

# Titus House Newsletter

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

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## Meet Dena, our newest board member

My husband has been involved with Titus House and its founders for several years. I began attending the Circle of Concern pot luck and meetings with him about 2 years ago. What I've found in the "Circle" is a group of very caring, honest, open people. After all, the sins are out in the open. The Circle is **fami-ly**. The Circle is safe. The Circle is where you can be yourself.

As the newest addition to the Board of Directors, I've been invited to write to you about myself. Here goes. My name is Dena, and I didn't **seriously try** to lead a Christ-centered life until 2014.

I was born in 1958 in the beautiful Dartmouth/Lake Sunapee region of New Hampshire. I was a headstrong youngster, prone to trouble, but school came quite easily to me. I graduated 4<sup>th</sup> in my high school class and I remember being relieved that I didn't have to write – and deliver! – a speech for the graduation ceremonies. I entered college and after two semesters I left school. I married a military man who was stationed in Maine. Eighteen months later I had my first daughter, and we were transferred to Florida. How's that for a climate change? After I learned to cope with the unbearable heat, the humidity, and the palmetto bugs, I learned that my second child was on the way.

The second pregnancy was a difficult one. My feet always felt cold and my legs were numb. It was sweltering in

Florida, but I was wearing two pairs of knee socks!! Eventually I was medically evacuated to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. They gave me a spinal tap and a myelogram. My reward for enduring that trauma was getting to watch the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks over the Washington Monument from my bed. That evening I was given a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis.

My second child was born in August. When my feeling returned to normal, I thought, "Phew! the doctors made the wrong diagnosis!" So, it went for 3 years. Then BAM! Numbness, tingling, cold feeling feet and staggering around like a drunkard. We were in Texas and I went to a civilian neurologist. He confirmed the MS diagnosis.

There is sin in my past. I have hurt people I love very much.

I entered an extramarital relationship with an abusive man. It was a constant struggle to not be a punching bag, but that wasn't the worst of it. The military sent my family to England and I married Mr. Abusive. Within six months I left him. One day I got a call from my first husband and he asked me if I'd come to England to try again. YES!! It must've been a sign from God!!

The following six years in England were a high spot in my life. The family was reunited, the children were happy, we got a puppy, we



both had fulfilling jobs and I finally got my degree. We began going to church. Military-approved services, but church nonetheless. Life was great!! Oh yeah, Jim Beam flowed freely in the household.

We'd promised the kids that once they were in high school, we wouldn't make them move any more. Boy did we regret that promise! I also regret being more interested in bourbon than I was in my children. Our second child was 16 when she ran away with a married man. We got her back 4 days later. The police had found her in Kansas City. On her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday she began to move her belongings into her car. "I'm moving out." The next month she called to say she was pregnant with that man's child. Then the older daughter announced that SHE was pregnant, too. Swell.

I drank my sorrows away. At work I was a competent career woman, but once I was home I made a drink and kept on making them until bedtime. I woke with headaches, got to work, came home and mixed drinks. Over and over. My husband did likewise.

My husband retired from the military and got a job that required travel. He was home about 4 nights a month. I was faithful in my marriage, but I loved Jim Beam and drank alone for 8 years.

On Valentine's Day, 2014, Twenty-six years after we'd re-married, he told me he wanted a divorce. No counseling. No Alcoholics Anonymous. Just a divorce. This was when I learned that Mr. Abusive had sexually abused our younger daughter. She'd been 4 at the time, and I hadn't been a vigilant mother. The guilt, sorrow, and the shame crushed me.

With the divorce pending, I moved into a "retirement community" that did all of the cooking, cleaning, and driving for me. I still drank. It was wine now, but I drank.

I met my new husband-to-be when he drove me to an appointment. He had an air of confidentiality, of wanting to help, of not being judgmental. Long story short, I blubbered my life story to him en route to my doctor. When he collected me for the ride back, he invited me to the fellowship dinner at his church that evening.

What a wonderful evening! I saw people I used to work with. I met new friends. I was invited to church service the following Saturday evening. I went, gladly. My new friend also performed Sunday church services at the very retirement community where I (**Meet Dena continue on page 2**)



## Meet Dena

lived! I began going to church on Saturday nights, worshipping on Sunday mornings, enjoying Wednesday evening fellowships, and centering my life around the teachings of Jesus.

And I sobered up. Being sober was a requirement to continue seeing this man God had placed into my life. Life was wonderful!! Jesus, sobriety, friends - all the good stuff!! The relationship blos-

somed. This man and I married at the end of the summer. We had no secrets from each other. He accepted my drunken history and my MS and I accepted his scamming, angry, S.O. past. After all, I didn't see any inkling of **that** man. God had changed him.

