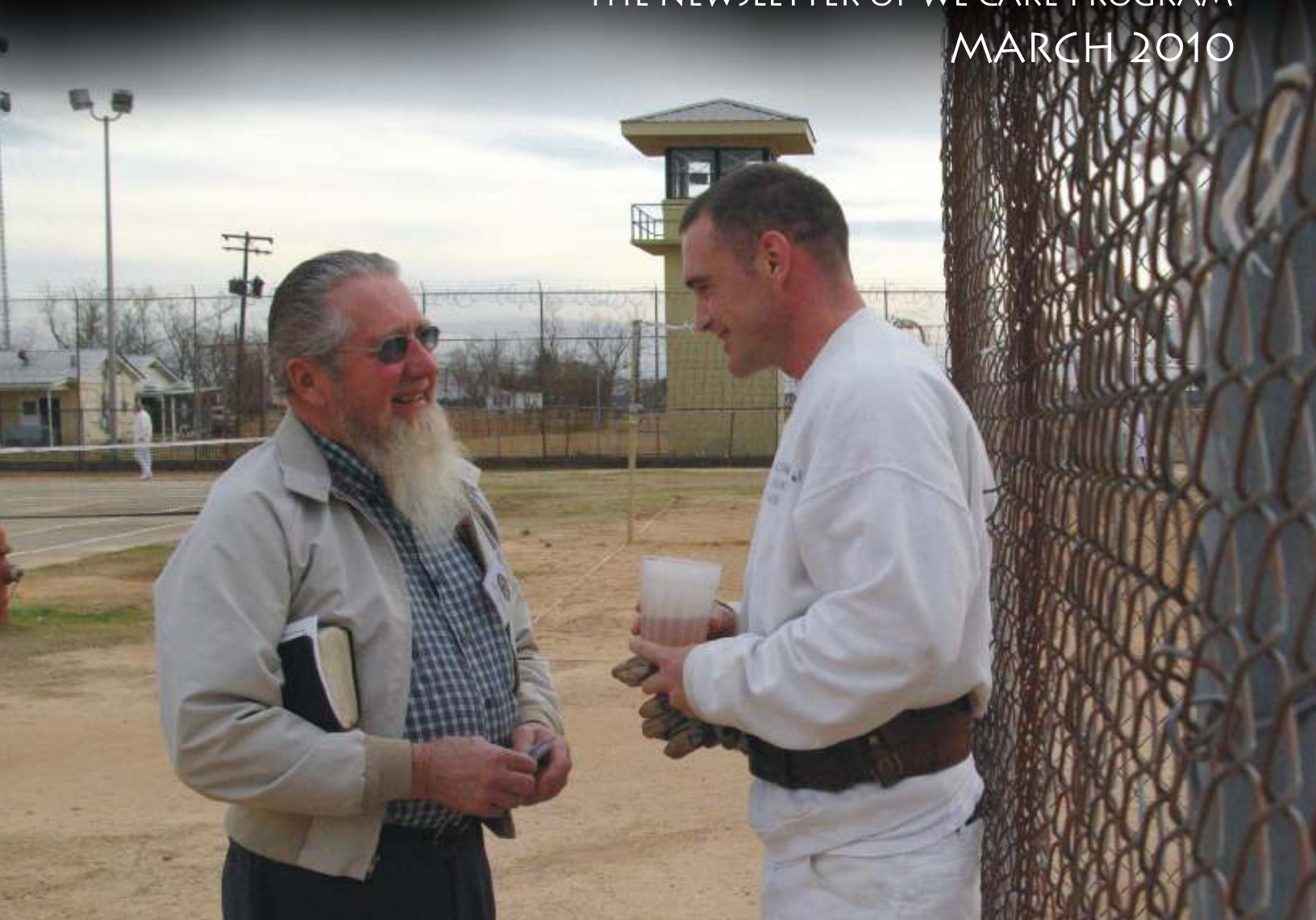


THE CONNECTION

THE NEWSLETTER OF WE CARE PROGRAM
MARCH 2010



2010 Crusade Facts

- 20 Correctional Facilities
- 22 Music Groups/Soloists
- 22 Evangelists
- 26 States/Provinces Represented
- 83 In-Prison Chapel Services
- 154 Churches Represented
- 412 Total Participants
- 20,486 Reachable Inmates

**Lives Impacted for Eternity:
Incalculable!**

SPECIAL EDITION!

Crusade 2010

**PROCLAIMING CHRIST
& DISCIPLING INMATES**



WWW.WECAREPROGRAM.ORG



Shannon Martin, PA, sharing with a friend at Draper.

