

# the TRANSFORMER

## News from the Everglades

Mitchell R. Brown (*Manageable Mitchell*)  
Miami, Florida, USA

Dr. Eduardo Diaz (*Expressive Eduardo*), Dr. Clara Diaz (*Calm Clara*), Dr. Dawn Addy (*Diligent Dawn*), and Dr. Michelle Kavanaugh (*Mentoring Michelle*) have brought AVP Miami into both the women's facility at Dade Correctional Institution (Homestead) and the Everglades Correctional Institution for the last eight years. All of them have spent countless weekends, untold finances, discomfort, precious time, and much frustration that occurs with the administration's turn-over rate...

It certainly doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out their commitment and conviction to supply us with tools we can use now

and upon re-entry to society far outweigh all of the above.

Even on a personal level, many of their significant family events have been cancelled or put on the back burner because of their commitment to spend a weekend here in the prison with their AVP family...

Diligent Dawn has taken it to another level with the Miami-Dade Mosaic Dialogues Study Circle—implementing basic dialogue skills assisting others to view an issue or position in a new light, rather than imposing ideas upon them, which has been a true blessing to me.

We want them to know they are loved and appreciated by every AVP Miami inmate at Everglades Correctional Institution. If we had two more facilitators like any of those mentioned, the "prison industry" would go out of business!



Here is our AVP family. I am the guy sitting between the women. On my left is Diligent Dawn. On my right is Calm Clara. On the far end is Expressive Eduardo.

# From the Outgoing Transformer Editor

*Charles Oropallo (Cheery Charles)  
Peterborough, New Hampshire, USA*

It is hard to know where to begin. An apology to the Transformer readers is as good a place as any. I feel it is important to let you know that I regret my inability to publish the summer issue on time this year.

The messages expressing concern from folks who had written and not heard anything back from me piled up. Thanks to Alan Taplow, there were responses to most indicating that another issue was to come out.

There has been little time for me to breathe. My web hosting company, CharlesWorks.net, successfully took off. That success left me extremely busy with little or no time for much else. Sunny Susan Oropallo saw how busy I was first hand, when, earlier this year while on vacation, she watched me manage servers and work on a clients' websites. Normally she isn't impressed by this sort of thing, except when it is happening using my laptop con-



nected to the Internet via my cellphone from a tent at Key West, Florida.

Well, enough of the excuses. Diana Couch informed me that Doug Couch has stepped forward and will handle the next issue. Thanks go out to Diana and to Doug.

I felt a tremendous burden being lifted from me when Diana conveyed the news to me that someone would be able to do this.

*The Transformer* is an important part of the Alternatives to Violence Project. It is still the best method of holding the organization together. As much as I believe in the power of the Internet and of websites (as I am sure Rick Krouskop, who manages the AVPUSA.org website, does as well), it appears that most of our organization's individuals still choose to rely on the printed word.

It has been a pleasure to have devoted the time necessary these past years editing and publishing *the Transformer*.

*Remember to check out the  
Transformer's very own website at  
<http://theTransformer.us>*

**<http://AVPInternational.org>**  
*for what's happening with AVP around  
the world and for international contacts*

*And for what's happening here at home:  
<http://AVPUSA.org>*

## Signing on to the AVP-L list

*Peter Hoover (Persistent Peter)  
Trumansburg, New York, USA*

AVP-L@CORNELL.EDU is a discussion list open to certified trainers of creative conflict-resolution workshops held under the auspices of the Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc., or its approved national (U.S.) or international equivalents. It is designed to facilitate communication among these individuals, with discussions to center around facilitation techniques, workshop exercises, and other useful information pertaining to the mechanics of facilitating AVP workshops. To preserve the confidentiality of workshop participants, please make comments about such individuals generic.

To subscribe, send an e-mail message indicating where and when you obtained your AVP facilitator certification, where you currently train, and any other pertinent information you care to include to the list owner, Peter Hoover, at prh4@cornell.edu.

## Signing on to the AVP-L2 list

*Richard Krouskop (Rambunctious Rick)  
Shreveport, Louisiana, USA*

Want to share your work with, or thoughts on: restorative justice, prison reform, school violence, the (.....Insert your favorite region here) conflict between (..... side A ) and (....side B), etc.? That's what the AVP-L2 E-mail discussion group is designed for.

