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## “Smart on Crime” Legislation

Ministry Friends:

About 3 weeks ago the Restorative Justice Ministries Network prompted you about contacting the state officials regarding restoring the chaplains who were cut in the budget cuts of 2003.

Because you wrote, our requests were heard and considered. We did not get full restoration. However, 20 additional chaplains are scheduled to be funded in the current budget.

Your letter writing is important and does bear fruit.

We are **now** asking you to contact your the state officials and your State Senator and State Representative about enacting changes in the criminal justice system which reflect "Smart on Crime" rather than the traditional "Tough on Crime" approaches. (Related article on pages 7 and 17)

The Texas Chaplain's program was slashed by approximately 50% in 2003.

The attachment "[Letter Writing Suggestions](#)" will assist you in the process. We encourage you to write your own letter using any of the suggestions mentioned.

If our legislators know that we are interested in "Smart on Crime" legislation, they will be emboldened to do the right thing. **We can make a difference!**

Emmett Solomon  
Executive Director  
RJMN

### Reform at the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) must go beyond ending sex abuse

By Marc A. Levin

Texans have been horrified to learn that some of the 5,000 juveniles allegedly being rehabilitated at Texas Youth Commission facilities have instead been molested and mistreated. At the West Texas State School near Pyote, two officials in charge repeatedly sexually abused young boys, using the leverage of delaying their release to pressure them into sexual favors.

Continued on page 15

#### IN THIS ISSUE

Hope for Horizon	2
New Book by Don Smarto	3
Air Chapel Ministry	3
California News	4
R. J. Resources	5
Straight Ahead Ministries	6
TDCJ Chaplaincy	7
Ministries Directory	8
Welcome Back Ministry	13
15 Years and 15 Days	14
TYC Reform	15
Using Our Gifts	16
Alternatives to More Prisons	17
Subscription Form	18

# Hope for Horizon

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**A Note from Executive Director, Emmett Solomon:**

*One of the most important movements in criminal justice during the last 10 years is the proliferation of Faith Based Dorms in Jails and Prisons across the nation.*

*I firmly believe that this will in time change the way prisons are managed. Faith Based Dorms work by developing a "positive inmate subculture." Actually the way prisons are traditionally managed is among the poorest ways to manage human beings. All of modern management training stands in contrast to traditional prison management. Faith Based Dorms are leading the way in new prison management techniques.*

*Horizon Communities spun out of Kairos Prison Ministries and is now among the very best of the organizations which manage Faith Based Dorms.*

*The attached editorial demonstrates how people are now catching on to the effectiveness of such programming. A prison administrator recently told me that he looked forward to doubling and tripling the number of faith based beds in Texas prisons.*

## Hope for Horizon

By Carroll Wilson



Carroll Wilson, Editor  
Times Record News,  
Wichita, Texas

A few days ago, I was behind bars.

The last time I was looking out rather than in, the Allred unit was just about to start receiving its first group of inmates. Even empty, the place bristled with a feral hostility. The atmosphere tripped the fight-or-flight switch in my brain. The prison didn't bear any resemblance to a country club then, and it didn't look like one on my recent visit.

This time, for some reason, all I felt as I stood in the waiting room was sadness. Allred is a brick-and-mortar testament to failure. It represents the fact that even in America the veneer of Civilization is thin indeed. And it is solid proof that Texans choose to warehouse prisoners - out of sight and out of mind. There is no universal rehab program at Allred. Job training is minimal. If an inmate wants to do anything but eat or sleep, there's a waiting list.

I went to the prison at the request of Judy Taylor, who works with a program called Horizon. Allred is the only lockup in Texas with the Horizon program. And only a few prisons in other states offer it. That's almost criminal in itself.

Very briefly, here's how Horizon works: A director and volunteers partner up with the state. The outsiders are given a small office. And those inmates who participate are housed in a one cell block. Horizon has a faith-based curriculum that is comprehensive and very well-planned. God and a human's relationship with God and how a person must respond to God's call - those are at the center of the program.

Yes, some lessons involve the tenets of Christianity. But, Taylor said that Muslims, Jews and men of other faiths have been participants. For two hours almost every night of the week, volunteer teachers lead Horizon classes. Let me emphasize that: two hours almost every night, not one hour on Sunday morning.

In the Horizon area, I sat with about a dozen men who had recently graduated. After more than forty years in journalism, I'm nothing if not skeptical about what any inmate has to say. I've never talked to a prisoner or received a letter from a prisoner who acknowledged he was guilty as charged.

I had a very different feeling about these guys. They admitted they had pulled guns on people, broken into homes, done drugs and so on. They admitted they had hurt their families. They weren't ooshy-gooshy in their religion. They certainly weren't sanctimonious. As much as possible, they did seem to have found peace. They knew they deserved punishment for what they'd done. But, what, they asked in one way or another, about mercy and justice? Especially, justice.

Is justice served when a man is given no hope? Is justice served when he is offered no opportunity to better himself? Is justice served when his sentence is so much different than someone else who did the same thing?

Continued on page 7

## New book, *Faith Based Mentoring* by Don Smarto



**Don Smarto**

This new book by Don Smarto is a practical manual for mentoring troubled and delinquent youth. The book has fifty-one separate subject headings with applications for adult mentors.

Important features include supplemental training guides, a bibliography, and a profile of an incarcerated Texas youth.

As Don's eighth book, it comes from his experiences having mentored twelve young men, each for one year and his observations from years of research and study of programs across America.

There are seventeen hundred mentoring programs in America but few that have a biblical world-view. The author believes that a faith based approach leads to lasting change and suggests that the building of trust and relationships which take 1-5 years is preferred over short term measurement like reduction in truancy and better grades.

Don is the Founder and President of Youth Direct Ministries in Dallas, Texas. For information and to order the new book he can be reached by phone at 972-572-TEEN or by email: [don@youthdirect.org](mailto:don@youthdirect.org).

## Air Chapel working with boot camp-restoring justice for juveniles

By Shirley Orr Smith

The Air Chapel Community Learning Center, located at the Grayson County Airport, Denison, Texas, just across the street from the Boot Camp, provides volunteer faith based services for the Cooke, Fannin and Grayson County Boot Camp. The Boot camp serves as a "judicial alternative sentence" for convicted young felons ages twelve to eighteen from eighteen Texas counties.

The heart of the Air Chapel mission is to oppose crime in our communities by changing the attitudes, beliefs and values of those most likely to conduct criminal activity.

Community Services Network, Inc. (CSN) is a faith based interdenominational company of volunteers dedicated to the moral excellence, humanity, and emotional intelligence of our people. CSN networks community people and positive groups that express joy, faith, hope, and high social standards. Teaching specific skills related to good character is a CSN mission.

Specific needs of Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) children and their families are a concern of the community. CSN bridges community, church, civic, law, and justice departments with people needs. Resources are identified and developed to help our community. The youth are learning from the community of faith; the community is learning from the children.