I was really challenged by an inmate who was rejoicing in the Lord and counting his blessings even in prison. He said one thing I'll always remember, "I wasn't arrested; I was rescued."
- Bill Janzen, AB, Canada

One day I sat down at a table with two men. Their body language was somewhat lethargic. They would give me only small glances of eye contact. I thought the conversation was almost over. As I concluded my remarks, I ended by saying, "Society may have rejected you, judges may have told you, you are worthless, but in God's sight you are special, significant, and useful." They sat up straighter and gave very much eye contact. There was a connection, and our conversation lasted another half hour.
- Bruce Bollinger, PA

One evening a long row of men went forward to answer the call to commitment. They stood clear across the front, courageously facing their peers in the audience to make their commitment. A very moving sight.
- Mary Ruth, OH

This was my first time doing prison ministry. I was really nervous because I didn't feel like I could possibly have anything to say that would help the women I met. I learned that God is the One who does the work, I just had to be willing to be used by Him. Once I let go of the "I" or "me" attitude, I saw God moving.
- Jaimee Emswiler, VA

I prayed with a man who responded to an altar call and rededicated his life. After sharing a little bit, he left saying that he felt like a load of bricks was off his back. Praise God!
- Anthony Sensenig, PA

Although this was my third prison crusade experience, I was again struck by the commonality of the human need for a Savior. Details of these inmates' lives differ from many of the people I daily encounter, but the need for a Savior from sin is met in Jesus Christ.
- David Slabach, VA



Easterling team with Chaplain Askew and his chapel staff.

My 22nd birthday fell on the first day of the crusade, and during the chapel service all the inmates sang Happy Birthday to me. That night and in the days following, many inmates personally gave me a hearty, "Happy Birthday!"
- Mark Miller, IL

It was a huge comfort to know that I was right where God wanted me to be.
- Larry Mullet, OH

The big word for me this year was "encouragement." I was able to give hope to several girls who were really discouraged. They expressed later that the future seemed brighter as they shared time and experiences with me.
- Grace Wolfgang, PA

I sure felt blessed to be able to attend another crusade at age 81.
- Eugene Hoover, PA

When I first saw "Shelly," she seemed like someone who would be scary to relate to because of her short "teddy" hair cut, her rough, joking demeanor, and her involvement in homosexuality. Everybody called her "Shane." Once I got to know her, I discovered she was fun, caring, and friendly. She said she knows she's living in sin. Behind her roughness and appearance, I saw a woman who was longing for love, peace, real joy, freedom from sin. She wished we would stay longer. I came home with a burden to pray for her salvation.
- Kendra Zimmerman, PA

I feel as if I am so overwhelmed with the love of Jesus! You have shown me how to release my inner fears, burdens, worries, as well as my deepest sins! I feel whole! Oh, this has been a truly inspiring week for me! I have never felt as much love and compassion from any ministry such as "We Care." Thank God for all of you!

-Inmate, Bibb Correctional Facility

At the service on Monday evening, when the girls got teary-eyed, one officer went after a roll of toilet paper and tore some off for each girl as they needed it. He seemed to be very keenly aware and sensitive to anyone struggling, including me, and gave me a piece of toilet paper too.

In the following days we continued to observe this officer who seemed, to us, to have a high sense of integrity and warmth and dignity for human beings who are incarcerated.

On Wednesday evening he asked John Schmid and Charlie Ness to pray for him. This officer is a Christian and is also sensitive to his own shortcomings and weaknesses; he wants to stop smoking with God's help. Praise the Lord! I want to keep this Christian brother in uniform in my prayers. He is going to be tested, and although he can rise above his former habit, he will need our prayers to pass the challenge victorious.

- Barbara Dawn Gehman, PA

On the last night of the crusade, Satan really tried to discourage me. Before I got up to speak, I thought I was nothing and had nothing to say and that it was all said anyway, so this was going to be a real "flop." When my time came to speak, the heavens opened and God moved and things began to happen and people came forward, confessing and praying and hearing God's call to service. Wow, what an evening!

- Jim Eigsti, IN

I was very humbled when one of the ladies told me that when we come, she can feel a presence in the prison all that week and when we go home, it lasts for a week. I told her that is not us but is the presence of the Lord in us.

- Celia Landis, PA

Curiosity killed the cat! Well, it can also get you saved! One inmate admitted that he hung around us to find fault. He was a man whose heart was very closed to people or any emotions. It took over eight hours of time with him (he did most of the talking), and other input, I'm sure, for him to open up to God's call. Seeing tears in his eyes, when the evening before he had told the evangelist that he has no feelings, gave me heavenly goose bumps. Then on Thursday evening he wasted no time to go forward and "put his stake in the ground" in response to Jim Eigsti's message. What a work of the Spirit!

- Richard Graber, KS

The Lord kept breaking my heart. I keep learning how there is nothing else to live for except Jesus.

- Andy Hilty, IN

The crusade experience has simply been a highlight of my life.

