

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

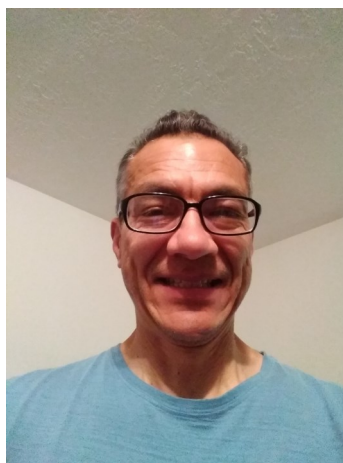
2020



MY LIFE SO FAR BY Max Hamilton as told to Don Johnston

My life before I met Christ was grades 1 through 12 I went to along with everybody. After I Indian School here in Albuquerque. That was about 1982 in 1981.

My conversion day was April torcycle stolen. The cops caught pretty drunk at the time. My Flagstaff and proceeded to not my motorcycle in the back of the que.



pretty normal I thought. From class, did my homework, and got graduated high school I went to the que called Southwest Indian Poly- because I had graduated high school

18, 1982 On this day I had my mom in Flagstaff, Arizona. He was mother and I drove our Ford 150 to only bail him out of jail, but also put truck and haul it back to Albuquerque.

Before we got to Flagstaff I informed my mother how cool it would be to drive the rocketbike back 300 miles to Albuquerque. She immediately sat me down, had me recite the Sinner's Prayer with her. Nothing tangible happened at that moment, but I do remember having an exceptional day the very next day. I was walking half an inch off the ground the entire day, and I had this slight feeling in my chest area that my heart had been uplifted too. So that's what happened on April 18 of 1982. It's been almost 37 years since that magical experience and Jesus has never let me down once!

DON JOHNSTON: Did you ride your motorbike back from Flagstaff?

MAX: No I didn't We brought it back in Mom's truck. Before I met Christ I never gave a thought about spiritual matters. I remember being invited to a Bible study one time in the 7th grade. A couple of classmates made the nice invitation. But my reaction was laughter so they left me alone. Later in 10th grade my best friend almost witnessed to me but I wasn't ready. His father, being a psychologist, gave me a detailed questionnaire to determine my personality. I never got the results but I could tell from the questions and my honest answers that I had a lot of depression and hopelessness.

Although I have never attempted suicide I was waking up every morning of my life with feeling of dread. I never took seriously those people who claim they wake up saying, "Thank you God for another day!" It might seem strange that it has taken me the last 37 years of knowing the Lord to feel better. I have even resorted to drinking and doing drugs to get by. So to combat my addictions I have attended hundreds of AA meetings and the Turquoise Lodge rehab hospital. But the greatest thing anyone can learn about reality is the love of God through His words in the Holy Scriptures.



Registry facing test in PA Supreme Court

By Angela Coulumbis

The landmark Pennsylvania law that for nearly a quarter of a century has required a public registry of sex offenders and community notification about their whereabouts is facing a life-or-death challenge before the state's highest court.

Enacted nearly 25 years ago, Megan's Law was hailed as a pivotal step toward making communities safer by empowering the public with information about where sex offenders live. Now, five separate cases before the state Supreme Court are attacking it as outdated, discriminatory, and unnecessarily cruel, depriving thousands of people of their



fundamental rights.

The cases challenge nearly every aspect of the law, which has undergone several incarnations since being signed in 1995, one year after the death of 7-year-old Megan Kanka. The New Jersey girl was raped and killed by a neighbor who, unbeknownst to her family, was a twice-convicted pedo-

phile. Similar laws were adopted across the United States and at the federal level.

Prosecutors believe the pending cases could gut Pennsylvania's law, allowing sexually violent predators to evade detection and endangering public safety. They also warn that the law's best-known aspect — the website that lists the thousands of offenders in the state — could be watered down or dismantled. In the last year alone, the website received 411 million page views, state records show.



Reintegration from prison into society

By Howard Ambruster

I would have to say that my answer although it may sound like a pat answer to reintegration to society from prison is Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit!

When I was released from prison I was sent to a Therapeutic Community at Las Vegas Medical Center in New Mexico which was a blessing because it was a culmination of 15 years of biblical and psychological research and application to my life. In addition taking advantage of all the ministry opportunities while I was in prison!