Multi-denominational worship services, spiritual lessons, civic talks, art and culture appreciation, youth group music, skits and games are currently being made available through community outreach volunteers. Emphasis is on positive and exciting programs to the Boot Camp theme of operation. Air Chapel mission increases the ability of our community to raise and care for our children.

Air Chapel looks for opportunities to work with other groups or individuals in the community. Two young men, shown with their respective parents, have been granted the Eagle Scout Award at a ceremony conducted in the Air Chapel gazebo. The work that these young men completed on the gazebo complex served to satisfy the requirements for "Community Service".



What does Air Chapel expect to accomplish?

As stated by Terry Dyer, Director of Air Chapel, "We expect troubled youth to have a personal transformation. We believe personal transformation is important because it increases the self-realization that God loves us and He is the single most powerful meaning of our existence. Dyer continued, we are convinced that programs that promote community and faith can reduce the recurring dependence to correctional institute living. Air Chapel is a place for family rest, meditation and classes relating to restoring justice for juveniles."

Mr. Dyer can be contacted by phone at (903) 786-5899 or by email [tdyer@mail.airchapel.org](mailto:tdyer@mail.airchapel.org)



## **Sacramento: Prison Sentencing and Prison Reform are Under Scrutiny**

California's state prisons are in crisis and in need of reform. Governor Schwarzenegger while proposing an \$11 billion building program to add space for thousands of additional inmates is looking to see changes in sentencing laws and changes in the state parole system.

## **Oakland: West Oakland Homicide Detective – Ordained Minister**

Oakland police homicide detective, James Moore also serves as an ordained minister in West Oakland. He finds that by combining his role as clergyman and cop he is able to minister to people in crisis. Moore is able to use his counseling and communication skills when dealing with distraught family members and uncooperative witnesses. He finds that there is a parallel in these jobs as he is both an advocate and a mediator between the families and the system. Moore strongly feels that both jobs involve a search for truth. His fellow officers testify to the way he lives consistently following Christian principles. His parishioners also speak highly of the way he ministers comfort in times when confronted with incarcerated family members, enabling them to move forward as he guides them through crisis. Moore finds that his police work helps him to minister more effectively. He brings his homicide experiences to the pulpit, encouraging victims of crime to forgive and to make their own peace with God.

## **San Leandro: New Juvenile Hall Nearly Ready for Occupancy**

A decade of planning has gone into the planning and construction of Alameda County's new Juvenile Justice Center. The \$176 million dollar, 360 bed facility is scheduled to open in April. The new facility will house five courtrooms, offices for public defenders, district attorneys and other county officials, as well as medical and dental exam rooms. The facility promises to be more accessible to family and friends. The new facility offers a new beginning for county juveniles with better rehabilitation programs. This will reduce recidivism and provide a better future for these young offenders.

## **Castro Valley: Follow Up Ministries Staff Leadership Retreat**

God Squad team members and Discipleship Training Seminar leaders met with FUMI staff for their annual Winter Leadership Retreat. The retreat was held at the newly acquired Murphy's Camp facility in Calaveras County. Speakers for the event included Rueben Martinez, Gus Enderlin, Tim Wagoner, and Gary Moes, active ministry leaders of the organization.

The theme of the conference centered on the leadership qualities exemplified by the Apostle Paul.

In 2005, Follow Up Ministries Inc. acquired the beautiful, flourishing 21-acre retreat center in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains of east-central California. The vision for this facility is to create and operate a Prison Ministry Training Center, a long-time goal of the FUMI leadership. Murphy's Christian Camp was originally founded more than 30 years ago to provide a spiritual retreat and camp for inner-city youth. The vision for the future of the camp is to continue the present ministry and to train present and future ministry leaders from throughout the world, to provide a meeting place for like-minded prison ministries, and to provide a getaway for prison ministry workers.



The R. J. News publications are dependent upon contributions from readers. If you find the articles in the R. J. News interesting and informative, please help us continue this ministry to you and others involved in justice system ministries. Donations by check or money order can be mailed to: Restorative Justice Ministries Network, 1229 Avenue J, Suite 360, Huntsville, Texas 77340. The RJMN is a non-profit organization. All donations are tax exempt.

# RJM Resources

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## Ministry Resources from Restorative Justice Ministries Network

1229 Avenue J, Suite 360, Huntsville, TX 77340

### Recommended for ministry people:

Restorative Justice Ministry for Pastors & Church Leaders \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Emmett Solomon** - Guidance for leaders interested in beginning RJM in the local congregation

### Recommended for ministry & offenders:

Serving Time, Serving Others - **Tom & Laura Lagana** \$17.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Acts of kindness by inmates, prison staff, victims, and volunteers

Chicken Soup for the Prisoner's Soul - **Canfield, Henson, Lagana** \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
101 stories that will inspire you with hope, gratitude and joy, regardless of your circumstance

Karla Faye Tucker SET FREE - **Linda Strom** \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Her Death-Row transformation captured the world's attention. Uplifting, good read

### Recommended for offender's families and friends:

Reflections of Life: Through the Eyes of a Convict - **Blake Holmes** \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Written with the intent to educate, inspire and motivate the reader to lead a positive and productive life.

### Recommended for offenders:

Behind The Walls A Guide For Families and Friends of Texas Prison Inmates \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
**J. A. Renaud** - A practical guide for inmates' families, and new inmates, to understand the system.

A Map Through the Maze - **Rollo, Adams** \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Overview of the correctional experience of offenders and their families

Man, I Need a Job - **Ned Rollo** \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Provides offender the insights and skills they need to find and keep a job following release

99 Days and a Get Up - **Ned Rollo** \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
A guide to success following release for inmates and their loved ones.

**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*All prices include shipping and handling. We can mail books to prisoners on your behalf.*

SEND BOOK(S) TO:

INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ INMATE #: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PURCHASER: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

# Straight Ahead Academy - Ready4Life Career & College Preparation

Straight Ahead Academy – a Christian-based juvenile facility where youth in Massachusetts and Rhode Island can serve the last six months of their time – just completed its first full year of operation. Straight Ahead Academy, is a program of Straight Ahead Ministries, and is based on their Discipleship Home model. That program yielded less than an 8% re-arrest rate, compared with 78% for kids who did not go there.

## What Makes Straight Ahead Academy Unique?

- **Vocational certification programs-** to give marketable skills through our network of potential employers. Certification will eventually be offered in computer competency, Bio-diesel manufacturing, Customer Service, Culinary Arts and Hospitality, small engine repair, automotive tune-up, brakes & mufflers, and EMT/First Responder. We also offer training in landscaping, painting, carpentry, and bicycle repair.



leadership principles and William Glasser's Choice Theory.

- **Bridging the gap from state care to independence-** It is our intention to continue providing support and mentoring to all Academy graduates even when their stay in state care has been completed. We recognize the serious problem that state agencies face when clients are discharged from their care and potentially become homeless and move into shelters.