- Miriam Strite, VA

My divine appointment was with a lady who had lost a son (22 years old) this past year. I was able to share with her as one mother who lost a son to another and was able to assure her that as the pain and anguish diminish it doesn't mean she is forgetting or dishonoring her son, it is God healing her heart. What a joy it was to see her smile through her tears.

- Susan Martin, PA



Tim Martin, PA, with a friend at Fountain.



Eli Yoder, KS, inviting men to deepen commitment to Christ.

I was glad We Care could be at the Annex during the time an inmate passed away. A lot of the ladies were questioning God's will, and we were able to pray with them. I was told that many came to the service that evening as a tribute or memorial service to the inmate who passed. The grief and tears flowed freely that evening as most everyone kneeled and prayed.

- Janice Miller, PA

The entire experience has been incredible, and I feel like I've been blessed beyond measure. It's awesome to see men with seemingly no hope for their physical future living in complete peace and freedom through Jesus Christ.

- Stephen Beachy, MD



A Day in the Life of a Crusade Volunteer Team

Following the Montgomery Women's Center and Frank Lee Teams



8:00 AM Joining the Montgomery region teams for a daily time of worship, sharing, and teaching.



10:00 AM With a later entry time, the ladies spend extra time praying for the day ahead. The men are on their way to prison.



11:00 AM The time has finally arrived for interacting with the ladies at Montgomery Women's Center. Entering the prison as a group, thoughts are now focused on personal interactions inside the fence.



11:30 AM A short devotional, followed by instructions for the day, and the men are soon ready to exit towards the dorms.



12:00 PM Friendship building can occur in a variety of ways, including "Phase 10."



1:00 PM Sitting on the bunk of an inmate is a privilege for Steve Stoltzfus, PA. A bunk represents home, belongings, private space. "I was in prison, and you came to me" takes on new meaning.



2:00 PM Spending time in the yard can offer refreshment from the noises, smell, and sounds of dorm life. Heidi Good, CO, shares a laugh with a friend.



3:00 PM Kyle Esh, PA, spends a portion of his afternoon encouraging this group of men. All are invited to a special evening service with music and message.



5:00 PM It has already been a long day, but a special chapel service is still to come. The ladies relax for a few moments before the evening service.



6:30 PM The Marini Family, PA, offer their musical gifts to the ladies at MWC. The church is encouraged. Hearts are softened for the message to come.



7:15 PM Titus Zimmerman sharing the "Bread of Life" with the men at Frank Lee. Each service ends with a time for personal reflection and commitment to the way of Jesus Christ.

After my first crusade in 2000, I chose three women to pray for. Ten years later, in 2010, I was very privileged to sit in Tuesday evening's service with one dear sister on my right side and the second one on my left! I thank God for this reunion!
- Jean Musselman, PA



Wilbur Siegrist, PA, offering hope at Holman.

It is truly a joy to hear the sincere prayers of confession at the altar. God answers prayer. He truly went before us, walked with us, and will be there after us.
- Larry Martin, VA

I have been impressed with how important aftercare is for the inmates. About 80% of the guys I talked with wanted help or discipleship when they get out. The ministry can't stop after this week. Discipleship just might be the most important component to this ministry.
- Eugene Wengerd, SC

Since this was my first crusade, I did not know what to expect, and I was most moved by how the inmates were such a blessing and encouragement to me. I came prepared to share with the inmates, and they were the ones that ministered to me.
- Harold Burkholder, PA

The very first inmate I talked to ended up surrendering his life to Christ. I had no idea what to say to these guys, and God used my first conversation, which was by far the most awkward, to work in the heart of that inmate. This just goes to show that God can use anyone to accomplish His work as long as we're just willing to make ourselves available.
- Gary Zimmerman, PA

Last year "Kevin" was hard as steel. I prayed for him all year. Now he says God is working in his life, and he at least listened to the plan of salvation (but still not ready to accept).
- Ray Raber, OH

This week affirmed to me that no one is born a winner or loser, but we are born "choosers."
- Wilbur Siegrist, PA

It was deeply impressed on my mind that whether on the "inside" or "outside" God is the One who can set us free!
- Durell Orendorf, MD

When I touched an inmate's arm and said his name, his eyes lit up. He gave me a big smile and said, "You remembered my name. You just made my day, my week, and my year."
- Paul High, PA

A man received Christ at the Tuesday evening service and denounced his homosexual lifestyle. Later that evening he called his dad who was very excited about his son's commitment and went to church the following evening and he also accepted Christ as his Savior. All this happened after an incident of violence in the inmate's block. We consider it a miracle that his block was allowed to come to the service that day. PTL.
- Gideon Stoltzfus, PA


My 15th in-prison crusade...and the best one yet! This year I again had the privilege of counseling a lady at the altar and hearing her cry in brokenness for mercy and forgiveness as she rededicated her life to the Lord. I never get tired of that!
- Emma Bender, AL



Group that traveled "coach" style from PA.