I did have the advantage of a halfway house even though I had a ruthless parole officer who ended every sentence with "or go to jail"

It was about careful preparation

before I got out in addition to following the leading of the Holy Spirit!



I was blessed that the Lord put a man in my way that wasn't even born again, was gay but had the ear of the big bosses at the business he was working for which was a professional fundraiser!

God opened the door for me getting the job that I held for 10 years straight!

I enjoyed the job cuz I was able to talk with people Coast to Coast border to border and get involved with some people in a form of ministry praying for them, biblical advice, etc. And as a result the Lord blessed them and me!

Just remember this any opportunity that you get when you get out especially work; do it as though you're doing it unto the Lord and you should be blessed!



Is refusing registered former sexual offenders shelter and support our best choice? Originally published at the Exponent Telegram.

By Sandy . . . Gary Keith, city councilman and real estate agent of Clarksburg, West Virginia, has propelled himself into the spotlight by protesting against the policy of the Clarksburg Mission to extend their services to those in need indiscriminately, specifically to those who have a conviction for any one of a vast multitude of behaviors that causes one to be listed on a sexual offense registry.

He begins his op-ed, intended to amplify on his 30-minute video piece, with saying that he wants to educate the public. It is a shame that his attempts at education do not include what decades of studies show about those who commit sexual crime. Once punished and living in the community, their rate of reoffense is remarkably low, in the low single digits according to virtually every valid study. The factors most associated with rehabilitation and remaining offense free, this furthering the interests of public safety, are those things that the mission provides: a decent place to live, stability, support, acceptance, encouragement, and, in some cases, employment.

Rather than laud the mission for serving a much-needed role in the recovery and stability of these men, Mr. Keith chooses to criticize them for doing so and seeks to seriously damage their future operations by appealing to the public to cease their donations to the mission, donations on which the mission depends.

His primary point of contention is that the registrants staying at the mission are not from the immediate area. He says he is unable to find evidence that any of the shelter's registered

residents have ever had a Harrison County address. He also obviously could find no evidence that any of those residents have reoffended or engaged in any violence while at the mission, or he would surely have pointed that out.

Mr. Keith is raising the specter of the "other," the "outsider," to create unease and even fear in Clarksburg residents. He maintains that those on the registry in need of assistance are attracted to Clarksburg because similar organizations in other areas will not take them.

This is possibly the only factual point raised by Mr. Keith in his op-ed. Many such places refuse admittance to registrants. But rather than use his bully pulpit to try to shut down the one place in the area that does help them, why does Keith not rather encourage other missions and shelters to do what will best serve public safety and amend their policies to include acceptance of those on sexual offense registries?

It is not, however, what Mr. Keith does not do but what he does that quite possibly pushes the boundaries of decency and honesty.

As an example of the criminal outsider coming in and infiltrating the Clarksburg community, Keith finds a report of a man wanted by the police for assaulting his mother (Exponent Telegram, Nov. 21). Although the report does not say so, Keith maintains that the man was living at the mission and arrested there, and this may be true. What is not is any connection between this man and the targets of Mr. Keith's venom, persons on sexual offense registries. There is nothing to indicate that the wanted felon had a conviction for a

sexual crime, but this appears to be what Keith would have the reading public believe.

What is interesting is that the Telegram identifies the man as a "Clarksburg man," but Keith maintains that he was from Weirton and makes a point of this being nowhere near Harrison County. Far down from the report of the arrest of the wanted man is a report of another person, a registrant, who moved from Weirton and was living in the mission; he was charged with failure to report his change of address to the state police within the mandated ten-day period.

Somehow, deliberately or through carelessness, Mr. Keith has conflated these two men.

And this begs the question of why; what is Keith's motive? Only two seem logical.

Mr. Keith failed to do any research whatsoever on the topic and the issue, believes that the rehabilitation of former sexual offenders is aided by their being homeless and lacking support, believes that the two different men with totally different names discussed in the Telegram are the same person, and is doing what he actually feels to be in the best interest of his community.

Or Mr. Keith has some ulterior motive, possibly personal. He is, after all, a real estate agent. Does he represent properties close to the mission, and, if so, has he had difficulties perceived by him to be due to the presence of persons on the registry living at Clarksburg Mission?

I have no idea, but it does seem like a question that needs to be asked.