- **Aftercare is a priority-** In addition to preparing youth for healthy transition out of the juvenile justice system we have a wide network of churches, individuals, businesses and job opportunities for youth when they leave. The cities of Worcester, Gardner, Leominster, and Fitchburg, Massachusetts are within twenty miles of our site and will be the source of mentors, potential employers and volunteers to forge connections with kids. We also plan on providing independent living opportunities in those communities to create fluid step-down approach to reintegrating into the community. Our services extend beyond a young person's commitment to the juvenile justice system.

- **Daily recreational activities-** designed to stretch participants. We have a high/low ropes course, hundreds of miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, three-day wilderness trip experiences, an indoor swimming pool, fresh water lake with canoeing and fishing.

- **The Spiritual Component-** SAA is a faith-based program based on Judeo-Christian principles and is best suited for young men that have a desire and/or openness to addressing the spiritual issues of life. Youth will participate in spiritual activities throughout the week and the staff will be trained to address these issues in a thought-provoking and sensitive way. Opportunities to serve and give back to the community will be provided through mission trips and weekly community service.

To learn more about the Ready4Life Career & College Preparation program contact Scott Larson by phone at 508-393-7894 or by email [slarson@straightahead.org](mailto:slarson@straightahead.org).



- **GED and College Preparedness-** The educational component is designed to be the last stop for youth on their journey to adulthood. For many of these youth traditional schooling is no longer a practical option. Our primary educational focus will be GED instruction and testing. All of the young men will participate in vocational/employment training that will make them marketable for the job force. Some will focus on college preparation and be encouraged to enroll in college courses.

- **Character and Leadership Development-** designed to address the faulty thinking patterns and increase moral reasoning for youth. The program is grounded in transformational

## **Straight Ahead Ministry Opportunities:**

### **9th Annual School of Juvenile Justice Ministries**

April 23-26, 2007

Woodbound Inn, Rindge, NH

### **5th Annual House Parent Training School**

April 23-26, 2007

Woodbound Inn, Rindge, NH

### **Job opening for Massachusetts State Coordinator**

[Job description](#)

If you're interested in any of these schools more information can be found at [www.straightahead.org](http://www.straightahead.org) or by contacting Bonnie at [bonnie@straightahead.org](mailto:bonnie@straightahead.org) or 508-753-8700 ext 101

# Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJ) Chaplaincy

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Marshall Kenderdine  
February 20, 2007

[Like Doc Berman](#), I support and appreciate most faith-based prisoner support programs, though I don't think prisoners should be treated as a captive audience for proselytizing by anyone.

But I certainly think before Texas launches too many new faith-based programs, we should fully fund the oldest faith-based initiative in the history of Texas corrections: the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJ's) Chaplaincy program. Prisons chaplains are the Rodney Dangerfields of faith-based initiatives: They get no respect.

In his budget, Governor Rick Perry proposed a new one-thousand bed faith based program starting this spring, declaring:

The Governor believes faith-based programs should be expanded whenever possible in adult correctional facilities to reduce violence and recidivism. Although state funds cannot expressly be used for this purpose, TDCJ will announce an additional 1,000 prison beds in existing units this spring. The Governor supports this and future expansions whenever possible.

Depending on the programming, I might be okay with that, but here's my question: Aren't we putting the cart before the horse? Shouldn't Texas fully fund its Chaplaincy program first?

At a recent House Appropriations Criminal Justice Subcommittee hearing (I was [listening to it here](#)), Rep. Jim McReynolds said he had constituents who were concerned about the chaplains' budget being cut. TDCJ staff told him (and Chairman Turner confirmed) that Texas' chaplains' program had been slashed by approximately 50% in 2003. That funding has never been restored!

Man, somebody please tell me again how [the religious right has taken over](#) Texas state government?

So Texas has gutted its own Chaplaincy program, and now, without restoring it, Governor Perry wants to create a new "faith based" program that only serves 1/150th of the prisoners, and which will be run by whom? A private contractor? A church of this or that denomination? Chuck Colson?

Shouldn't Texas for starters, in this time of surplus, just double current funding for TDCJ's chaplains' program, if only to get it back to its level of support it had when the state's current leadership took over the reins?

Mr. Kenderdine is a freelance writer focusing on State Government. He can be reach by phone at (512) 517-5171 or by email: [marshall@lobbytx.com](mailto:marshall@lobbytx.com)

## Hope for Horizon

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Continue from page 2

Is justice served if there is no rehabilitation program, no training program, no educational program, no protection from gangs?

Horizon, one inmate told me, "is the most effective. This is the best. Put people into something like this. The individual has to change. That's the first thing that has to happen. The person has to change."

In Texas prisons, will a person change for the better? Or for the worse?

My money, literally and tragically, is on the latter. Except for those guys in Horizon. They see something beyond the sunrise and the sunset. They do seem to see hope.

And that's hard enough to do when you're sitting on a cushion in the pew of a church, thinking about having lunch at Luby's.

Carroll Wilson is the editor of the Times Record News, Wichita Falls, Texas, [www.TimesRecordNews.com](http://www.TimesRecordNews.com). He can be reached by calling (940) 720-3435.

Use this Ministry ID Key to locate Ministry Emphasis:

\*1=Prison \*2=Non-residential Aftercare \*3=Victim \*4=Professionals \*5=Juvenile Offenders \*6=Family  
\*7=Resources for other RJMs \*8=Residential Aftercare \*9=Jails \*10=By Mail

**\*CANADA**

**1,2,3,4, 5,6,7 Restorative Justice Outreach Ministries**  
Rev Larry Dewolf  
Box 55  
Drumheller  
Alberta TOJ OYO  
403-823-4736  
403-823-5995 **Fax**  
restore@praize.com

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**ALABAMA**

**7 Mothers Against Methamphetamine**  
Director  
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256-498-6263 **Fax**  
Office@mamasite.net  
www.mamasite.net

**ARKANSAS**

**Cornerstone Baptist Jail Chaplaincy**  
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**CALIFORNIA**

**1,5,9, 10 Follow up Ministries**  
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www.followupministries.org

**COLORADO**

**4 Desert Waters**  
Ventline for Correctional Staff & Families  
PO Box 355  
Florence 81226  
866-968-8368  
youvent@desertwaters.com  
www.desertwaters.com

**5 Youth Transformation Center**  
Jeannette Holtham, Exec Dir  
PO Box 38074  
Colorado Springs 80937  
719-440-1983  
[www.youthtransformationcenter.org](http://www.youthtransformationcenter.org)

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alhanson@ylm.org  
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**1,2,7 Released and Restored**  
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 ruth@releasedandrestored.org

## NEW YORK

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 Chaplain Don Snyder  
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 585-589-4726  
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## OKLAHOMA

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**10 Letters for the Lord**  
 c/o Linda Odell  
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**1,2, 5,9, 10 Casa Recovery Ministry/ New Starts Prison Ministry**  
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 843-248-8835 **Fax**  
 pnew@epiphanyministry.org  
 www.epiphanyministry.org

**1,7,9,10 Justice Ministries/ Prison Evangelism Outreach**  
 Sid Taylor  
 PO Box 3353  
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 843-558-2350  
 www.justiceministries.com

