

# Titus House Newsletter

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MAY 2016



## My Story-by Alice Benson/Johnston

I was born in upstate New York, the first child of a Baptist pastor. I was in church several times a week. I was baptized at 9 on Easter Sunday with my Dad doing the honors. As I moved into early teens I became uneasy with all the rules and regulations imposed on me. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade I went to a summer camp where a well-known evangelist had just returned from a trip into the Amazon jungle. He told of hundreds of villages where the gospel hadn't gone and he asked us kids why we went to church several times a week and did nothing about the people who had never heard. That thought never left me but in high school I started to rebel against the strict rules imposed on me by my parents. I was not allowed to go near high school dances for example. Finally after becoming engaged to a school dropout turned US army recruit my mother arranged for me to go to Wheaton Academy in Illinois. I said I wouldn't go without my dog. My godly aunt bought a home in Wheaton just so I could live with her. Before long I got on a train with my clothes in a large footlocker and a large collie dog in the baggage car. 800 miles later I landed in the town where I would live for the next six years, meet my husband, get married and leave for Seminary in California. My last year at

Wheaton Academy was a major turning point in my life. I was only interested in sports but one evening I attended a student prayer meeting. Our beloved coach spoke and I knew his message was directed at me.



I left the meeting, went outside in the cold of January, leaned against a tree looking at the stars above and told God, "You win!" I broke up with the high school dropout, tackled my Freshman year at Wheaton College and several months later met the man I would marry, Don Benson.

We were married and as Don was finishing college our daughter, Connie was born. Three months later we packed up all our worldly goods, a small dog and a baby and headed for California in a very old station wagon. The blessings of credit cards had not yet arrived and we got to Pasadena

with one dollar left for gas. Don started seminary at Fuller and found a job selling Fuller Brushes! The combination always brought laughs from friends.

After graduation, raising money and packing, we

headed for the Philippines. By this time we had adopted a little girl, Janet. Janet was later diagnosed with low I.Q. and one doctor said, "Send her back!" That made us mad, we kept her and to this day she calls us once or twice a week from a great facility in Pennsylvania.

We took a ship to the Philippines – three weeks of skirting typhoons. We were four of the 10 or so passengers on that Norwegian freighter. We ate at the captain's table, had the run of the ship, a great experience.

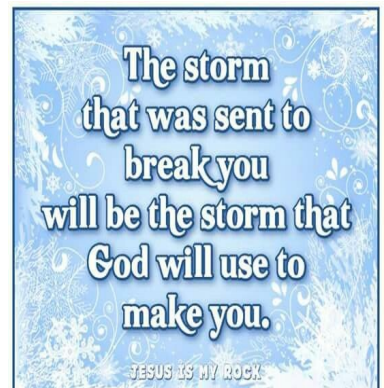
Our assignment in the Philippines was (MY STORY page 2)

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- How Eagles Unlimited is helping Registered Citizens/sex offenders
- An article that describes the way racial groups of offenders throughout our history have been abused, and how this same hatred has now focused on sex offenders.





## My Story

establishing churches and we worked with six of them, our last the construction of a large inner city church in Manila. We had every possible experience in the Philippines, the joy of building churches, training leadership and falling in love with the people. Don learned to preach in the Tagalog language and we were so blessed in that work. To this day I attend a Bible study in Albuquerque which hosts many Filipino people who have moved to the US.

We adopted a baby boy during one furlough from the Philippines, welcoming Jimmy to our home on Halloween! After a few months we were back in the Philippines. Before leaving the last time we adopted a small Chinese boy named Kelly from an orphanage and after many trials with international paper work, we brought him to the states when we retired from the mission.

My husband died of pancreatic cancer in March 2005. I asked God what he would have me do now that I was no longer a pastor's wife or school director. After a few months I received a letter from a prison inmate that I had known in our last Albuquerque church. His wife had accused him, judge declared him guilty of a sex offence. I panicked! He wanted me to visit him in prison! I had experienced a typhoon in the middle of the Pacific, I had climbed a volcano which went off just after we got out, experienced a typhoon which destroyed 80% of Manila's homes, but I had never gone alone to a prison! We endured several severe earthquakes but a prison!