Then my daughters learned that he had a felony history as an S.O. and things got ugly; they haven't spoken to me for over 2 years now.

The difficult world of the S.O. is new to me, and the Circle of Concern educates, takes appropriate action to improve lives, and empathizes in the deepest way. It's a pleasure to be fellowshiping among you. If my position on the Board of Directors allows me to positively impact your lives, it's a work of the Lord, not me. God bless you all.

## DISCUSSION: HOW CAN REGISTRANTS MAKE A LIVING?

By Jay from Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws

I had a small motorcycle repair business prior to my arrest. I restarted that company once I was released. It has been hard but not all due to my status. Some months I really struggle, others I do well. But it is growing.

Here is my opinion. While I am writing this on the perspective of living in Boise, Idaho, I am sure it applies everywhere. We need to look at this as two separate issues. Getting a job, and obtaining a worthwhile career. They should be looked at completely different.

First, get a job. Over my 50 years on this planet, I have always found that if you are truly willing to work hard, you can get a job. It may not be pretty, glamorous, or prestigious, but it is a job. You may have been an engineer, accountant, etc., before your arrest, but now you need to be thankful you got a job as a flagger for construction projects.

Once you have a job, any job, then you can start working towards something meaningful. Your original career may be out of the question, but maybe not. It may just be really hard to get back into. Now is the time to start working on this. Maybe taking some night classes. Maybe think about starting a business. But do it all while you are working a regular job to put food on the table.

Even though I own my business, I want to retire from it at some point. Wrenching is a young mans game and I am not young any more. So I am now a 50 year old college freshman. And I am going for a degree in something that will be difficult to find work in, but not impossible. Counseling. I volunteer as a mentor for the department of correction with freshly released inmates, and through church with college aged kids. I love it. I am told I am good at it. I will never be able to get state licensing for this profession, but through research I found that I can get certified via other means and work in other areas that do not require the state licensing. I am going to a Bible college and have been told by multiple pastors that many churches would be eager to hire someone with my checkered past who has come through it and wants to turn it around and help others. There are also many faith based charities and organizations where my past will not only not be a hindrance, but a blessing to them.

Do not take a few "no thank you's" as a final word that you can not succeed. It is much harder for us, but not impossible.

Please understand that I am completely sympathetic to much of the depression found among us. And I suffer from it as well. I still have 14.5 years remaining on state probation for my crime and it is



hell. I have a dark cloud that wants to surround me each and every day. I find myself wishing I would just get cancer and die (I am too chicken to actually do it myself, which is a good thing). But each day I get up and find the strength to go through another day. I believe that God has me on a path for something. I am just not quite sure what it is yet. And since His ways are better than mine, I better just stick it out and figure out what He has in mind for me.

Another thing while I am talking about depression. If you are dealing with it, do not do it alone. Talk to someone. Get help. Talk to your pastor, doctor, friend, etc., but talk to someone. I lost my good friend and roommate to suicide two years ago and it should have not ended that way. He was doing so well, but just could not see through that dark cloud. It will get better. And we need to be able to find ways of becoming content within our situations. I wish I had the answer as to how, but we need to keep working towards it.



## God Doesn't work At McDonalds

From the teachings of Jonathan Cahn and Don Johnston

Most world shakers in this world fought against ungodly causes. However, if you study the lives of the most successful world shakers, you notice something – they were all disciplined, at least during the time of their shaking the world. They did not spend their days sitting on chairs in the day room or in their cells watching TV or playing spades or cards or being entertained, but they focused their efforts and energies into their cause.

Today, the drive-thru has become a modern cultural phenomenon used by banks, restaurants, coffee shops, convenient stores, churches, car washes, and even zoos. We're able to get what we want, when we want it without taking much time or having a real interaction with real people. Even in Christianity, there are many teachings that treat God as if He was a drive-thru, a machine that exists to serve you. Just say the right words or formula and you'll get what you ask for. This is not the way to approach God, trying to get what you want from Him instead of having a relationship with Him. It's about seeing His face. Have you gotten more into your desires, requests and petitions to God, then God Himself; coming to Him more to get your order filled than to

relate to Him, driving past His presence instead of coming in? It's time to get out of your spiritual car, forget your demands and come into His presence, because the Lord is a lot more than a burger and your relationship with Him is not a drive-thru.



