



# the connection

WINTER 2015

## *The Power of Love*

By Steve Martin

### **I Was Unable to Love**

When We Care Assistant Chaplain Anna Miller met Diane in 2012, she was seeking freedom from a lifestyle that had kept her in bondage for the past 30 years. During that time, she had been incarcerated six times for criminal activities so that she could support her drug addiction. “I liked doing drugs,” Diane recalls, “so I did it more!” For Diane, drugs were an escape from all the pain and hurt in her life.

When her first child was born, she felt unable to love him due to the emptiness deep inside. “I was overwhelmed by shame, guilt and despair—unable to feel any love for self or for the innocence that laid there before me,” Diane remembers. “As time went on, I learned how to love him, realizing I was all he had. His love so innocent and sweet taught me how to nourish him and keep him safe. Yet I never quit using. Once again, drugs became greater than life itself.”

For the next 25 years, through the births of two more children, severe abuse from her boyfriend, a growing drug addiction, continued criminal activity, and being in and out of prison, Diane’s life was raging out of control. Even in the midst of all the craziness, she knew what she was doing was wrong. Speaking

of being arrested for stealing from her job in 2000, Diane commented, “I had much regret and remorse for what I had done. Shame became my best friend.”

During all of this, there were some better times. Diane was able to build a relationship with her children.



Anna, Sharon, and Diane

In 2010 she was preparing for a Christmas celebration with her children for the first time in years. “I was excited about the perfect Christmas I had planned,” Diane remembers. Then on December 14 she was once again arrested. After getting out for a few weeks in January, she returned to prison for the sixth time.


### **A Love That Never Fails**

Diane finally agreed to attend church after finding out the prison chapel had air conditioning. “It was there,” she said, “I saw God’s love for me. It gave me so much hope and a desire to allow God to change everything about me so I would not have to return to prison. God began a work in me. I was astonished to see my faith strengthened and transformation happen as I allowed God to take hold of my life.”

“When I first met Diane, she was a selfish and determined lady,” Anna recalls. “But after her conversion she saw her own faults, was not so quick to condemn others and did some real soul searching.

*Continued on page 3*

**INSIDE: 2015 Staff Directory Poster**

find us on 

[WWW.WECAREPROGRAM.ORG](http://WWW.WECAREPROGRAM.ORG)

# Thrift Stores

## Update *by Stan Schrock*

We Care's thrift stores make a valuable contribution toward helping to fund the prison ministry. Previously known as Economy Shops, the stores are now named simply We Care Thrift Stores.

My involvement with the Thrift Stores began this past spring when I stepped in as interim director. In July I accepted the position long term and was named Thrift Store Director. I have served with We Care since 2009. From then until 2012 I served as a chaplain in Century Correctional Institution and since that time as business manager at the We Care headquarters. Now I am excited about working with the Thrift Stores and feel God's calling and blessing in this position.

Not long after I began serving in this role, we were faced with the potential prospect of closing the Flomaton store. We had been renting our store space, and the owner informed us he was selling the building because of health reasons. At their meeting in July, our Board of Directors gave approval to purchase the



property. After acquiring ownership, we remodeled and expanded into an adjoining empty store area in the same building, thereby enlarging the

Flomaton store by 40%. The visibility of the expansion has attracted new customers.

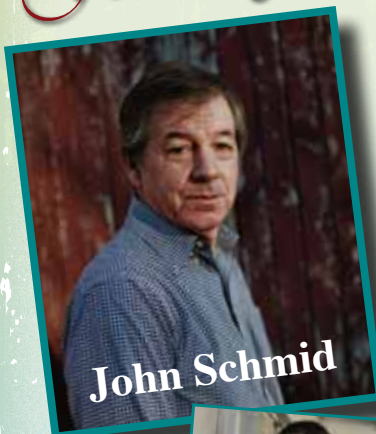
Prattville, Alabama, is the site of our newest store which opened on September 24, 2014. Located on the outskirts of Montgomery, the city of Prattville has a population of over 33,000. This new store, situated in a shopping plaza, is now our largest store.

On October 17, 2014, we celebrated 25 years of Thrift Store business in Atmore. We served hot dogs and hamburgers in front of the store and presented our customers with coupons and other promotional giveaways.