Crusade Photos

View more photos online
at www.wecareprogram.org.



Don't Forget!

Crusade 2011:
January 23-27

JANUARY 2011

21	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

-W.C. Crusade-

News of Note

VOL. 42, NO. 1

Atmore, Alabama

March 2010

Welcome

Oren Horst joined our administrative team on a short term basis to help with crusade preparation and follow-up, 40th Anniversary planning, and donor relations. Oren comes to us from Goshen, IN, where he attends Eighth Street Mennonite Church. We are grateful for Oren's willingness to serve with We Care during these busy winter months.



Oren Horst

Also joining the We Care family are **James and Charmaine Smoker** from Kinzers, PA. The Smokers have



James & Charmaine Smoker & family

three children: Dexter, Isaiah, and Ava Marie, and come with the blessing and support of their home church, Honey Brook Community Church. James joins David Bucher in assisting with chaplaincy programming at Donaldson Correctional Facility, Bessemer, AL.

Board Election Results

At their annual meeting on January 23, members of the We Care Program voted to fill three vacancies on the Board of Directors. **Aaron Martin** (Ephrata, PA) and **Lester Huber** (Atmore, AL) were re-elected to three-year terms. **Sam Jones** was elected to fill the remaining position. Sam and his wife Francine live in Birmingham, AL, where he serves as pastor of Ambassadors for Christ Church and bishop in the Birmingham District of Good News Fellowship. A special "Thanks" to **Dennis Nolt** (Ephrata, PA) who completed nine years of service on the Board.

Service Opportunities

Internship - "Discover" is an eight-month spiritual growth program for young men to discover their God-given strengths, talents, gifts, and heart passions while serving those in prison. The program, based in Atmore, AL, is open to young men ages 20 and up and runs from September to May. Opportunities include in-prison visitation, building friendships, evangelism and discipleship, giving spiritual guidance, mentoring, teaching, and learning how to listen. For more information, contact Blaine Copenhaver at discover@wecareprogram.org.

Bookkeeper - Jeanna Fox, who currently serves as our bookkeeper, will be ending her term of service this summer. We are looking for someone to fill this role. This service opportunity primarily involves data entry, processing deposits, assisting with payroll and paying bills. Basic computer skills are needed and while bookkeeping experience is not required, it would be an asset. We are looking for a volunteer to fill this position but are open to other custom arrangements. Two-year commitment requested. For more details, contact Don Metzler at don@wecareprogram.org.

Volunteer, Economy Shops - Are you looking for an active way to support We Care but not feeling called to in-prison ministry? We Care's three thrift stores, called "Economy Shops," help provide financial support for the ministry. The stores provide ongoing opportunities for volunteers to serve in a variety of ways. Current openings are available for men or women, young or seasoned, short term or long term, part time or full time. Volunteer positions can be tailored for the individual. Possible assignments include preparing, organizing and displaying merchandise for sale, customer service, and facility upkeep. One-year commitment requested. For more details, contact Gary Mast at gary@wecareprogram.org.

Volume XLII, Number 1

Published six times a year, *The Connection* provides news and views of friends of We Care Program. We Care Program is a non-profit, interdenominational organization consisting of Christian men and women who share a burden for and commitment to helping incarcerated men and women. We are accomplishing our mission by recruiting, funding, training, placing, and administering missionary chaplains and chaplain's assistants in prisons to provide friendship evangelism, teaching, peer counseling, and encouragement.

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BE LOOKING FOR HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS IN
UPCOMING NEWSLETTERS AS WE CARE
PROGRAM CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF MINISTRY.

Those familiar with correctional life know that attempts are being made to “rehabilitate” men and women in prison through programs focusing on issues like substance abuse, criminal thinking, basic education, and re-entry preparedness. In addition, most facilities (at least in Alabama) have a wide range of religious programs available to inmates. These generally include many religions and denominations, emphases and teachings, and occur on weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly levels. Many of the programs and religious services provided are good and helpful, and in some cases, we are either partnering with others or offering these programs and services ourselves.

But We Care Program’s motivation throughout our 40-year history and into the present is the conviction that the only hope for lasting change is the inner transformation that occurs when one makes a decision to

follow Jesus *and* begins to gain new attitudes and values based on His life and teachings. **Much of this can happen in relationship with loving and caring mentors who walk alongside and disciple those new and growing in faith.**

We believe that it takes a combination of 1) effective programs based on Biblical morals and ethics, 2) religious services that focus on applying Biblical truths to daily life situations, and 3) mentoring relationships grounded in love, care, support, and accountability to bring about the kind of “rehabilitation” that will positively affect families, churches, and communities. Your prayers, support, and involvement are an integral part of our mission. Thank You!
-David R. Landis, President



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