## SOUTH DAKOTA

**1,2,3,10 Prison Lighthouse**  
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 605-357-0780 **Fax**  
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 605-624-3123 **Fax**  
 Pastored@iw.net  
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**3 Victim Services Division-TDCJ**  
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 Austin 78711-3401  
 800-848-4284  
 512-406-5417 **Fax**

**1,3,5,8,9 Wheless Lane Christian Brothers Restorative Ministry**  
 Robert Mitchell/Robert Sephus  
 2702 Wheless Ln  
 Austin 78723  
 512-926-2988  
 O-Mitchell@webtv.net  
 www.whelessococ.org

**1,2,3,6, 7,9,10 Diocese of Beaumont Criminal Justice Ministry**  
 Deacon Harry Davis  
 PO Box 3948  
 Beaumont 77704-3948  
 409-838-0451  
 409-838-4511 **Fax**  
 hdavis@dioceseofbeaumont.org  
 www.dioceseofbmt.org

**1,3,4 International Institute of Faith Based Counseling**  
 Bill Yeary  
 1297 Calder  
 Beaumont 77701  
 409-832-9060

**6 Shepherd's Inn Gaspard Center**  
 Mary Green  
 PO Box 20618  
 Beaumont 77703-4921  
 409-898-8797  
 409-892-9534 **Fax**  
 shepherdsinn@gtba.org  
 www.gtba.org

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\*1=Prison \*2=Non-residential Aftercare \*3=Victim \*4=Professionals \*5=Juvenile Offenders \*6=Family  
\*7=Resources for other RJMs \*8=Residential Aftercare \*9=Jails \*10=By Mail

<b>1,2,5,7,9,10</b>	<b>Inmate Discipler Fellowship</b> Renee Armstrong PO Box 334 Bedford 76095-0334 817-285-1644 817-282-3264 <b>Fax</b> idf_rjm@sbcglobal.net	<b>2</b>	<b>King's Ministry</b> Bryan Boyd/Barbara Abbe 203 W 2nd Ave Ste B Corsicana 75110 903-654-0003	<b>1,7,8,9,10</b>	<b>Freedom Outreach Ministries</b> Mel Gipson PO Box 180941 Dallas 75218 214-325-9583 214-824-3499 <b>Fax</b> pastormel@affinity4.net
	<b>More than Conquerors</b> Kelley Purselley PO Box 210936 Bedford TX 76095 817-343-0492 www.conquerorsthroughchrist.com rpandktp@sbcglobal.net	<b>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10</b>	<b>Newlife Behavior Ministries</b> Buck Griffith 3833 S Staples Ste S-101 Corpus Christi 78472-2188 361-855-3372 361-855-7469 <b>Fax</b> nlbcasa@yahoo.com www.nlbm.org	<b>3</b>	<b>Hope for Healing Ministries, Inc and The Victim Memorial Center</b> Susan Edwards, Director PO Box 140132 Dallas TX 75214 214-477-2610 sedwards@hopeforhealingministries.org
<b>1,2,6,7,9</b>	<b>Regional CJM Center of S Texas</b> Gene Woodard PO Box 4056 Beeville 78104 361-358-9699 gwoodard@cablone.net	<b>1,9</b>	<b>Prayer-life Seminars Inc</b> Hugh White 630 Meadowbrook Dr Corpus Christi 78412-3019 361-993-7651 361-985-8615 <b>Fax</b> hughlwhite@aol.com www.prayer-lifeseminars.org	<b>5</b>	<b>Kingdom Visions</b> Dr. Dana Brockway PO Box 740681 Dallas 75734 469-633-0221 <a href="mailto:religious@kingdomsvision.org">religious@kingdomsvision.org</a> <a href="http://www.kingdomsvision.org">www.kingdomsvision.org</a>
<b>3,4,5,6,7,9,10</b>	<b>J.A.I.L. Ministry Inc</b> Steve Cannon PO Box 634 Belton 76513-0634 254-933-8506 254-933-7569 <b>Fax</b> jailmin@vvm.com	<b>1,2,3,9,10</b>	<b>"Be Free" Jail &amp; Prison Ministry</b> Chaplain Inga Davis 3236 Golfing Green Place Dallas 75234 972-247-1769 972-247-8487 <b>Fax</b> Befree@comcast.net	<b>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10</b>	<b>St Francis Anglican Church</b> Fr William Conner PO Box 140182 Dallas, 75201 972-900-7298 frwilliam@catholic.org www.angelfire.com/tx5/holycross
<b>1</b>	<b>Holy Ground Prison Ministry</b> Johnny T Horan 207 N Saeger Brenham 77833 979-836-6328 daphne@gcfchurch.us	<b>1,5</b>	<b>Chapel of Hope Ministries Inc</b> Frank E Graham Jr 6030 W White Rose Trl Dallas 75248-4934 972-980-1009 972-503-5392 <b>Fax</b> Frank@chapelofhope.org www.chapel-of-hope.org	<b>5</b>	<b>Juvenile Justice Ministries Network of TX</b> Weldon Fox PO Box 765156 Dallas 75376-5156 214-696-7834 info@jjmnt.org www.jjmnt.org
<b>1,2,8 (F),9</b>	<b>New Beginnings / TAX Bryan &amp; College Station</b> Pat Howard PO Box 3785 Bryan 77805 979-219-0671 979-361-4291 <b>Fax</b> phoward@co.brazos.tx.us	<b>1</b>	<b>Christian Fellowship Enrichment</b> Jim Lang PO Box 700023 Dallas TX 75370 972-283-7871 jjmlang41@aol.com	<b>1,2,3,9</b>	<b>R O D Ministires</b> Dale Truitt PO Box 710385 Dallas 75371-0385 214-827-8555 214-824-5355 <b>Fax</b> ddtruitt@hotmail.com www.rodministries.org
<b>1,9,10</b>	<b>Redeemed Ministries</b> Betty G Oates PO Box 891 Chico 76431-0891 940-644-5237 940-644-2982 <b>Fax</b> redeemedministry@hotmail.com	<b>1,2,4,5,7,9,10</b>	<b>First Baptist Dallas Prison Ministry</b> Jim Pence 1707 San Jacinto St Dallas 75201 214-969-2421 214-969-7847 <b>Fax</b> jpence@firstdallas.org www.firstdallas.org	<b>1,3,6,7,9,10</b>	<b>Texas Baptist Men</b> Don Gibson 333 N Washington Ave Dallas 75246-1782 214-828-5353 214-828-5284 <b>Fax</b> dgibson@bgct.org www.baptistmen.org