I told Dave to send me a visiting form, hoping it would get lost in the mail, hoping the prison would not accept me but you know what happened – I was

approved! Over the next 12 months or so I visited Dave and we outlined what we thought would be a good ministry to those with a sex offence. Dave was released, worked for a while, was violated several times, is now in Texas. I want to thank Dave for saving me from the depression often suffered by widows. Dave asked me to visit several fellow inmates and before long I was running back and forth to Los Lunas to visit others. It was in that long line of contacts I started writing to Don Johnston. We dated for a while after his release in 2009 and we married in November of 2010. He is the man in my life for this ministry and God has convinced both of us we are in the place God wants us to be.

## My name is Vernon Boyett

Vernon Boyett is an inmate in Beaumont, Texas. I promised I would tell his story. His story if written in full would break your heart. (We have three notebooks of stories that would break your heart.)

His crime was downloading pornography from the internet. He was in prison in a mixed setting with other crimes, with people who violently hate sex offenders. He was recently attacked so viciously that he nearly died, nearly lost an eye, his face was terribly mutilated. As this was happening several fellow sex offenders

stood by and didn't lift a hand to help him. He was transported to a hospital where they tried to put him back together. He discovered the man he bit in defending himself was positive for HIV. For treatment they did half of what was recommended along with half the medication and very little of other recommendations. His first five days were spent on the Byrd unit in a cell by himself with half a mattress and two sheets. All this happened in October 2015 and he just returned in March to the prison. Through it all someone finally gave him a pillow! However he had to wait with his little pillow on a steel bunk

for three days before getting a bunk! Vernon concludes a long typed letter – four pages – by saying, "I have many ministries trying to save my soul, but few trying to save me or comfort me."

Vernon knows we love him. Many other inmates know we love them. They know we are sinners too. Many have asked forgiveness and sometimes families and wives won't forgive. We know God does and we are all forever grateful.



## Eagles Unlimited

Eagles Unlimited provides services for those who have been accepted by State Probation-Parole giving them an opportunity to change the direction of their lives. Their entire staff works closely with the probation-parole officers to assist in the offender's transition.

They are funded by a grant through the NM Department of

Corrections. Some of the services they provide are; ID /DL, help to pay for first month's rent for an apartment, referral to the Salvation Army for 2 clothing outfits, bus passes, employment help for those not in La Pasada, a \$25.00 hygiene gift certificate to Walmart and referral for food. The Probation-Parole Officer will provide a referral if they feel the service is needed. All services require a referral. Please speak to your Probation & Parole Offi-

cers first. Eagles Unlimited will help those who are registered citizens/sex offenders. Their address is 5907 Alice Ave, NE, Albuquerque, NM, 87110. Telephone (505) 254-7600. They do not take walk-in appointments. If your PPO puts in for a referral they will contact you. If you have any questions always feel free to call.



## "Have We Been the only Ones Mistreated?" by Matt

Our legal system has, throughout our history, abused offenders. We know how we have been treated. Winston Churchill said it best about how countries should treat the accused.

***"The mood and temper of the public in regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilization of any country. There must be a calm and dispassionate recognition of the rights of the accused against the state. (That there should be) a desire and eagerness to rehabilitate, to discover a curative and regenerative process with an unfaltering faith that there is a treasure, if only you can find it in the heart of every person."***

Instead of rehabilitation, our society punishes its offenders, throws them into prison, and destroys any chance for reintegration into society.

Those in power have always targeted minority groups to punish and even destroy. Some Native Americans tribes were completely eliminated and removed from lands that they held sacred. Pictures of Blacks hanging from trees during and after slavery have been engraved in the psyche of fair-minded Americans.

Legislators with malice in their hearts created those laws to justify the punishment of Native Americans and Blacks, and so too were the Chinese who brought opium from China for recreational use and later to sell. In 1875, a law was passed criminalizing the selling of opium, which put hundreds of Chinese into prisons.