On AVP-L2, there are no restrictions: just "anything in which you think other AVP facilitators might be interested."

Subscription to AVP-L2 is automated and done entirely through the AVP/USA website. Be certain you are using a computer with e-mail connected to the e-mail address you wish to use for the list. You will be sending an e-mail to register and your return address must be the e-mail address to which you wish to receive list traffic.

- Go to: [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org)
- Go to the Facilitator's page (click on the AVP/USA tab)
- Login Name: "member"
- Login Password: "texashug"
- Sign up for AVP-L2 (and also AVP-L) near the bottom of that page.

## Minutes from AVP/USA

*Diana Couch (Delightful Diana)  
Lancaster, California, USA*

The Annual Meeting was held May 30, 2004 at the Mount Olive Retreat Center, Farmington, MN. A list of attendees is attached.

Donn Kesselheim opened with a moment of silence.

Terry Kayser introduced the agenda.

Minutes from Annual Meeting 2003 were approved.

Ann Ward presented an interim Financial Report. Mike Leatherwood has resigned as Treasurer and the Finance Committee has not yet found a replacement. The interim Financial Report is attached and a proper Finance Report should be completed and will be attached to this report.

Committee Reports were facilitated by Pat Parker-Roach. Committee reports are attached to this report.

Committees and presenters were:

CLARG – Dotty Joos

COMMUNICATIONS – Diana Couch/  
Hakim Al Siddiq/Alan Taplow

FINANCE – Ann Ward

CONFERENCE – Terry Kayser/Pat  
Parker-Roach

EDUCATION – Fred Feucht

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – Donn Kesselheim

YOUTH ad-hoc - Darrell Hefte/Susan Hefte

An international report was given by Dick Nethercut, Giri Sequoya and Bob Barns.

A light and lively was led by Dotty Joos.

The following By-Law Changes were presented for acceptance:

Article 6.8, Standing Committee – New Article: The Annual National Gathering may establish or dissolve committees when there is an interest from the membership to do so. Such an action shall be noted in the minutes of the Gathering where it occurred.

*(See "Minutes" continued on page 4)*

# The Agony of Missing You

*Jamie Chambers (Courageous Chambers)  
Prisoner at James River Correctional Center  
State Farm, Virginia, USA*

It feels like we've been apart  
for a million years!  
I miss you so much,  
but I know that  
our love will last forever,  
and that helps me survive this long wait.  
Soon I'll see you again...  
one day we'll be together for good...  
I keep telling myself those things,  
cheering myself on,  
in between thinking of you.  
I love to remember the last time I saw you  
and the way each second  
of our time was so precious.  
It gives me hope  
for what our future will be  
and reminds me that  
this waiting is all worthwhile.  
Being away from you is hard,  
but I'm learning a lot  
about love and patience!  
I'm also learning to appreciate you  
so much that I don't think  
I'll ever take you for granted –  
not even if we're together  
for a million years!

*Several writings by Jamie Chambers were submitted by facilitator Don Ayers. Thanks, Don & Jamie!*

—Charles

*(“Minutes” continued from page 3)*

The current Article 6.8 shall be renumbered as 6.9.

Facilitated by Dick Nethercut. Approved.

Article 8, Fiscal Year – Change: The Fiscal Year of the Corporation shall be twelve months and shall run from April 1 through March 31.

Facilitated by Ann Ward. Approved

Article 3.3, Meetings – Change: A record of decisions made (at the annual meeting) is to be distributed to the members within 30 days after each meeting. (Changed from “10 days”).

Facilitated by Diana Couch. Approved

A Proposed By-Law was presented by Dick Nethercut and Steve Angell.

It was proposed as an add-on to responsibilities of the Conference Committee.

“It shall also facilitate AVP/USA participation in the biennial International Gathering and any related organization. It shall, a year in advance, nominate a person to be appointed by the Annual National Gathering as the AVP/USA representative to the next international gathering.”

After discussion of the purpose and meaning of this suggested by-law, it was

*(See “Minutes” continued on bottom of page 5)*

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# Names in the News: Awards and Honors

Douglas Scott Arey  
Westover, Maryland, USA

## AREY WINS NATIONAL

### NONVIOLENCE ESSAY CONTEST

The Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence has named Douglas Scott Arey, a Maryland resident, the first-place winner of their national nonviolence essay contest.