I believe if we all as citizens (which includes those that are presently incarcerated) who want to make a change, need to get together and support one another. Once a person leaves prison, they need to attend our group the Circle of Concern. Don't just drive-thru Titus House but be a part of the answer. We can use you in help folding the newsletter and stuffing it, share our newsletters to other inmates in prison, pray for Titus House, checking on members who have real needs, giving rides to the Circle of Concern. You can

fit in many places. You can find out more about the Circle of Concern on the back page of this newsletter. In addition, we need to be involved in groups right now like NARSOL – National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws and their address of Operations is: Post Office Box 36123, Albuquerque, NM 87176. Their Headquarters is: Post Office Box 25423, Raleigh, NC 27611. They have Affiliates around the country; write them to find out more information about a group near you. Another good group is: Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws, ACLU Building, 1313 W. 8th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90017. Write them, get involved in the fight for your constitutional rights.

Together we can do what we can never do alone. There is no knight in shining armor that is going to rescue us from these ineffective laws. "There are three types of people in this world: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened." Which type of person are you going to be?

## Think you know who the sex offenders in our community are? By Florida Action Committee

Do you think the public "sex offender registries" are helpful in identifying who the sex offenders in our communities are? Think again!

According to research from Bowling Green State University, police officers in the US were charged with forcible rape 405 times between 2005 and 2013. That's an average of 45 a year. Forcible fondling was more common, with 636 instances. And the majority of sexual offenses committed by police are not reported. Similarly, we are always seeing headlines about teachers or coaches being caught sexually abusing their students.

In defense of police and teachers, a

very small percentage commit these crimes. The overwhelming majority are doing their job professionally and living a law abiding life. The same can be said about people on the sex offender registry. There will be a small percentage who re-offend, but the overwhelming majority are also just trying to live their lives.

Police and teachers have strong unions to protect them. The study estimates that for every sexual assault at the hands of a police officer that makes the news, there are — on average, five more that do not. About half of the victims are children. People required to register have no unions to protect them — in fact, they are under such constant surveillance and scrutiny that small technical violations of the long list or requirements placed on them will

send them right back to prison.

Historically, we've taught our children that their teachers and police are to be trusted — we've taught them that the people on the registry are dangerous and to be avoided. What that has done is create a false sense of security.

Contrary to what we are teaching our children, the overwhelming majority of sexual offenses are committed by someone who is not on the registry and is actually known to and trusted by the victim.

The registry has proven itself counter-productive — it is merely punishment. If we want to make strides towards prevention, we need to refocus our attention and resources towards teaching our children who the real potential sex offenders in their community are. Anyone! Anybody in their community, their schools, their social circles and even their family can be an offender and instead of looking out for "a person" that can harm them, they need to look out for "an act" that can harm them.



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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



## CDL

I have been asked to provide some information on obtaining a commercial driver's license (CDL). Here is some information that you can write to and get more info here in New Mexico.

ABQ Driving School, 5110 Copper Avenue NE, Albuquerque, NM 87108

Central New Mexico Community College, 525 Buena Vista SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Dona Ana Community College, 2800 Sonoma Ranch Blvd, Las Cruces, NM 88011

Eastern New Mexico University, 52 University Blvd Roswell, NM 88202

Gallup CDL Training, 1707 W Historic US 66Gallup, NM 87301

International Schools, 141 Quinella Rd. Sunland Park, NM 88063

Mesilla Valley Training Institute, 3530 W Pica-cho Avenue, Las Cruces, NM 88007

Navajo Technical University, Lower Point Road, Crownpoint, NM 87313

New Mexico Junior College, 5317 Lovington Hwy, Hobbs, NM 88240

Rocky Mountain Truck Driving School, 2705 Princeton NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

## U.S. Job Openings Topped 7 Million for the First Time

The Wall Street Journal Updated Oct. 16, 2018

American employers had more than seven million unfilled jobs for the first time on record this summer, reflecting a historically tight labor market that is causing some businesses to struggle to find workers.

There were a seasonally adjusted 7.136 million job openings on the last business day of August, the Labor Department said Tuesday. That extends further into record-high territory for data dating back to 2000.

Available jobs in August outnumbered jobless Americans actively looking for work by 902,000, the largest such gap on record. Prior to March, job openings had never exceeded unemployed workers in more than 17 years of monthly records.

The number of job openings rose by more

than one million, or 18%, from a year earlier in August. Growth in openings expanded just ahead of the unemployment rate falling in September to 3.7%, a 49-year low.

“Employers are still looking to add workers, and the pool of potential hires continues to decline,” said Nick Bunker, an economist at recruiting site Indeed.com. “Employers need to compete with each other to fill their vacancies—something that bodes well for the job seeker.”

The latest data underscores an increasing need for workers at a time when broader economic output is accelerating, beginning a shift in bargaining power to employees and appearing to support modestly rising wages, especially for lower-earning workers.

## 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 offenders, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on November 18, 2018 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.