Cocaine regulations were also triggered in 1914. Cocaine use was associated with blacks just as opium use was associated with the Chinese. Many Blacks lost their freedom. Beginning in the 1920s the same thing happened with Marijuana and Mexicans, and today statistics show the high percent of minorities who have been imprisoned.

Within the last 20 years, law enforcement has punished sex offenders with the same vengeance. It has also replicated a legal system that rewards those in power with the same model; they define and convince people of a criminal behavior, legislate laws to enforce them, and created a lucrative prison industry to detain, this time, sex offenders.

What is different with sex offenses is that "most" of the men and women on the registry are white, ordinary citizens like you and me.

Another difference between offenders of the past and now is that our society so reviles and condemns sex offenses. The hysteria berates us, makes false generalizations, and treats us like lepers, ignoring the facts about sex offenses against children... actually not so different from the past.

It is a bleak picture of reality that I have painted, yet there is hope. Throughout the States there are Champions who are fighting against this tyranny such as Janice Bellucci who has challenged the International Megan's law in California. Our own Larry Neely is assisting in a lawsuit against the unconstitutional residency laws in Rhode Island. Heroes are working to stop the placement of Juveniles on the Sex Registry. Many experts have written about and testified that the sex registry is broken and ineffective. There have been numerous successful court decisions to allow sex offenders to use libraries, to eliminate the flawed "Halloween laws," to stop civil commitment, and a new trend of removing people from the sex registry.

The mood and temperament that Churchill so eloquently expressed are about fairness and compassion toward the accused. We have to change the minds and hearts of people to think this way. It is an uphill battle, but the momentum is turning, slowly in our favor.

Read RSOL, CA-RSOL and other publications about people throughout the United States who are fighting against this tyranny because it is only through legal battles, education and expressing heartfelt truths can we change the wrong-thinking about sex offenses ... and we can.



## Titus House Ministries

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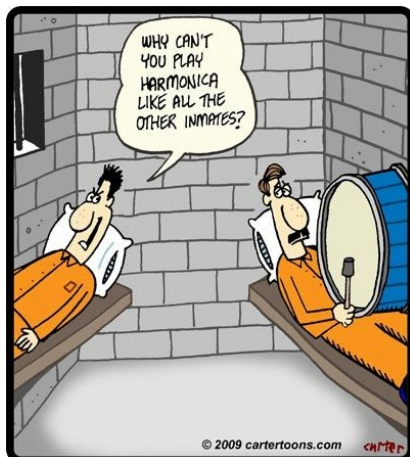
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**Don's Cell: (505) 315-7940**

**We're on the Web  
[titushouseministries.org](http://titushouseministries.org)**

*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



## La Pasada

Our group at La Pasada is growing to around 25. We see people coming to the Lord and souls being saved, decisions being made, people growing in the Lord and rededication of their life to God. Alice and I drive 25 miles from the East Mountains to La Pasada which is the highlight of our week.

We really enjoy being in fellowship with all the guys and girls there. Lorraine a board member of Titus House and a committed Christian, joins us each Thursday evening at 7pm. We start with singing a few songs, then read from *Our Daily Bread*, then we start our study.

We have studied through the gospel of John, Acts and part of Proverbs. We end in everyone praying. Alice and I have been doing this for 5 years now and seen a turnaround of people every 6 months. We have kept in contact with several people once they leave La Pasada.



## My Mother is an Angel-by David Stevens

My mother is an angel  
sent to guide us.  
God has given her invisible wings.  
She has a solid gold halo  
she keeps polished  
And she speaks of only  
Heavenly things  
Her glory shines forth  
from her beauty  
She's a radiant and glori-

ous light  
She has a veil she must wear  
in the evening  
To keep from blinding us all  
through the night  
On her harp she plays such  
wonderful music  
The sweet sounds of rejoicing  
she shares  
Like the aroma from the  
innocence she offers

When she stands before  
God with our prayers  
Yes, my mother is a beautiful angel.  
You might give my  
Mother a call  
But you must not delay or  
she might fly away  
Because God needs her  
too, after all.

## Circle of Concern

The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered offenders, family and friends that meet together on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on May 8th, Mother's Day at 6-8pm. We will be having a potluck. We meet at Foothills

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.

