

Since 1984: *Reconciling persons to God, families and society*

### REPORT: NUECES COUNTY JAIL

A county jail ministry is unique. It is more challenging than state or federal prisons. But the rewards are many for determined county jail volunteers. We encourage more brethren to seize such opportunities. Christians often fly past county jails in their rush to get to a prison farther down the road. We are not suggesting brethren reduce their work in prisons but don't overlook the *goldmine* in your backyard. Don't go halfway around the world to win souls and fail to walk across the street to share Jesus.

A county jail is usually nearby. In some counties, a *prison* doesn't exist. A county sheriff normally runs the jail and is elected by its residents. This makes him accountable to its citizens. Leaders of a local congregation are normally longtime residents, business owners, and influential in the neighborhood. Elected officials need them on their side. This means a volunteer's entrance may be more readily approved.

While security is a top priority, life is a bit less tight in this environment compared to a prison. If you respect the *rules and regulations*, you have more freedom to accomplish your God-given mission. Following Covid-19, here is a 9-month report of our efforts in Nueces County Jail (May through February). We have enrolled a monthly average of 67 students, given out 24 Bibles, and received 20 prayer requests along with 19 baptisms. We have three weekly male and female classes. A county jail is where the "rubber meets the road" and, if we do our job here well, we send more Christians and better taught believers on to prisons that will help improve those ministries, too.



With less teaching time due to county jail turnover, choose your tools wisely. We may select one lesson in a NLB course to gain attention and then, enroll them to finish by mail. He can study the remaining 12 lessons at his pace from wherever he goes. In a small facility, you may be allowed to physically see everyone. In Nueces County, we rotate pods weekly. Wherever we go, we sow seed. Since the majority in jails will *not* end up in prison, a student may quickly be in our office or reconnect at church. If to prison they go, we tell them of ministry friends there and ask prison volunteers to expect them to be involved soon upon arrival.

**Please, don't overlook the goldmine in your backyard.**

49th Annual Churches of Christ Jail & Prison Ministry Workshop

### FORTIFIED

Come and be FORTIFIED in your ministry **June 7-9th, 2023** in New Orleans, LA. There will be relevant & encouraging sessions, national resources, knowledgeable experts, think tanks AND food, fun & fellowship!

Registration is \$90 to \$95. Space is limited so register early!

We are here to answer your questions:  
David (913)605-2495 or  
Jaime (985)379-8944

### IN LOVING MEMORY ~ IN HONOR OF

Family Upreach expresses gratitude for remembering loved ones and honoring those cherished with gifts. These remembrances allow souls to be taught to transform destructive behaviors into positive ones through Jesus.

**Received from:**

- M/M Bob Wachtel
- M/M Buck Griffith
- Dr./Mrs. Dale Underwood
- M/M Buck Griffith
- M/M Bob Wachtel
- John Henry Pruitt
- M/M Bob Wachtel
- M/M Buck Griffith
- Dr./Mrs. Dale Underwood
- John Henry Pruitt

**In loving memory of:**

- James Illgen
- Don Crofton
- Mary Callaway
- James Illgen
- Don Crofton
- Don Crofton
- Mary Callaway
- Mary Callaway
- Don Crofton
- Mary Callaway

## WHEN THE PLAYPEN IS EMPTY

How do you answer this question, “What happens when the playpen is empty?” In the case of the one near our front door entrance, there is only one answer when it comes to our **Little Angels** program: “We make a visit to Walmart to buy more toys.” But don’t send sentimental *Grandpas* like Dale Underwood or Buck Griffith. Their last trip blew our budget! There IS a definite increase in cost coming out of Covid. The toys in the playpen are “in addition to” the \$25 Walmart Gift-Cards. When the family enters and adults begin completing our assessment forms, a child is easily side-tracked by toys. Each can take his or her toy of choice home. *There is nothing that compares with the happy face of a child.*

Glenda Watson is usually the one that gets to experience this joy. If we ever have more toys than the playpen will hold, we hide them in Pat’s locked office to prevent Raquel and Merced from playing with them when they should be working at their stations. Of course, it’s hard to get Pat to open his office door because he’s in there on the floor with his socks and shoes off acting like a 5-year-old!

No kidding, we are serious about this effort. We seek to keep an assortment of toys that are both attractive and appropriate for the age and grade levels: 2–3-year-olds, 4-5-year-olds, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, and Grades 5-6. For infants, we give pampers of all sizes. We can buy toys for the younger ones for less than \$12 each. But toys for older children keep rising in cost to \$15-\$16 each. Our goal is to have some for all but generally, it is the younger children show up with moms and grannies. Hopefully, the older ones are in school.



Some of our friends have the “Little Angels” on their minds constantly. One man passed a bike that had been tossed out with trash to be picked up at the curb. It was broken and needed a few parts replaced, cleaned, painted, etc. He did all the work himself and brought it to the office. You should have seen the face of the little girl that got to take it home!

Caring friends offer *special* support for this phase of the ministry. Some do the shopping for us and bring unwrapped toys to us. This also saves us time. If you have children or grandchildren in the age/grade ranges mentioned, you know exactly what

best fits these needs.

We also ask that you **PRAY** for these **Little Angels**. Purchasing and having these toys on hand is the easy part but we pray for the family and each child leaving our office. We want caregivers to treat them well. They may benefit from free books in our Little Angels’ **Library**. We want them to continue feeling highly valued by God and live abundantly. The next time we see them may be when they are adults. But ***we don’t want to see them behind bars.***

## TRANSLATING ENGLISH TRACTS INTO SPANISH

You are aware of our ongoing efforts to translate 100% of the NLB curriculum into Spanish. This will require at least the next 10-12 years and, of course, we keep adding new courses constantly. The next two include the much-needed study on Re-Entry and “12 Steps to a Closer Walk with God.” At the same time, the “Video Project” in association with Harding University requires translation work. But believe it or not, we occasionally have time to work on smaller projects like translating a few hundred tracts that supplement our courses. We recently finished six.

With help from Raquel Rivera, we are having six of the most used and popular tracts translated at a time. The first six completed were *Things Essential to Salvation*, *Becoming a Woman of God*, *Admitting Weakness*, *Families Imprisoned*, *Anger*, and *Discipline/Temperance/Self-Control*.

We are now focused on the next six: *The Full Price of Crime*, *Patiently Waiting to Obey*, *The Right Medicine for Anger*, *The Monarch Butterfly*, *Dealing with the Pain*, and *Crawl, Walk, Run & Jump*. If any of these can be useful in your outreach to the Spanish-speaking community, please let us know.

**Things  
Essential  
to  
Salvation  
(Spanish)**

### **FAMILY UPREACH, INC.**

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