



INSIDE OUTSIDE

Prison Network Ministries Newsletter

A LESSON FROM THE MAGPIE



On this particular morning, I left home early to take my young friend to the doctors. As I neared her home, I wound around a number of backstreets endeavouring to take a few minutes off the trip. An unusual sight caught my eye. A magpie was flapping frantically on one

side of a chest high picket fence and on the other side another was doing the same, with a third hovering over them. All three were noisy and seemed distressed, and at first I thought they were fighting. I couldn't work out however, why they would be doing it on opposite sides of the fence. Anyway, it was no big deal so I kept driving.

After collecting my friend I drove back the way I'd come. I glanced at the house where I'd seen the birds and noticed there was now only one magpie. It was no longer frantic. I looked more closely and noticed blood splattered on the fence. "What had gone on here," I thought. I quickly filled my friend in on what I had seen earlier. It was then that we realised, that somehow the magpie had got its head stuck between the pickets. The magpie's that had been on the other side were obviously distressed about the situation it was in but had now deserted it. The battle to free itself had probably gone on for quite some time. Sapped of all its energy, it hung limply from the fence. By the amount of blood on the fence, it obviously hadn't given up without a fight. We both grimaced as we realised what had happened. I pulled the car over a little

further up from the corner and commented that it looked like it was too late. The magpie wasn't moving anymore and had obviously hung itself. We watched for a minute in the rear view mirrors just in case there was any sign of life, but there was no movement. A sucker for wildlife and animals, I said to my friend, "I'm just going to double check that it's too late and there's nothing we can do". As I approached the bird there was still no movement. I gently put my hand under the magpie in the hope that maybe I could help free it if there was any life left. I got the fright of my life when it suddenly flapped its wings and took off at an enormous speed! Whoa!

I walked back to the car with a pep in my step feeling the satisfaction of "saving a life"! Instantly I saw the parallel between the work we do and what I'd just seen. So many of those we work with are only just hanging on. Many times they are battered and bruised and have got themselves into situations they never dreamed of. It didn't take much effort on my behalf to help the magpie, but the little I did actually saved its life.

On a daily basis we see how a little bit of kindness can go such a long way...particularly in people's darkest moments. Just a little bit of time and effort can change someone's world. When there appears to be no hope, give hope. Where there is distress and pain, bring comfort. The story of the Good Samaritan comes to mind.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for supporting us in this ministry, in the hope of making a difference.

VOLUNTEER NEWS – Craft Group

At the start of this year, with all of my kids having finished school, I was really asking the Lord to show me where He wanted me to be involved now that I had more time on my hands. I didn't want to be where other people wanted me to be but where God wanted me to be. So, due to circumstances, I found myself going into the prison with another group that support a Saturday sport program in conjunction with Prison Network Ministries, and knew as soon as I stepped in there that this was where God wanted me to be involved.

I then discovered that I could also be involved with Prison Network Ministries in their Tuesday afternoon craft program. I wasn't sure what would be expected of me really as I have never seen myself as a particularly gifted person in the craft area, but it has been a real joy and I look forward to going in every Tuesday to spend time with



the girls that come. We have regulars who come in most weeks. This has allowed me to sit, talk and joke around with them and hopefully give them some hope that there are people who care about what is happening in their lives, and that they are worthy of people wanting to spend time and effort on them. The appreciation that the girls have for us making the effort to run things for them is enormous too. I guess it breaks up the monotony of prison life!

Recently, I have been going to the Christian discussion group which follows the craft program and that has been very interesting. Whilst some of the girls can make discussion difficult with their 'red herrings', there is never a lack of participation which is fabulous. My prayer for each of these girls, whether they are in the craft, sport or Christian discussion group, is that they will really take to heart a verse that we read there the other day: "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you."
– Jeremiah 29:11, 12.

Lyn

"NEEDS"

- **Board Members**
– Have you ever considered joining the PNM Board? Please contact Deb for more information. Not as scary as you think!!
- **Support Worker**
– Due to Jody's resignation we are seeking another staff member to join the team. If you could advertise the need at your church or know of anyone who may be interested in applying, please contact Deb or Laurel.



VOLUNTEER NEWS-Fun With Mum

Taking part in the Fun with Mum program has been my first involvement with PNM. It's really lovely to see the mums and children interact, especially when the children innocently and genuinely tell their mum's how much they've missed them and that they love them. Maggie does an awesome job of organising the activities each month and both mums and children enthusiastically take part in them.



It's been good to be able to meet some of the women, although there is less interaction with them in this program

compared with other programs. The main focus is for mums and their children to spend time together. It is a very relaxed time and the mums are very appreciative of us coming in. They know it can be a bit boring for the children without the activities. I was surprised to hear that some of the children don't even visit much during the rest of the month because of the lack of things to do.

For me it's been good to be reminded of how lucky I am. I can't imagine how hard it would be for a mum to see her children only once a week, often less. It certainly is heartbreaking at the end of the day seeing them say goodbye to each other. All in all, I don't feel I do very much, so it's a humbling experience to be a part of the

Fun with Mum team and to see the positive impact the program is having on the relationships between mothers and their children. *Jo.*

PNM Prayer Notes

If you would like to receive a copy of PNM's monthly Prayer Notes, send an email to Deb Redford or drop her a line. (Details over page). Your prayers will be valued and appreciated

When asked at Discussion Group, "What's the greatest thing anyone's ever done for you?" the quick but reflective reply from "Lisa", a newcomer to the group "smile!"

We laughed at the thought that a smile could be such an outstanding act.

" No, I'm serious", she added "In this place a smile can make such a difference."





OLYMPICS DAY

WE LAUGHED SO MUCH OUR FACES HURT



"Let the games begin", resounded loudly over the P.A at The Dame Phyllis Frost Centre on Saturday the 2nd of August. Some of PNM's most enthusiastic young team members, along with help from a SLAM team (an outer south eastern combined church group),

Everyone involved had a day to remember, but also a chance to forget where they were..... if only for a little while. After all the action was finished and the cleaning almost done, the last woman to leave turned and said to our group; "Thank you so much! I appreciate so much all that you ladies do. I have a special place in my heart for each one of you, I really do. I just don't know how to put it into words, but thank you." Well done team!

organised and participated in an Olympics Day. Around 30 eager entrants, who were watched by a far greater number of fascinated onlookers, participated in a number of events ranging from sack races, tyre relays and an egg throwing competition. I have never heard so much laughter in the jail before. Plenty of thrills and spills and lots of mess provided enthralling entertainment for the onlookers and some unusual types of exercise for those prepared to have a go.



The highlight was the grand finale event which was a Winter Olympics challenge where the women decorated a team member as a snowman. Equipped with a can of shaving crème, a

roll of toilet paper, a bag of flour and some marshmallows, creativity reached amazing heights and the leisure centre transformed into a winter wonderland within minutes!

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