<b>1,2,3,5,9,10</b>	<b>Walking Through the Light Prison Ministry, Inc.</b> Eleuterio Z. Adame PO Box 4761 Dallas 75208-0761	<b>1,3</b>	<b>Bridges to Life</b> John Sage PO Box 19039 Houston 77224-9039 713-463-7200 713-465-5658 <b>Fax</b> jsage1@aol.com www.bridgestolife.org	<b>1,2,3,5,7,9,10</b>	<b>Restored to Christ</b> Harold Travis 14147 Ivy Bluff Ct Houston 77062 281-488-5110 281-488-8218 <b>Fax</b> harold@clearlakemethodist.org
<b>7</b>	<b>C O P E (Coalition of Prison Evangelists)</b> Fauhn Schierer 1001 W Euleess Blvd Ste 212 Euleess 76040-5032 817-684-7870 817-684-7876 <b>Fax</b> office@copeministries.org www.copeministries.org	<b>1,2,3,5,6,7,9,10</b>	<b>C O O L Ministries Inc</b> Boyd Harrell 5005 West 34th Street, St 130C Houston 77092 713-592-0134 1-866-992-COOL we.cool@cfaith.com www.coolministries.net	<b>1,3,4,6,9,10</b>	<b>Servants of Christ Prison Ministry</b> Sibble Knight PO Box 111275 Houston 77293-0275 281-449-2703
<b>1,6,7</b>	<b>Parents and Children Together (PACT)</b> Rev Suzanne Boeglin 2836 Hemphill St Fort Worth 76110-3214 817-924-7776 pact1924@sbcglobal.net	<b>1,9</b>	<b>Crossover USA</b> Gary R Nichols 911 Westmont Houston 77015 713-545-7991 713-455-7060 <b>Fax</b> gnichols@crossoverusa.com	<b>1</b>	<b>Skills for Life Inc</b> James Lynn Arnold 6223 Greenway Forest Ln Houston 77088-4012 281-931-9122 281-447-1784 <b>Fax</b> arnojl@msn.com
<b>7</b>	<b>World Bible Translation Center</b> Glenn Peden 4028 Daley Ave Fort Worth 76180-8600 817-595-1664 817-589-7013 <b>Fax</b> glenn@wbtc.com www.wbtc.org	<b>1,3,4,5,8,9,10</b>	<b>Epiphany Ministries of Texas</b> Chuck Talbot PO Box 590578 Houston 77259 chucktal@msn.com www.texasepiphany.com	<b>1</b>	<b>Chaplaincy Operations TDCJ-ID</b> Bill Pierce, Director PO Box 99 Huntsville 77342-0099 936-437-7192 936-437-7191 or 936-293-1321 <b>Fax</b> billy.pierce@tdcj.state.tx.us
<b>10</b>	<b>Write-way Prison Ministries Inc</b> Ralph Nichols PO Box 461582 Garland 75046-1582 972-840-9798 972-864-9692 <b>Fax</b> writewaypm@juno.com	<b>5,7,10</b>	<b>Initiatives for America's Youth</b> Boone Vastine 15153 Kimberley Ct Houston 77079-5130 281-493-4556 layjjm@aol.com	<b>1</b>	<b>Chaplaincy Support TDCJ-ID</b> Richard Lopez, Director 936-437-7181 richard.lopez@tdcj.state.tx.us
<b>1,2,4,6,7,8(F),9,10</b>	<b>Cross Prison Ministries Inc</b> Carole Ross PO Box 412 Gatesville 76528-0412 254-865-5163 crossprisonministry@htcomp.net	<b>9</b>	<b>Jail Chaplaincy Ministry</b> Freddie Wier PO Box 30262 Houston 77249-0262 713-569-2929	<b>1</b>	<b>Elkins Lake Baptist Church</b> Rev Ken Huggins 206 State Highway 19 Huntsville 77340-7152 936-295-7694 936-295-3388 <b>Fax</b> elbc@lcc.net www.elbc.org
<b>1</b>	<b>Discipleship Unlimited</b> Dallas / Linda Strom PO Box 145 Gatesville 76528 discipleship@earthlink.net www.liferow.org	<b>6</b>	<b>Newgate Connection</b> Wesley Stevens PO Box 96333 Houston 77213-9633 281-452-2352 wfstevens@pdq.net	<b>1,2,3</b>	<b>Episcopal Diocese of TX RJM</b> Edwin Davis 2003 Avenue P Huntsville 77340-5029 936-291-3153 edsalpc@yahoo.com
<b>1,2,3,4,5,6,9,10</b>	<b>Morning Star Jail/Prison Ministry</b> Rev Robert L Buchanan 2251 El Paso Grand Prairie 75051 setatliberty1@aol.com www.morningstar-baptist.org	<b>1,7,9</b>	<b>Oil of Joy for Mourning</b> Rev Rhonda Arias PO Box 720768 Houston 77272-0768 713-419-1214 281-879-8433 oilofjoy@sbcglobal.net www.ojfm.org	<b>1,2,3,4,6</b>	<b>First Baptist Church</b> David Valentine, Pastor 1229 Avenue J Huntsville 77340-4698 936-291-3441 david.valentine@fbchuntsville.org www.fbchuntsville.org