Our fourth store in Monroeville continues to be a stable contributor to the bottom line of We Care. In addition to raising funds for the ministry, all of our stores help to provide name recognition for We Care Program within the state of Alabama. We thank God for our store employees and volunteers and for 25 years of financial blessing through the Thrift Stores.

# Spring Tour ..... March 3 -10, 2015

*Featuring*



**John Schmid**



**Bob Depew**

**Music by John Schmid, Reflections from Death Row by Chaplain Bob Depew and Ministry Update by President Don Metzler**

- Tuesday, March 3** – Banquet at Dayton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA
  - Wednesday, March 4** – Banquet at Calvary Chapel, Farmville, VA
  - Thursday, March 5** – Banquet at Franconia Heritage Restaurant, Franconia, PA
  - Friday, March 6** – Banquet at Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, PA
  - Saturday, March 7** – Concert at Church of the Good Shepherd, Lebanon, PA
  - Sunday, March 8** – Service at Canton Mennonite Church, Canton, PA
  - Monday, March 9** – Banquet at Amish Door, Wilmot, OH
  - Tuesday, March 10** – Banquet at Der Dutchman, Plain City, OH
- An offering will be received to benefit We Care Program*

Be on the lookout for event postcards coming to your mailbox soon, or go to [www.wecareprogram.org](http://www.wecareprogram.org) for more information.

# From the Field

## Tiffani Heisey

Discover Intern  
Montgomery Women's Facility  
Montgomery, AL



It's cold. If not in temperature, at least in atmosphere. Walls and floors are cement in a building that would appear to be a warehouse. The large room is lined with metal bunk beds dressed with white sheets and navy blankets. Two drawers underneath hold the occupants' belongings, and a mesh laundry bag hangs on each end.

Sound awful? To most women it is. To some it may feel more comfortable than the openness of the free world. To a few women honesty has them there but does not hold them there. In one form or another, reality is escaped. The worship of God or a small detail in their day brings them through. A smile. A card to send to family. A shower. A phone call. A coloring page. A game. A new hair-do. A TV show. Small things take them

away from the reality of their surroundings.

This was noticeable on the day a particular woman caught my attention. She was in their "kitchen," an area with a sink, three microwaves, and an urn of hot water. The food consists of packaged items such as Cup-of-Lunch noodles, sausages, dill pickles, rice, sugar, Kool-Aid, cheese curls, and chips, just to name a few. In her excitement, the woman hopped up and down clapping her hands. She was making a cake!

If I understand correctly, crushed peanut butter cookies, sugar, hot chocolate mix, and water were set to soak and then microwaved in her rectangular, plastic container. Cubed Milky Way candy bars and melted chocolate bars topped the cake.

For you too, wherever God has placed you is a field of detail. May you embrace the joys and pains because these are the matters, whether big or small, that lead to the goodness of our Father God.

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*For additional stories of how God is using the Discover interns, please check out our facebook page by going to [www.wecareprogram.org](http://www.wecareprogram.org) and following the link.*

## *The Power of Love* continued from page 1

She saw her own sin and accepted responsibility for it. She went about sharing her experience with others, wanting them to see the truth that only Jesus can give the freedom they are looking for."

We Care Chaplain Sharon Bruckhart also observed, "It was not just talk; we could see it in Diane's walk. She began to mentor younger incarcerated women who struggle with addictions. She came up with a way to share her own journey with them."

### **"Thank You for Loving Me!"**

"Thank you very much for all you do," Diane shared. "God is doing an amazing work with We Care! When the Bible said, 'I will visit ya in prison,'

Anna and Sharon represented that verse to the fullest. I so looked forward to seeing them each week."

Diane has been out of prison for a few months now. She is happy in her new freedom and life. Recently Anna and Sharon had the opportunity to visit her at her home. She shared with them how she is staying in the Word and how God has opened up a new job for her. Though she faces difficult challenges at times, she keeps a smile on her face and is thankful for God's faithfulness in her journey.

We Care thanks you for supporting Anna, Sharon, and our other chaplains as they share the Good News of Jesus, which makes turnarounds like Diane's possible.



# MY FELLOW WORKERS

A MESSAGE FROM DON METZLER, PRESIDENT

don@wecareprogram.org

As the President of We Care Program, it is my privilege to work with some wonderful people. Noreen Horst (*Administrative Assistant*), Hannah Neighbors (*Bookkeeper*), and Wilma Graber (*ReNew Hope Assistant*) do an amazing job of keeping things in the office running smoothly and assisting the rest of the We Care staff in many ways.