The winning essay, addressing "The Effects of War and Violence: Analyzing and Ameliorating the Damage Done to our Relationships with

the People of Iraq and Afghanistan Under the Principles of Nonviolence Exemplified by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther

(See "Arey" continued on page 7)

(*"Minutes" continued from page 4*)

decided that the wording needed to be improved and then could be submitted as a proposed by-law for acceptance at the next annual meeting.

A new slate of officers was presented and approved:

President – Dick Nethercut

Vice President – Ann Ward

Secretary – Janet Riley

Treasurer – To be Announced

The announcement of the next Annual Conference site was given. The 2005 AVP USA Annual conference will be held at Headlands Site just north of San Francisco, CA.

The 2006 International Conference will be held in South Africa.

Submitted by:

Diana Couch

AVP USA Secretary

### Note

Since the submission of the minutes, Joann Perry of MN has stepped forward to fill the position of Treasurer.

Visit <http://AVPUSA.org> for the extensive committee and regional reports.

# The Gift of an Angel by Your Side

Jamie Chambers (Courageous Chambers)  
Prisoner at James River Correctional Center  
State Farm, Virginia, USA

May you always have an angel by your side  
Watching out for you in all the things you do  
Reminding you to keep believing in brighter days

Finding ways for your wishes and dreams to come true

Giving you hope that is as certain as the sun

Giving you the strength of peace as your guide

May you always have love and comfort and courage

May you always have an angel by your side

Someone there to catch you if you fall

Encouraging your dreams - Inspiring your happiness

Holding your hand and helping you through it all

In all of our days, our lives are always changing

Tears come along as well as smiles

Along the roads you travel,

May the miles be a thousand times more lovely than lonely

May they give you gifts that never, ever end;

Someone wonderful to love and a dear friend in whom

You can confide

May you have rainbows after every storm

May you have hopes to keep you safe and warm

And may you always have an angel by your side.

Several writings by Jamie Chambers were submitted by facilitator Don Ayers. Thanks, Don & Jamie!

—Charles

# Minnesota Memories and Looking Ahead

*Richard Nethercut (Radiant Rich)  
Concord, Massachusetts, USA*

Once again the Mt. Olivet Conference Center provided a hospitable setting for our Annual National Gathering. The weather could have been better but the spirit was great.

Terry Kayser and his local crew were excellent hosts and again there was great transportation assistance (with Seeing Eye Sid as the genial airport greeter), comfortable accommodations, good food, feathered friends galore at the window feeders, wild turkeys, deer, and a bald eagle sighting.

Our numbers were down somewhat from last year but the number was just right for the room in which we held our plenary sessions. And right from the get-go on Friday evening there was this warm, joyful, loving spirit that characterized the whole weekend. People came from far and near with prize for the farthest shared by Giri Sequoya of India by way of Australia and Canada, and Pat Hardy, who went from Beijing to California to Minneapolis in a single day joining us Saturday evening.

One main theme of the gathering was the relationship between Restorative Justice (RJ) and AVP. The keynote speaker, Kay Pranis, a recognized authority on restorative justice

and restorative circles, was outstanding. She shared her experience of a restorative circle process with Corrections Officers from which she concluded that COs like inmates feel victimized and are often just another set of walking wounded. Later that day there was an evening plenary session on "Dealing with the 'system'" which explored the interface between Corrections and AVP Facilitators.

Another key issue for me is how AVP can assist ex-inmate facilitators in the re-

entry process. As one breakout session described, the New York region has taken the lead in this area. The co-presidents of the New York Council are both ex-prisoners, and The Landing Strip in New York City is a well-established model for welcoming and supporting released inmates who have taken AVP.

At the annual business meeting there were reports from the standing committees, plus the adoption of several by-law changes (which will be detailed in a later issue) and the election of officers. I was given a second chance to "get it right" as President; Ann Ward, whose experience, love, and commitment has been the glue keeping us together, was re-elected Vice-President; and Janet Riley will replace Diana Couch as Secretary. Subsequent to the meeting Joann Perry agreed to replace Mike Leatherwood who has resigned as Treasurer.

At the concluding meeting on Monday, plans for the 2005 National Gathering at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California were discussed (see separate article). It was also announced that the Conference Committee had approved Boston as the site for the 2006 National Gathering.