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<p><b>1,2</b> <b>First Baptist Church "Welcome Back" Ministry</b> <b>Jerry Phillips, Associate Pastor</b> 1229 Avenue J Huntsville 77340-4698 Jerry Phillips, Associate Pastor jerry.phillips@fbchuntsville.org</p>	<p><b>1,6,10</b> <b>Texas HOPE Literacy Inc</b> Lucy Smith PO Box 905 Hurst 76053-0905 817-282-9489 lucy@hopelit.com www.hopelit.com</p>	<p><b>1,2,4,6,7,9,10</b> <b>Preaching the Cross Ministries</b> Bobby Griffith PO Box 633741 Nacogdoches 75963-3741 936-326-4556 936-326-4229 <b>Fax</b> ptcmgriffith@wmconnect.com</p>
<p><b>6</b> <b>Hospitality House</b> Freddy Walters 912 10th St Huntsville 77320-3937 936-291-6196 freddy.walters@thehospitalityhouse.org www.thehospitalityhouse.org</p>	<p><b>1</b> <b>The Brotherhood of St Andrew</b> Oliver Osborn PO Box 537 Lake Jackson 77566-0537 979-297-6217 eosborn@brazosport.cc.tx.us</p>	<p><b>1,2,4,6,9,10</b> <b>Loops (Loved Ones of Prisoners)</b> Leland / Linda Maples PO Box 14953 Odessa 79768-4953 432-580-5667 432-580-8299 <b>Fax</b> leland@loopsministries.com www.loopsministries.com</p>
<p><b>7</b> <b>Restorative Justice Ministries Network</b> Emmett Solomon, Exec Director 1229 Avenue J, Suite 360 Huntsville 77340-4698 936-291-2156 936-291-6260 Fax esolomon@sbcglobal.net www.rjmn.net</p> <p>Anita Parrish, Ministry Assistant arparrish@sbcglobal.net Bill Kleiber kleiber@sbcglobal.net</p>	<p><b>1,2,3,7,8(B),9,10</b> <b>Calvary Commission</b> Joe Fauss PO Box 100 Lindale 75771-0100 903-882-5501 903-882-7282 <b>Fax</b> joefauss@calvarycommission.org www.calvarycommission.org</p>	<p><b>1,2,3,5,7</b> <b>God's Friend Ministries Inc</b> Jack McClelland 3727 N 16th Ste 287 Orange 77632 409-988-3865 godsfriend@gt.rr.com</p>
<p><b>3</b> <b>TDCJ Victim Services</b> Jim Brazzil PO Box 949 Huntsville 77432 936-437-4941 jim.brazzil@tdcj.state.tx.us</p>	<p><b>1,2,7, 10</b> <b>Freedom in Jesus Ministries</b> Don Castleberry PO Box 6525 Lubbock 79493-6525 806-778-3923 806-791-5853 <b>Fax</b> fijm@nts-online.net</p>	<p><b>1,2,3,4,8(B),9</b> <b>Mike Hooker Ministries</b> Mike / Charlotte R Hooker PO Box 143 Queen City 75572-0143 903-796-5297 214-796-6592 <b>Fax</b></p>
<p><b>1,7</b> <b>The Old Time Religion Hour Inc</b> Rev George Lupo PO Box 1225 Huntsville 73342 936-293-8000</p>	<p><b>1</b> <b>Encouraging Word Ministries</b> Margaret Hackler 2401 N McColl Rd McAllen 78501 956-686-7728 rmont55@aol.com</p>	<p><b>1,5,7,9,1</b> <b>From Pain to Joy Prison Ministries</b> Henry M Sorelle 14 Canyon Creek Vlg #44 Richardson 75080-1602 972-231-9606 972-392-0446</p>
<p><b>1,5</b> <b>University Heights Baptist Church</b> Bro Richard Rogers 2400 Sycamore Ave Huntsville 77340-6120 936-295-2996</p>	<p><b>5,7</b> <b>Lifechange Mentoring</b> Shirley Orr Smith PO Box 9535 Midland 79708-9535 sos@lifechangementoring.org www.lifechangementoring.org</p>	<p><b>1,2,3,6,7,10</b> <b>Operation Oasis</b> Michael Lee 302 Centennial Blvd Richardson 75081-5057 972-437-3801 972-437-3139 <b>Fax</b> mlee@operation-oasis.org www.operation-oasis.org</p>
<p><b>2,5</b> <b>Winner's Circle Juvenile Program</b> Kent Lucas 550 Elkins Lake Huntsville 77340 936-436-9467</p>	<p><b>10</b> <b>OpenArms Ministry</b> Diana B Moore PO Box 1808 Mission 78573-0031 956-445-2333 956-585-3113 mrst24dbt@aol.com</p>	<p><b>1,2,4,7</b> <b>Worldwide Voice in the Wilderness</b> Johnny Moffitt 1221 Abrams Rd Ste 250 Richardson 75081-5580 972-234-6009 972-234-6050 <b>Fax</b> johnnymoffitt@sbcglobal.net</p>

<p><b>2</b>     <b>One Man's Treasure</b> Mary Carter PMB 211 519 I-30 Rockwall 75087 888-433-9826 dca7704051@aol.com</p>	<p><b>1,2</b>     <b>Trinity RJM</b> Galynn Ferris 3919 Snag Ln Spring 77388 281-352-3913 galynn@trinityrjm.com www.trinityrjm.com</p>	<p><b>VIRGINIA</b> <b>1,5,9, 10</b>     <b>Good News Jail &amp; Prison Ministry</b> Dr Tom Beckner PO Box 9760 Richmond 23228-0760 804-553-4090 804-553-4144 <b>Fax</b> info@goodnewsjail.org www.goodnewsjail.org</p>
<p><b>1,2,7</b>     <b>Christian Restorative Justice Mentors Assoc</b> Murray Batt PO Box 131412 Spring 77393-1412 281-292-0442 murray@crjma.org www.crjma.org</p>	<p><b>1,4,6</b>     <b>Houston Trinity Prison Ministry</b> Romeo Pena PO Box 1411 Sugar Land 77487-1411 713-906-3407</p>	<p><b>WASHINGTON</b> <b>1,4</b>     <b>His Sufficient Grace Ministries</b> 2424 130th Pl Se Everett 98208-6708 425-357-8596 ldgroom@comcast.net</p>
<p><b>1,10</b>     <b>Joy Prison Ministry</b> Ura White PO Box 7324 Spring 77387-7324 281-253-8342</p>	<p><b>1,9</b>     <b>Fruitful Harvest Prison Ministry</b> Charles Sickles P.O. Box 1130 Sulphur Springs 75483 903-885-1424 903-348-6415 fruitfulharvest@verizon.net</p>	<p><b>1</b>     <b>Prisoners for Christ Outreach Ministries</b> Greg Von Tobel PO Box 1530 Woodinville WA 98072 425-483-4151 gvt@pfc.org www.pfc.org</p>
<p><b>7</b>     <b>UMC TX Conference Criminal Justice &amp; Mercy Ministries</b> Jack Walker Spring 77393-1412 713-569-1076 jweswalker@aol.com www.newgateinitiative.org</p>	<p><b>1,7,9, 10</b>     <b>Woodville Church of Christ Prison Ministry</b> PO Box 276 Woodville 75799-0276 409-283-5977 woodvillecoc@sbcglobal.net</p>	
<p><b>1</b>     <b>Accepting Grace Ministries Inc</b> Joe L / Betty Waggoner PO Box 983 Stamford 79553-0983 325-773-2248 bettyj@camalott.com</p>	<p><b>1,7,9, 10</b>     <b>Cornerstone Prison Ministry</b> Chaplain Al Gibbons PO Box 1672 Wylie 75098-1672 972-475-5789 972-412-7748 <b>Fax</b> cspmin@clearsail.net</p>	

List your ministry in the RJNews Ministries Directory and on rjmn.net.  
 Contact Anita Parrish Phone: 936.291.2156 or  
 email: aparrish@rjmn.net

## Welcome Back Ministry

The Welcome Back ministry is looking for volunteers with email addresses who are willing to greet and encourage ex-offenders as they are released from incarceration.

Volunteers meet with offenders prior to their release. At that time the offenders are invited to give contact information. This information is emailed to a volunteer in the community in which the ex-offender will reside.

The community volunteer provides information about resources in the community, food, clothes, phone numbers, churches that will welcome ex-offenders, etc.

If interested in becoming a Welcome Back contact please, email Bill Kleiber at kleiber@sbcglobal.net.

## Welcome Back success story

The following email message came to Bill Ponder, a volunteer who sends out releasees information emails to local community volunteers from Gatesville State Prison and several state jails.

The email is as follows:

*We made the contact to the family with the just released prisoner. One of our members, Mike Dikovitsky went to their house. The son was not there at the time, but the mother was. When Mike told her who he was and why he was there, she started crying and saying, "God found me! How did you know where we were?" Sunday morning her and her son both came to encounter and loved it.*

*They were so grateful for the contact, for the attention, and for the chance to be in church. They said they would be back and have signed up to attend the next "entry" event we have.*

# 15 years and 15 days

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By Allen Rice III  
Published in the Spirit Key News  
December 15, 2006

Byron served his entire 15 year sentence in the Texas Department Criminal of Justice (TDCJ) and they released him to the street November 13, 2006. The day of his release, he met Bill Klieber (see related article on page 16) of the Restorative Justice Ministry Network (RJMN). RJMN established the “Welcome Back” program that would become the safety net to return Byron to his family in California.