Since the beginning of August when I became President, the Board of Directors and I have been working together to establish a leadership team. I would like to briefly introduce to you this team of directors who have been assembled to serve with me in leading this ministry.

• Steve Martin - *Development Director*. Working part time from his home in Womelsdorf, PA, Steve is responsible for the fundraising and public relations part of the ministry.

• David S. Landis - *Chaplaincy Director*. Dave is responsible for spiritual formation input for our chaplaincy staff. He also serves part time as a chaplain at J. O. Davis

Correctional Facility in Atmore.

• Stan Schrock - *Thrift Store Director*. Stan oversees all aspects of our four Thrift Stores.

• James Smoker - *Recruitment Director*. James focuses on recruiting new chaplains and serves as a part time chaplain at Donaldson Correctional Facility just north of Birmingham.

We are currently seeking to fill the role of Business and Outreach Director. This person will work mostly in the office carrying many of the responsibilities I used to carry as Business Manager/Vice President. Please pray with us that God will fill this role with the person He is preparing to serve in this way.

I thank God for each of these secretaries and directors who work so diligently as we together seek to “Proclaim Christ and Disciple Inmates” in the prisons of Alabama and beyond. I am also thankful for each of you who care about, pray for, participate with and support us in so many ways. May God bless each one of you for the part you play in the ministry of We Care Program.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Phone: 251-368-8818

Atmore, AL 36502-4669

3493 Highway 21





# 2015 Staff Directory

## Board of Directors



Front row left to right: Richard Graber, John Yoder, Dennis Nolt, Lester Huber, Durell Orendorf  
Back row left to right: Alvin Landis, Loyd Gingerich, Sherwin Wenger, Loren Wissmann, Marvin Fisher  
Not pictured: Sam Jones



**Katherine & Eli Plank**  
Associate  
Ohio Reform. for Women



**Wilma Mullet**  
Chaplain  
Ohio Reform. for Women



**Steve & Ella Mae Martin**  
Development Director  
Womelsdorf



## OHIO

- Ohio Reform. for Women
- Madison CI



**Ralph & Donna Smith**  
Associate - Madison CI



**Allen Screws**  
Chaplain  
Dept of Youth Services / Frank Lee WR



**Ramona Rosser**  
Associate  
Boaz City Jail

## PENNSYLVANIA

- Womelsdorf ★
- Fort Washington ★



**Jason & Amy Martin**  
Zaida, Caleb and Ezra  
Graphic Designer - Fort Washington



**David & Veola Bucher**  
Cheney, Ethan, Sean and Benjamin  
Chaplain - Donaldson CF



**James & Charmaine Smoker**  
Dexter, Isaiah, Ava, Jacob and Garrett  
Recruitment Director / Chaplain  
Donaldson CF



**Sharon Bruckhart**  
Chaplain  
Tutwiler Prison

● Boaz City Jail

● St. Clair CF



**Jeremy & Andrea Miller**  
Joshua, Alyssa and Jadon  
Chaplain - St Clair CF



**John & Shirley Kurtz**  
Savannah and Hadden  
Volunteer - Webmaster



**Anna Miller**  
Chaplain  
Montgomery WF



**Ellie Copenhaver**  
Discover Intern  
Montgomery WF



**Tiffani Heisey**  
Discover Intern  
Montgomery WF



**Ben Nolt**  
Discover Intern  
Fountain CF

★ Birmingham

● Childersburg WR

No Photo Available

**Jack & Debra Hausen**  
Associate - Childersburg



**Bob & Polly Depew**  
Chad, Cassie and Kevin  
Chaplain - Holman CF



**Delmar & Marjorie Yoder**  
Associate  
Correspondence Ministry, GA

## ALABAMA

Frank Lee WR

Tutwiler Prison

Prattville ★

Montgomery ★

Dept. of Youth Services  
Montgomery WF



**Jimmy & Pam Dees**  
Associate  
J O Davis CF



**David & Mary Landis**  
Abby, Joshua, Benjamin, Lizzy and Matthew  
Chaplaincy Director / Chaplain  
J O Davis CF

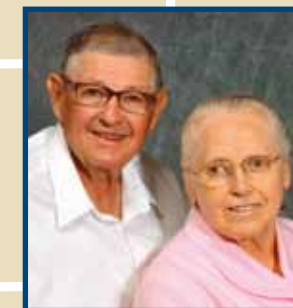


**Sid & Susan Chapman**  
Associate  
Camden WR



**Lester & Goldie Huber**  
Associate  
Fountain CF

● Camden WR



**Marvin & Emma Bender**  
Volunteer - Headquarters



**Prattville Thrift Store**  
Kaci Stiles, Philip Thomas, Kimberly Palmedo, Naomi Lynn, Heather Voss, Alexis Davies, Carol Stoltzfus, Steve Stoltzfus, (not pictured Tana Fulton, Stephanie Hawkins, Michael Warrington)