In conclusion, let me mention how honored I feel to be head of this remarkable organization. AVP has changed my life and I will be forever grateful. The Mt.. Olivet meeting was replete with testimonies of how others had been transformed, empowered and renewed through AVP. I share Steve Angell's conviction that AVP can have a role above and beyond the prison or community workshop experience as already demonstrated in several instances in Africa. I encourage all of us to think big and live AVP whenever and wherever we can. Finally I offer a slogan for AVP which I think reflects the spirit of the Mt. Olivet gathering and what AVP means to me.

# A Report on the International Gathering in Aotearoa

Joan Bobier (*Jammin' Joan*)  
Albany, New York, USA

Hello all,

... It was a great opportunity to go to the International Gathering and vacation with my daughter who lives in New Zealand following the Gathering. Rainbow Rere and I had facilitated a community work shop here in Albany NY USA when she was traveling in the states. It was wonderful to see her again and all the facilitators I had met at the International Gathering in Oxford. I also met many new facilitators, some of whom are on this list!

I learned a great deal about facilitating in different cultures and on multi cultural teams. Since then, I have facilitated a basic work shop with Great Giri from Australia in Greenhaven Correctional Facility where it all began when she came to visit the US.; We got to use the exercise Choices, Choices which she introduced at the International Gathering.

At the International Gathering, we learned that Americans need more space than many people from other cultures.; I stayed in a motel that is how much space I needed!; It gave me the opportunity to phone my daughter each night since I was in her country of residence, and deal with my jet lag.; I came straight from the airport to the International Gathering and I missed the opening ceremony because of missed connections in Los Angeles airport.

We Americans also learned that it is very important to have a space to put our glasses when we go to sleep. Since the International Gathering, I spoke with a woman who facilitated a work shop in Uganda.; She warned me that she had to know how to take a bath with a bucket and a cup and how to squat when using the latrine which was just a hole in the ground.;

Still, AVP survives without all our fancy American amenities we take for granted. Our gracious New Zealand hosts provided us a beautiful compound of several buildings: the meeting house (whara nui), the building with dining room and kitchen, and the building with separate men's and women's showers, sinks, and toilets.;; There was also an office for the organizers to work in.; Fortunately, the buildings were connected by covered walk ways because it rained every day.; In fact, it rained every day but 3 on my four week vacation. Still, a good time was had by all.

I was pleased that Ellen Flanders and Janet Lugo, two women I call among the founding mothers of AVP from the Albany NY USA area council, were able to attend. They have been doing AVP since 1975! Now, we all look forward to the next International Gathering which will be in South Africa. Hopefully, many other facilitators who did not get to go to this last gathering will be able to attend the next one. How's that for impressions?

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*("Arey" continued from page 5)*

King," was just printed in the summer quarter Truthseeker newsletter and brought a \$75 prize and Sunrise Jaycees certificate.

This is the first time any Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) Facilitator in Maryland has won this award. Arey, who has been certified

as an AVP Facilitator for almost a decade at both MCIH and the Eastern Correctional Institution, credits the principles of AVP with providing the foundation for winning this award. He cites Community Correctional Services Committee volunteer AVP Facilitators Sara Zenge, Marjorie Grumbacher, Emma Lou Comstock, and Dolores Harmon as his nonviolence mentors, and Arey especially acknowledges the contribution of retired MCIH warden Lloyd "Pete" Waters with teaching him how to "think

*(See "Arey" continued on page 9)*

## AVP Goes to Barcelona

*Elaine Klaassen  
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA*

I had the great privilege this past July to co-facilitate a seven-hour AVP workshop at the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR) held in Barcelona, Spain. The logistics of making this happen were extremely complicated and the expenditure of energy was outside of my orbit -- but it actually happened!!!! I felt ravingly heroic when it was over. Elena Garcia, my wonderful, charismatic co-facilitator, is the only trained AVP facilitator in the whole country of Spain, and it was nothing short of a miracle that she was able to be there. Both of us are very hopeful that AVP can be developed in Spain.

The problem with the logistics began in February when I started writing the proposal and tried to find AVP headquarters so I could request permission and support from them. I finally learned they were here in St. Paul, and that Joann Perry, whom I know personally, is one of them. A Muslim woman from Oregon, whom I met on the plane to Barcelona, was very interested in AVP. When I told her how hard it is to find them, she said, "Oh, like Al-Qaeda."