After rejoining the free world and meeting Bill at the bus depot in Huntsville TX, Byron was taken by bus to Houston with little money (\$50). It went away fast - with no money, no job, no family in Texas and no family with an ability to help him, he did the best he could. With the cold night temperatures, the shelters were full. Besides, they have a very similar feeling to the prison he had just left.

Unfortunately while sleeping one night under a bridge, Byron was arrested and spent the night in the city jail. The food and a shower there were refreshing but it was not the direction he wanted to go.

Byron wanted to get a job and save enough money to go home to his family in California. With no driver’s license, no address and no clothes, this plan was nearly impossible.

“Welcome Back’s” 1-800 hotline number was Byron’s lifeline.

He called each day to seek assistance for his dilemma. Bill Klieber had begun orchestrating a way to help Byron with the assistance of several organizations, individuals and churches in the Houston area.

Bill talked to Bryon’s family in Los Angeles, and they were anxious for him to come home, but had no resources to help get him there.

My name is Allen Rice and I had been reading emails from Bill for several days of various attempts to put together a plan of action. It had been fifteen days since Byron had been released with him living on the streets and eating at soup kitchens.

We needed to take action... I called Bill and said, “Lets go! Spirit Key can do this!” Bill had found an attorney that was sympathetic, offering to pay the bus ticket. He also enlisted the help of John, a disabled ex-offender, who rides the city buses, helping others.

John was to get the money from the attorney and meet us at the bus depot. Bill had also arranged for a package of items at the bus station. I went to Cypress Assistance Ministries (CAM), got some shirts, a backpack, water, bread, and a Bible for the trip. I picked up a newspaper, magazine and some cookies donated from City Brew Coffee. I called Mike Riggs and off we went down-town to the Bus Depot.

While John was getting the money Byron was walking towards the Greyhound Bus Station on South Main.

“There he is!” I had picked him out of the crowd; I felt like he must be our guy. Mike pulled the van, still in the street, up next to the guy standing near the pole. “Byron?”

“Yes!” He said. “Get in” I replied, and off we went.

Mike drove into the McDonalds across from the Bus Depot. “Are you hungry Byron?”

“Yes I am,” Byron said with anticipation.

I had just finished telling Mike stories about buying people their first Mickey D’s after being in prison 10-15 years and I said, “Now’s your time Mike!

Mike and Byron went into the restaurant to get Byron’s feast (and Mike’s).

Meanwhile, I went looking for John, the guy with the money for the ticket for the bus. John called me on his cell phone and we pointed at each other across the street.

The next step was complete. A travel bag full of clothes and shoes from the Texas Inmate Family Association (TIFA), Cross Roads Baptist Church and RJMN, arranged by Bill, had been delivered to the bus depot. John and I went looking for the travel bag; however, John said, “I got to the attorneys office and they had closed for the day and there was no money.”

“No problem!” we said, Spirit Key would pay for the bus ticket .



Continue on page 16

# Reform at TYC must go beyond ending sex abuse

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Continued from page 1

A criminal investigation that languished for years is now gaining steam, and TYC has been placed under new management. More fundamental changes are needed.

Beyond the sexual abuse, TYC suffers from a 48 percent annual employee turnover rate, producing youth/staff ratios nearly twice the nationally recommended maximum of 12:1. The result has been bedlam. Youths flooded a dorm and threw computers at the Evins facility in McAllen, which is now under a Department of Justice investigation.

One out of seven TYC workers file workers' compensation claims, at a cost of \$6 million. Many youths go weeks without the rehabilitative programs that are supposed to be provided, likely due to the staffing ratios.

TYC facilities exist in remote locations, which make hiring complicated because the work force in these areas is small. Twenty-three percent (or 630) of its commitments come from Harris County, but TYC has no institution or halfway house in the Houston area. The open-bay, prison-style barracks in TYC institutional facilities that have as many as 600 youths also undermine hiring and retention, because youths are much more difficult to manage than they would be in a setting with a smaller population and more privacy.

About 64 percent of TYC youths are nonviolent offenders. Most can be rehabilitated more effectively in a community-based setting rather than a prison-style facility.

TYC could establish a separate therapeutic facility exclusively for nonviolent youth with a drug offense or a property offense that is linked to their drug habit. It should be in a major urban area so qualified staff can be retained and should offer a day treatment component. Intensive day treatment costs \$20,000 a year, as opposed to \$57,000 at TYC.

Missouri has become a national model in juvenile justice reform. It transitioned from large training schools featuring bars and jumpsuits to group homes of 30 to 40 young offenders that provide a nurturing environment and vocational programs. Missouri's recidivism rate is now 8 percent; TYC's is more than 50 percent. And Missouri's approach costs \$14,000 less per ward per year.

Even better than diversifying the types of TYC facilities, Texas should consider altering the entire juvenile justice funding system to incentivize counties so that they develop community correctional programs for youth instead of punting their problems to TYC.

Through its innovative RECLAIM (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternative to Incarceration of Minors) program, Ohio took funds previously allocated to its version of TYC and instead distributed them to county probation departments based on population and delinquency levels.

Under RECLAIM, juvenile judges may use the allocated funds either to treat juvenile offenders in the community or pay to commit them to the state. Youths convicted of serious violent offenses like murder and rape are sentenced without using the RECLAIM funds. According to a University of Cincinnati study, RECLAIM has resulted in a 7 percent recidivism rate and 36 percent fewer commitments to the state.

The RECLAIM program contrasts with the Texas system, where the state bears the full cost of TYC commitments but funds only 30 percent of local juvenile probation. TYC commitments cost nothing to the counties, leaving them with little incentive to maximize the use of alternatives that are primarily locally funded. In fact, several county post-adjudication facilities for youth have closed in the past year, while TYC is expected to see more commitments every year, culminating with a projected need for 769 beds by 2012.

Insufficient staff and inappropriate facilities certainly do not excuse the abuse at TYC. However, by either diversifying TYC's facilities to give the agency options for youth they receive who do not need institutionalization or removing the fiscal incentive for local governments to make unnecessary commitments to TYC, this shameful situation can provide the impetus for future success.

*Levin is director of the Center for Effective Justice at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a nonprofit, free-market research institute based in Austin.*

# 15 years and 15 days

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Continued from page 14

We had a few minutes to talk to Byron. He is a great guy who attended a Kairos weekend (a Christian program inside prison). He has a sister that is very spiritual and a loving family waiting I called the family on the phone and Byron talked to Liz, his sister, and he told her he would arrive in 30 hours (that next night). Byron got his ticket, backpack and travel bag. Just before his departure, Mike took this picture of the two of us, so we could share his story with Spirit Key News readers. Most importantly, we could remember the day we witnessed the Body of Christ, the true church coming together. A church of many people that have never met, with one purpose and one purpose only, to be Samaritans, to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Our prayers go out to Byron that he will find a great church home, friends, some Christian Kairos brothers and a small group of Godly men to pray and share with.