THOUGHTS FROM ALICE

The story of Max on page one is a great joy both to us and to his mother.

I want you to know how thankful Don and I are to those of you who are now supporting him with a salary. Don has worked tirelessly for 9 years as a volunteer to Titus House. Recently our board of 7 voted to give Don a monthly salary for his tireless efforts of producing an interesting monthly newsletter which goes to inmates in over half the US and to a combined readership of 800 folks.

Along with the newsletter, Don ministers to released inmates over the phone, and both of us teach 10 to 20 inmates at La Pasada halfway house every Friday evening. We often have someone who has just arrived from prison. Don continually shops for basic clothing for these guys. Now in the wintertime they show much appreciation for our efforts. Thank you for donating clothing and some basic essentials for these folks.

We both hold a monthly support group at Foothills Fellowship Church on Tramway Blvd. Many of us attend Foothill's Sunday service at 10:00. Please join with us if you are looking for a friendly church.





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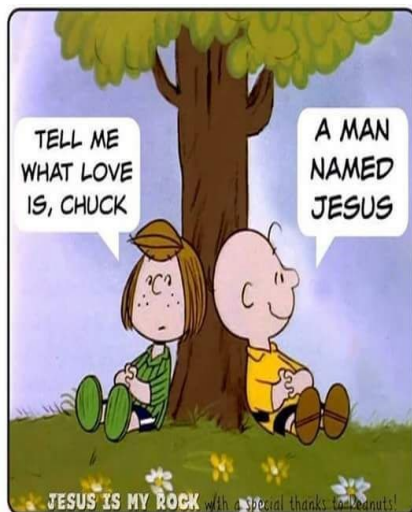
Email: donmagicjohnston@gmail.com

We're on the Web

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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Remember if you change your address you need to let us know if you want to continue to receive this newsletter



Illinois Supreme Court says no to blanket social media ban for registered sexual offenders , by REBECCA ANZEL Herald

Review

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois' highest court ruled Thursday that it is unconstitutional to ban convicted sex offenders from social media sites.

Conrad Allen Morger was convicted of sexually abusing a minor and sentenced to four years of probation by a court in McLean County. That came with a binding condition he not use specific internet sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

During oral arguments, held in September in Godfrey, Morger's representative said the ban is a violation of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment fundamental right to freedom of speech.

"Certainly I recognize that there is a government interest here, in helping to rehabilitate offenders, in reducing recidivism, and of course keeping our communities safe, particularly our most vulnerable members of our community — children. But as the Illinois statute is written, it doesn't meet all of those goals," Zachary Rosen, assistant appellate defender, said.

The Illinois Supreme Court agreed in a unanimous decision among the six participating justices. Chief Justice Anne Burke "took no part in the consideration or decision of this case," according to the opinion.

The justices analyzed Illinois' law by considering whether the mandatory social media ban is "reasonably related" to the goal of probation — which is rehabilitation.

Morger was a teenager when he committed the crimes and did not use the internet, Justice Lloyd Karmeier wrote in the decision.

When Joshua Schneider, the state's representative, was asked during oral arguments how barring Morger's access to certain websites would help him reintegrate into society, he said the mandatory probation condition would erase the "temptation to

reoffend."

"That answer might carry some weight where a defendant is one who has used social media to orchestrate and ultimately commit his crimes; however, a host of offenders — this defendant included — do not fall into that category," according to the opinion. The law "broadly sweeps the latter in with offenders who have used social media to prey upon others."

The court ultimately decided the "protective value" of a prohibition on access to certain websites does not outweigh "the impairment to the probationer's constitutional rights," including those to freedom of speech.

Karmeier noted the statute does not make an exception for a justifiable use of social media websites by a convicted sex offender at a time he or she could be supervised by a probation officer.

In a footnote, he added he and his colleagues were "not persuaded that [the law] provides rehabilitative value ... that outweighs, in many circumstances, its detriment to rehabilitation." Instead, Karmeier wrote, counseling and treatment might be better options to "more likely ensure successful rehabilitation."



Circle of Concern

Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community, and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma

they face. The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on January 19, 2020 at 4 pm—6 pm. We will be having a potluck. We meet at Foothills Fel-



lowship Church, corner of Tramway and Candelaria on the far east side of Albuquerque. We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at (505) 315-7940.