The CPWR was a very large convention, with about 6,000 people attending from all over the world. Many events occurred simultaneously. There was a lot to choose from, so we felt gratified that our workshop attracted about 10 people who came and went throughout the day, and five who stayed for the entire workshop. There were two women, from Japan and Australia, who had been living in England; an Irishman who lived in South Africa; and a woman and a man from Barcelona.

The purpose of doing an AVP workshop at this large convention was to expose it to people interested in peace work. The response from all five participants was very positive. The Australian woman hopes to connect up with AVP when she gets home

## National Gathering in Minnesota last May

*Henry Rivera  
Yonkers, New York, USA*

What a victorious weekend we had. All of the approximately 70-80 AVPers from all across these contiguous United States and at least one young lady from the continent

*(See "Rivera" on page 9)*

this fall. She was also especially interested in the work being done in Rwanda and I've sent her information about that. The Japanese woman said as she was leaving she wanted to help translate the manuals to Japanese. Unfortunately, we seem to have an incorrect email address for her, so we hope she tries to contact us. The Irish/South African man knew of AVP. The two Catalanes (from Barcelona) have been in email contact and are waiting for the Spanish-speaking AVP team to arrive.

The AVP experience rang bells of recognition in various ways. One of the women said the AVP guidelines were almost identical to the rules for community in her meditation group. In the handpushing exercise, one man said he had a revelation about how peace work works, the subtlety of its dynamic.

Several people mentioned that the AVP concept wasn't theoretical, but practical. That was demonstrated as we adapted to the language situation in order to include everyone and therefore build community: One person spoke no English and another spoke only a little. Therefore, Elena and I translated everything that was said in English into Spanish and vice versa. Some of the exact thoughts might not have gotten shared, but the intention to communicate was so great within the group. It was wonderful.

I thank Joann Perry for the fund-raising letter she sent out for me, and I thank everyone who contributed to my trip. I can be reached at ElaineKlaassen@Yahoo.com.



("Rivera" continued from page 8)  
of India.

For me it started out from Greenwich, CT. on Friday May 28th. I left the house at 6:00 am to walk to Metro North train station, so as to connect to subsequent trains leading to the air train bound for Kennedy Airport. My final destination being the twin cities of Minneapolis Minnesota.

Since my flight's departure was scheduled for 11:50 am. I still had plenty of time to watch CNN, as it was only 8:30 in the morning. One of the ticker tape news flashes I saw that morning revealed we have 2.1 million men incarcerated in the land of the free-home of the brave. A second confirmation along a statistic I read while taking the shuttle train, after being handed a small periodical called Metro-something. When Gary Riley joined me at the flight holding area we shared this appalling American reality. To think in this Lord's year 2004 we have 1 in 75 men in prison makes you wanna holler at the injustices still confronting our most poorer communities.

Nonetheless I had set out early on this day in order to spend time alone pondering what we AVPers are all about, who we help, our purpose in life and the fact is we strive to continually assist men/women/youth found in our penal institutions-so that each one reached can in turn help to transform another human being.

At McArthur Airport we were picked up by a young lady (Amy), who waited with an AVP placard, much the same way taxi/limo drivers do at N.Y. airports. Nice touch of class. Amy was an AVP weekend commuter. She explained much of what she knew the weekend to be and let us know about the "Mall of America," a sight we were going to experience before departing for New York.

We reached Mount Olivet around 2:00 pm and we were quickly greeted warmly

(See "Rivera" on page 10)

## A Poem from Wyoming

Tamela L. Lewis (Terrific Tamela)  
Lusk, Wyoming, USA

Sitting here in AVP  
where we discuss things that are violent.  
Where women no longer have fear,  
and are no longer silent.

We confront our situations,  
and deal with them in a positive way.  
Letting one know how we feel,  
resolving situations today.

We find our common grounds,  
to try to keep the peace.  
Dealing with the problems,  
putting out minds at ease.

We've learned a lot of things  
to remove violence from our lives;  
to live a happy life  
as mothers, friends, and wives.

If you want a happy life,  
one where you are free,  
you'll learn a lot of things  
by taking AVP.

*The above poem was submitted to the Transformer on 9/14/2004, by Chelsea Kesselheim with a note saying:*

"A woman in our Basic AVP workshop at the Wyoming Women's Center (the only women's prison in the state) wrote this poem. She did it while in the workshop. We were/are impressed!"