What a day and what a blessing, experiencing the joy of giving to someone else. Yes, here I am Lord - send me!

As of this printing, Byron has been reunited with his family and is seeking work in the greater Los Angeles area. As his sister said in a recent phone conversation, "He is doing great! Byron is looking for a job right now! Thank you for everything and God Bless you!"

Thanks to the Lord indeed for His magnificent church!

Mr. Allen Rice, III is the Executive Director/Founder of Spirit Key Ministry. He can be reached by phone at: 281-813-0093 or by email: [allen.rice@spiritkey.org](mailto:allen.rice@spiritkey.org).

## Using our gifts in service of our Lord

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By Emmett Solomon

Four years ago, Bill Kleiber, a formerly incarcerated person came to volunteer at the Restorative Justice Ministries Network office in Huntsville. It was quickly noted by all that Bill had great ability to do telephone counseling with the many former prisoners who called the office on our 800 number. They voiced all sorts of needs and we in the office were relieved to have someone with such telephone counseling ability.

Let me back up a year. After being released, Bill came to Trinity Texas to live with his mother. She was elderly and lonely. When he got there, he found that Jim Parrish, pastor of the Burning Hope Baptist Church in Trinity was ministering regularly to his mother. Ministering along side Jim was his wife, Anita. She also is the Office Manager for RJMN in Huntsville.

After sometime Bill was no longer able to live with his mother and Jim and Anita let him live in their home until he found a place. During that time he began to volunteer at the RJMN office.

Soon the Lord provided funds for Bill to work part-time at the office. He built a ministry at the Huntsville bus station where hundreds of men each week gladly catch the bus on their way out of Huntsville. Bill is the first civilian to "strike up" a conversation with them after their release. He shares information about their impending transition and has a prayer circle for all who want to join. (Dozens of men each day join hands and ask God for help as they leave Huntsville.)

Bill has been doing the bus station ministry each week day for 4 years. After the men leave town, he returns to the office and begins emailing contact information which the men gave to our volunteers the night before at the "Welcome Back" program inside the "Walls."

His work at his computer is interrupted several times each hour by calls from people who were released a week or month or year ago. They keep that 800 number handy in case they have a need that they do not know how to handle. At that point they dial Bill and he cheerfully visits with them about their issues.

Bill has found a ministry for which he has been uniquely gifted by our Lord. My prayer is that each of us may find that place of service for which our Lord has gifted us!

# Alternatives to more prisons

Note from the Editor: The following excerpted are from an article entitled *Alternatives to More Prisons Promote Public Safety, Restorative Outcomes, and Fiscal Responsibility* by Marc Levin, Esq., Director of the Center for Effective Justice. The article in its entirety can be found at <http://www.texaspolicy.com/pdf/2007-02-PP03-CEJ-ml.pdf>.

For decades, Texas policymakers have been caught in a cycle of regularly passing sentencing enhancements and restricting parole and then, after several biennia, responding to the overflow of inmates by building new prisons. However, January 29, 2007 represented a critical moment as state leaders endeavored to break this cycle. First, Governor Rick Perry issued an executive order creating the Texas Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center and, later that day, two alternative scenarios to new prisons were presented by Senate Criminal Justice Committee Chairman John Whitmire (D-Houston) and House Corrections Chairman Jerry Madden (RPlano) at a historic joint hearing of the Senate Criminal Justice and House Corrections Committees.

These scenarios would spare taxpayers \$1 billion in costs associated with building and operating the 4,000 new prison beds over the next decade, which were proposed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Moreover, these alternative frameworks would herald a culture shift away from excessive incarceration of nonviolent offenders and towards community-based approaches that are more effective than prison in treating addicted and mentally ill offenders, collecting restitution for victims, preserving families, and collecting the \$2.5 billion in child support owed by Texas prisoners, who cannot earn money while behind bars.

## **Scenario One:** Parole Reforms, SAFF/DUI Treatment & Halfway Houses

The first scenario relies in part on parole reforms to keep the prison population at current levels. This scenario also includes a new 1,000 bed combination Substance Abuse Felony Punishment (SAFF) and Driving Under the Influence (DUI) treatment unit to be available by September 1, 2008, an item that was also requested by TDCJ in addition to the 4,000 hard beds and recommended by the Sunset Commission. This unit is estimated to result in 6,244 diversions from prison by addressing the backlog of up to 1,900 inmates who have been paroled but are waiting to complete a six-month treatment program that is a condition of release set by Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP). This scenario also includes creating 150 new halfway house beds to clear out the backlog of paroled inmates awaiting release as soon as they have a home plan.

## **Scenario Two:** SAFF/DUI Treatment, Halfway Houses, ISF Facilities, Probation Residential Treatment Facilities, IPTC, and Conversion of Youth Facilities

The second scenario, based on no additional offenders being paroled, envisions: This second scenario could cost an additional \$142.7 million in the 2008-09 biennium, but would avert the \$377 million in proposed new prison construction costs. Moreover, the second scenario is projected to net a total savings of \$65.1 million by 2012. Central to the second scenario is a focus on short term, community-based residential beds. The new probation residential treatment and ISF beds would provide a community-based alternative for probationers now revoked to prison for technical violations, such as testing positive for drugs, or a new drug possession offense. When such offenders go for timeout and treatment for 90 days or more in one of these secure community residential facilities, the state saves the costs of the offender being revoked to prison for years. These programs also include a job training and community-service component, making it more likely that offenders will be rehabilitated and employed so that they can support themselves and meet any restitution and child support obligations. This scenario also envisions converting two Texas Youth Commission (TYC) facilities into prisons.

While prison—including health care—now costs the state \$49.40 per day, parole costs \$3.15 a day.

This scenario would result in savings of \$99.8 million for the 2008-09 biennium and \$543 million by 2012, not including the avoided cost of building new prisons.

Some lawmakers have asked what the fallback position would be if, for some reason, the projected diversions in these scenarios do not materialize. First, more beds can be leased from county jails, which are currently at 90 percent capacity. We also recommend that the Legislature lift arbitrary caps on capacity at privately operated prisons.

While the state's criminal justice challenges can seem daunting, they are easier to solve precisely because, for the most part, incarceration is now the hammer and every offender the nail. Given that half of Texas prison inmates are nonviolent offenders, we need not and should not hesitate to incarcerate when it comes to violent offenders. By simply utilizing a bigger toolbox when it comes to nonviolent drug offenders, and selected nonviolent property and DUI offenders, Texas taxpayers can be spared a billion dollar commitment to new prisons. Furthermore, we can transition to a system that still punishes and protects public safety, but also more effectively reforms offenders and restores victims.

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The board of the non-profit corporation includes: Emmett Solomon, Don Gibson, and Jim Young.

We welcome your questions, comments, subscriptions and news articles. Subscriptions should be sent to Anita Parrish, Ministry Assistant at [aparrish@rjmn.net](mailto:aparrish@rjmn.net). Comments, questions and news articles may be sent to Emmett Solomon, Executive Director at [esolomon@rjmn.net](mailto:esolomon@rjmn.net). Articles are subject to space available.

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