**Dorsey & Karen McDonald**  
Clint and Kaley  
Associate - Monroe Co. Jail



**Dave & Debbie Landis**  
Diana, David and Darren  
Chaplain - Atmore WC

Monroe County Jail ★ Monroeville

Atmore WC  
Holman CF  
Fountain CF  
J O Davis CF

Headquarters  
Atmore ★ Flomaton

● Century CI



**Don & Phyllis Metzler**  
Brandon, Perry and Lauren  
President - Office



**Stan & Ruth Schrock**  
Austin and Denver  
Thrift Store Director - Office



**Monroeville Thrift Store**  
LaShandra Fountain, Judy Baggett, Vonda Wiggins, (not pictured - Arletta Salter, Haley Watts)



**Marvin & Elaine Bender**  
Jonathan, Kenton, Twila, LaRonda and Rachel  
Bible Study Coordinator - Atmore



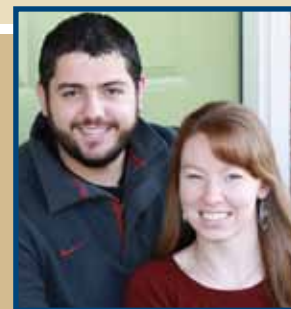
**Joe & Lorraine Kolb**  
Chaplain  
Mobile Metro Jail

Mobile Metro Jail

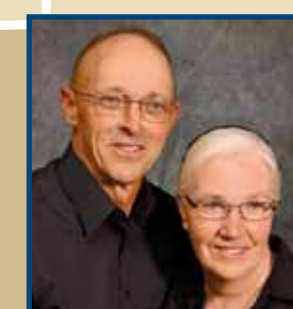
## FLORIDA



**Noreen Horst**  
Administrative Assistant  
Office



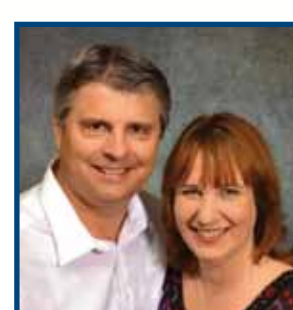
**Chris & Hannah Neighbors**  
Bookkeeper  
Office



**Richard & Wilma Graber**  
Chaplain / Secretary  
Atmore WC / Office



**Flomaton Thrift Store**  
Glenda Bagwell, Delores Carden, Morgan Boone, Lynn Carnley, Lounette Baker, Jacob Carnley, Chad Depew, Charles Hawkes, Lori Steele (not pictured Hope Womack)



**Mike & Patty Strehlow**  
Chaplain  
Fountain CF



**Dennis & Evelyn Bilbo**  
Associate  
Fountain CF



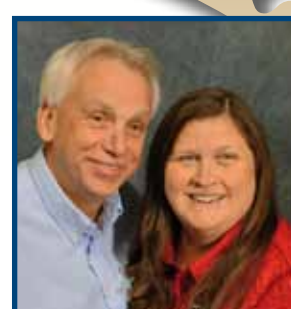
**Blaine & Sheila Copenhaver**  
Eli and Wil  
Chaplain - Fountain CF



**Benjamin & Marla Zook**  
Amanda and Luella  
Host Couple / Chaplain  
Headquarters / Fountain CF



**Haskell & Faye Dunn**  
Associate  
Fountain CF



**Frank & Kathryn Gossett**  
Chaplain  
Holman CF



**Irvin & Kathy Martin**  
Durrell and Kaden  
Chaplain - Century CI



**Atmore Thrift Store**  
Peggy Lambert, Mary Thomas, Crystal Moye, Celestine Leslie, Aerial Johnson, Lisa Quinn, Mary Salter, Ruth Weber, Lester Weber, (not pictured - Rosanna Mast, Willemese Coleman)