"We've been doing workshops in the women's prison in Lusk for at least eight years now, and some wonderful things have come out of them—but never a poem."

("Arey" continued from page 7)

globally" when writing and editing.

As a consequence of this nonviolence training, the judges said Arey's essay "stood out above the rest."

To read the essay, or for further information about the contest or the Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, write in care of Christian Brothers University, 650 East Parkway South, Memphis, Tennessee 38104, or visit the [www.gandhiinstitute.org](http://www.gandhiinstitute.org) website.

(*"Rivera" continued from page 9*)

by Terry Kayser and Richard Nethercut. Then we made our way towards the dorms in order to secure choice bunks. Then I observed the wildlife outside the dining hall windows. Bird feeders abounded all around. But there was a really tall two tiered bird feeder adjacent to one of the large glass windows. I saw cardinals, humming birds, woodpeckers, and red squirrels, and a wild turkey. She stayed around for the duration of the weekend. Shortly thereafter Gary and I began aiding Dick as he sought to add yet another important article to our already growing conference packets. I met a few folk from the AVP-U.S.A. national gathering at Virginia, as well as some new people. Dick reminded me I was to chair the ex-prisoner panel, to which I acquiesced.

Later on we ate supper. Marge Schlitt, a former Westchester (N.Y.) area council regular joined us. Collectively we were-counting Fred Feucht-already 4 New York State AVPers. Etta Roebig joined us thereat also. We caught up on old times, current happenings and such. Following this we had a large gathering where we introduced ourselves, stated our Adjective Names, shared who we were. Where we came from and how we were down with AVP When we finished we broke for leisure activities. I shot some pool that evening. A sport I hadn't visited lately, but one close to my heart as a young city man.

On Saturday I woke up early, rolled out of the sack, showered and was in time to watch a nice sized rabbit chillin' outside on early morning grass munchies. The wild turkey was just outside the door, drenched from the outpouring of rain that poured down all night. I went on a trail walk and saw an egret take off from the marshes. I spotted a blue jay, auricle's and several other species of birds along the path. I turned back when rain started coming down again.

At breakfast time we ate by regions. The food was really good and we were not allowed to do K.P. duties. This issue was ironed out beforehand by the conference committee. A relief for most if not all in attendance. Next we heard from our keynote speaker (Kay Pranis). A woman who had gone on a journey with D.O.C.S., its employees and others in her work on peace making circles. Kay delivered an excellent presentation on her cumulative experiences along that continuum; followed by a question/answer period. Kay also refused to accept our allotted honorarium. A factor Terry Kaiser would raise later on when we met as the conference committee. Terry proposed using the honorarium as a price reducer incentive for Kay's book entitled "Peace making Circles," "From Crime to Community." A proposal that went over real well and one that served to induce Kay to come back and bring books for all present.

Next we heard from the Restorative Justice panel led by John Shuford, Steve Angell, Alan Taplow, Kay Pranis and Donn Kesselheim. All were provide with a thorough and meticulous presentation on some of the connection pieces between restorative justice, AVP and our respective communities. We each in turn received hand-outs on the multifaceted issues involved. Then too we had a question/answer phase, followed by our 1st breakout session.

I chose Concord Prison Outreach led by Nancy Shippen, so that I could hear what goes on in other parts of the country regarding Prison outreach, it's effectiveness, success stories, ..... Nancy spoke to how 20 churches united as one in order to help bring constructive programs into the prison system for prisoners. Programs sorely needed at that time. She fielded questions from us pertaining to her topic of discussion, methodology, community support, influence, affect on the men, and how it all

(*See "Rivera" on page 12*)

# Special Offer for the Luther Sanders book!

Alan Taplow (Awesome Alan)  
AVP Distribution Center  
Plainfield, Vermont, USA

**Just thought I'd let everyone know about the special offers for the book shown to the left, *The Road to the Kingdom*, by Luther Sanders:**

**Offer #1:** For Prison Coordinators 10 Free Copies to any Prison Coordinator—send check to AVP Distribution Service for \$3.50 made out to AVP/USA, to cover Shipping & Handling costs. No Credit Cards unless the request accompanies an order for other publications. Additional copies @ \$2.50 each. The order must have the following information:

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Peace, Alan

Alan Taplow - AVP Distribution Service  
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*The AVP Distribution Service provides facilitators with a convenient source of Manuals and other workshop materials. It is 'volunteer administered' --- 98% of it's revenue goes back to the programs and services offered by AVP/USA.*

## THE ROAD TO THE KINGDOM

BY LUTHER SANDERS



*I gave my heart to search out  
By wisdom concerning all things  
That are done under Heaven:  
This sore travail hath God given  
To the sons of man to be exercised  
Thereunto. Ecclesiastes 1:13.*

I became single-eyed, seeing only the good that people do. With my mind's eye I see them happy and successful in all their endeavors. —The Author

Here are the front and back covers of *The Road to the Kingdom* by Luther Sanders.

“The work in this volume reflects the deeply felt journey of spiritual awakening experienced by Mr. Sanders. It is a road not often taken, but it is the road for which our heart always yearns. I believe this book needs publication in these times because so many are searching for a deeper sense of fulfillment. For Luther Sanders, the episodes of personal revelation are expressed with veracity, in poetic prose-poems. I am grateful for having been led on the journey to see the places that have given him joy, sorrow, and wisdom.”

Mariah Britton  
Associate Minister  
Riverside Church  
New York City

“*The Road to the Kingdom* is one of those rare books which blends the common man's experience with the metaphysician's inquisitive mind. Luther Sander's passionate journey into the spirit can inspire even a heart made of the most stubborn stone.”

Kurtis J. Lamkin  
Poet, Writer, Teacher  
The New School  
New York City

*("Rivera" continued from page 10)*

began. All in all we came away with a sense of full circles connecting by all parties involved in that particular human exchange of love.

For my second breakout session I decided to hear what Ann Ward had to say about grant writing. She was offering a 2 part session. I attended this one only, as her second session conflicted with the Landing Strip presentation I agreed to work with Gary and Etta to bring about. Ann was on the money. She used handouts, personal knowledge, visual aids and grant writing books she lugged to the workshop, as part of her overview on grant writing. Ann proved to be very well informed on the subject matter presented and leant a special hand to all in the class. Soon thereafter I went to the pool for a couple of hours. The sauna and swimming pool felt great.

Dinner was next on our agenda. The food was as scrumptious as usual. We then heard a piece on corrections that delved into "Dealing with the System." Once again John Shuford headed up this informational assisted by Patrick Parker Roach and Joann Perry. The discussion was engaging, so much so we kept on past the camp fire time-especially it being so damp outside then. Once we hashed out all we wanted to speak to we broke it up. Some of us then saw a film on racism challenges. It was a weekend of sorts. Set in very close quarters, wherein 8 men were thrashing out racism in America through the eyes accustomed to being used, abused, and seen as castaways. All were in the same boat except for one man in particular who didn't see the light until enough shades from his/their pasts were lifted for him to look through. It was a great moving piece of film. In the end tears were shed, hearts opened up, and a real sense of reconciliation ensued. I retired to a nice shower, followed by slumber time.

On Sunday 3 facilitators and I took to the long trail walk-with a map accompanying

us of course. We saw the egret again, walked around the marsh area and saw a real small white tailed fawn. She was a sight. She had white spots along her fur as she pranced, stopped to look around her circumference and then jolted through the thicket. By the time we returned it was about breakfast time. I grabbed some grub and joined the conference committee. We had our finances in order; were well pleased with our annual conference turnout, discussed introducing an amendment to the By-Laws that would be voted on next year, to allow an ambassador from the national conference committee for the international conference set for South Africa-2006. We met with two of the representatives for the national conference being prepared for California. Next came time for worship and/or rest/reflection. Several of us spoke to two ex-prisoners who are involved in some serious Iraq peace initiatives and are under what sounds like black bag persecution operations. Before we knew it it was time for our third breakout session. We heard from Giri Sequoya, Bodacious Bob, John Shuford, and Steve Angell. Each shared their international AVP experiences with the whole circles of AVPers. All present were impressed with their audacious spirit. Giri shared her personal story as well and how AVP has had a great impact on her life's travels. Then Giri and Bodacious Bob let us know they would be staying in the area after the conference ended <so that they could do a local AVP workshop.

Gary Riley and Etta Roebig led the third breakout session. Our topic was "Landing Strip." Gary shared what Landing Strip was all about, followed by Etta who had just recently visited Landing Strip with Giri from India. I chipped in as I felt led to. We hosted a slew of questions relevant to Landing Strip, ex-prisoners, who attends, women ex-prisoners, the how's, what's, when's, where's. Some I felt came away with a better sense of how to better support men and women ex-

*(See "Rivera" on page 14)*

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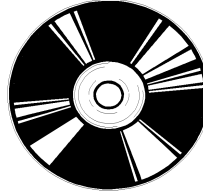
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(*"Rivera" continued from page 12*)

leased from the penal industrial complex. We shared Maddie's (young lady from Landing Strip) story at Landing Strip; her growth process, and success she's proved to be, as well as that of T-Haywood and others whose names came to us as role models for those recently released. We then enjoyed another splendid lunch.

Then six of approximately eight ex-prisoners joined the panel led by this writer. I did not leave much room for pre-discussion on the issues we should speak to or about. I simply invited all eight to join me and elaborate a bit on what we had gone through upon making our prison exodus, societal transition... I was totally trusting the process. I informed all listening we would each take turns speaking from our experiences. What followed was right from our hearts. Tears flowed from several panelists as we shared. We spoke to who we were prior to the prison experience, the incarceration itself, our release from the institution, how AVP did help in our transformation process and our future AVP commitment and other life goals. Our time was extremely on. One question was duly addressed by several of us panelists. That being our take on the so called "Criminal Mind," and is there truth to this supposition. I unhesitatingly answered it was poppycock, rubbish or no more true than one man's inference on cranial proportionment as a definitive criminal mind attribute. I had read Samenow's "Inside the Criminal Mind," for one of my college classes, while in stir. The overall agenda covered our annual national meeting. Fred was covering the meeting with a report we all spoke to as AVP New York, so Etta volunteered to drive Gary and myself to the Mall of America. It is a sight to see indeed. We stayed all of 45 minutes, purchased twin cities souvenirs for our families, saw the amusement park, snapped some photos and then dashed back to the conference to eat supper.

After eating I attended our 4th breakout session. John Shuford held a "Manly Awareness," session. One topic of several he has developed over the years called special topic workshops. He led us through an in depth explication about the workshop. Fred sat in this one as I believe Gary did too. Our final note on the agenda for Gary and I, as we were heading back to New York on Monday morning, was attending a jazz entertainment set. The music was playing and Karen Lu delivered vocals in Arabic, English, Korean, Israeli and one other language that escapes me now. During their recess we saw a "Today Show," news piece featuring Richard Nethercut's story about his daughter's brutal homicide. He stood out beautifully as a man who passionately believes in forgiveness.

A man who very much as the very first Green Haven Correctional Facility long term prisoners in conjunction with the New York State Quakers-in 1975- felt their is something inherently good inside of every human being on this planet. The expose was a good way to close out the conference for us. The music played awhile longer.

People even danced some. Then I retired to my last swim, pool area dialogue with Terry and a few people before my last sleep at the center.

The next day we woke each other up, settled into a car bound for the airport and waited a little while for the boarding of the aircraft. We boarded the airplane and started to mentally process this super AVP annual national conference and what next year will be like-by the Golden Gate Bridge. Hope to see all there in 2005 and look to see some new people as well.



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# Another Transforming Power Rap

Charles E. Boyd, Jr.  
 Graterford, Pennsylvania, USA  
 Written March 8th, 2003

## A TRANSFORMING POWER RAP

Seek to resolve conflict by reaching common ground. Reach for that something good in others... and never - ever - ever - ever put anyone down.

Listen before making judgements. Base your position on the truth... for this type of thinking will be beneficial and save you from many headaches and sleepless nights too.

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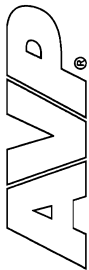
Be ready to revise your position, if it is wrong. Expect to experience great inward power to act... and life will truly be for us all, a much happier song. Risk being creative rather than being violent... Use surprise and humor... to brighten up any hour.

Learn to trust your inner sense of when to act. Love, Peace, Conflict Resolution, Restorative Justice, Freedom and Equality... Ummm, Ummm, Ummm... Imagine that! Build community based on honesty, respect and caring. TRANSFORMING POWER... the principal philosophy of AVP... A concept we are now both feeling and committed; to sharing, with everyone we meet.

Some call it this... some call it that... It's here, there... available everywhere. It's in you, in your opponent and surrounds you both... for those who are open to it, "TRANSFORMING POWER, is the way to go."

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