

Titus House Newsletter

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

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Paul Shannon at NARSOL's conference awards banquet "Is this really the way we want to live?"

By Paul Shannon . . . To begin, I'd ask all of you to just look at this group and realize how amazing it is that such a gathering even exists — I'd ask you to consider what a great bunch of people we have as we take on the most volatile and difficult of issues that face us — and all the commitment and courage and compassion that fills this room as we battle for the soul and sanity of our country.

When we started RSOL in 2007, given the mood that existed in the country, we felt it would be too dangerous for people on the registry to actually get involved. It was the wives and mothers and intimate partners of registrants who provided the backbone for the project.

When we held our first national conference in Boston in 2009, we were so afraid that we would be attacked by mobs with pitchforks that we didn't even divulge the location of the meeting until after people had registered.

We launched RSOL fifteen years ago with a manifesto I published in the Counterpunch online magazine. It began:

There is today in our country a growing threat to our legal system, to the rights of all of us, to the quality of life of children, and to common sense. This threat has been fanned by prosecutors, nurtured by the media, and ignored by those who usually speak out against such dangers.

In its most narrow sense, this threat can be defined as the particular approach to sexual deviance embodied in ever-more-draconian laws against all behaviors labeled "sex offenses" — including those committed by minors — and in the sex offender registries of every state and the federal government. In this approach to sex offenses, slander, hysteria, and demonization often replace reason, solid research, and proportionality.

But more broadly, the danger consists of an all-out assault on fairness, on the reputations of some of our most caring people, on necessary social relationships, and on our critical ability to confront the deepening social paranoia of 21st century America.

It went on with many specifics and then it closed:

The present crusade is spreading fear and loathing across our society. Our society does not need more fear and loathing. It needs trust and dignity and redemption. At present there is no telling how far this self-destructive approach to social problems related to sexuality can go - unless people capable of courage, compassion, and common sense stand up to stop it and turn our country's attention to real solutions to our problems.

We were stunned by the widespread response from people of all walks of life across the country. 1500 people signed on (including Chrysanthi Leon, our first keynoter of this conference; Dr. Fred Berlin from Johns Hopkins; and historian Howard Zinn) leading to the formation of RSOL.

Tonight, though, I'd like to briefly call your attention to something mentioned in this manifesto. Specifically, the notion of confronting the deepening social paranoia of 21st century America and turning our country's attention to real solutions to our problems.

For the impact of the insidious attitudes we are dealing with go far beyond our group here, go far beyond the registrant community.

Yes, we know that the registry, residency restrictions, job and housing discrimination, and civil commitment have terrible impacts on registered citizens and their families. But the reality is that there is no one out there whose life is not negatively affected by these ideas that poison our lives.

I offer you the idea that the feelings of fear and loathing directed toward those accused or convicted of a sex offense undermine the ability of every person in this country to live out their own lives, to tell their own story in this world, and to find the happiness that they and their children are capable of. **(Continue on page 3 Paul Shannon)**



WHY THE U.S. MARSHALS SPEND MILLIONS ON SEX-OFFENSE REGISTRANT SWEEPS

Source: theappeal.org 7/8/22

The real aim of these operations might be to boost support for cops.

Gary, a 62-year-old on Texas's sex-offender registry, dates the problems with his neighbors to a visit by police in 2018. After a successful real estate career he lives in a relatively safe neighborhood outside Dallas, identifies as a conservative, and has friends on the police force. He's donated to police charities, once giving \$10,000 to the family of an officer killed on duty, he tells The Appeal.

He was convicted of child pornography possession in 2007, spent five years in prison and 10 years on pro-

bation, and hasn't reoffended since, state records show. "It's very serious," he said of his offense. "It's wrong. I take responsibility." (Gary isn't his real name, which he asked to have withheld to protect his company and family.)

That day four years ago, a team of local officers and U.S. Marshals showed up at his home in full tactical gear and a tactical vehicle with the Marshals' logo, he says. They were checking the addresses of those on the registry. Gary showed them his license and they left—the whole thing took perhaps five minutes.

Since 2006, the federal government has funneled millions into some-

times-massive operations to verify the addresses of those on sex-offender registries. It's hard to tell how often these happen—the Marshals Service didn't respond to multiple requests from The Appeal about how many operations they ran in the latest fiscal year. But a look at how authorities talk about the operations—and the flattering press coverage they generate—indicates their importance in selling the public on more police. Worse, studies show they likely do nothing to improve public safety or make incidents of sexual violence less likely.

(read the full article in The Appeal).

Spiritual Housecleaning

by Don R.

Today I participated in Don and Alice's Titus House daily telephone devotional group using the Daily Bread. I was struck by the story of Josiah (II Kings 22-23, II Chronicle 34-35) who at age 16 began to seek after God. Then at age 20 he began to destroy the places of idolatry. I'm impressed that this young man made radical changes as the new leader of the nation. He had the heart of God. It began in II Kings 22:8 where he found the Book of the Law in the temple, and as he read it he was deeply moved and greatly distressed. In repentance he began to "sweep out" the idols and anything else that would displease God.

We, too, need to examine our lives and our homes for things that bring compromises in our

life. It is so easy to find books, music, and other things about which we give little thought when first acquired, but they may contain things that can bring spiritual harm to those in our household, including us. Periodically it helps to go through our possessions and get rid of what may be less than godly.

During the devotional, I realized that I had a book by a Christian that had brought wrong thoughts to my mind the day before our devotional. It was a helpful book in many respects, but I knew it had to go. The Lord had convicted me and made me distressed, exactly as he had King Josiah. I think all of us need to do some spiritual housecleaning from time to time and even make it an

ongoing process. We need to watch what goes into our homes and into our minds, so that Satan does not gain a stronghold there. The story ends with Josiah ordering the repair of the temple at age 26. Notice the progression: he had to (1) seek after God, then he needed to (2) destroy the idols, and finally he was ready to (3) repair the temple. God prepares us to do great things by clearing out the compromises and distractions, making room for the work he desires. Now we are uncluttered with sin and the idols of modern life. As a result we can "build the temple" which is the task he has given us. Do you need to do some spiritual housecleaning?



Paul Shannon

The mantra, of course, by those who presently oppose us is “protect the children.” But this is really our call, to protect the children — and not just from sexual violence but from the fear of not being free, the fear that they are surrounded by demons on every side, the fear of mythical dangers — so they can both live their lives more fully and learn how to protect themselves from actual dangers.

And the harm spreads into many corners of American life. There is no one out there whose life is not negatively affected by these ideas.

How can anyone’s life not be curtailed with the threat of false accusation or misunderstanding leading to shaming and social banishment hanging over our heads?

Lenore Skenezy, our banquet speaker several years ago, documents the tragic things we do to ourselves and our kids in daily life America in the name of protecting them.

A man helping a child in trouble is suspect instead of it being the most natural thing in the world;

Life is perilous for male coaches of female athletes;

Men avoid becoming teachers for elementary school kids for fear of parents’ suspicions — even though their presence in the classroom would be most helpful to many of those kids;

Helping a lost little girl find her dad gets you beaten to a pulp;

In fact, it is well known that men refuse to help children out of fear of being suspected of being “after kids.”

Is this really the way we want to live?

The fact is that this draconian legal regime and belief system around sexual offending directly impact only a small fraction of the population. Unless we are joined in our efforts to rid our country of this curse by millions of other fellow citizens, we will always face an uphill battle.

So an important part of our work is to help our neighbors to see that their lives will be enhanced if they ditch the registry and allow themselves to be freed from the fear and hatred that gave birth to it.

So we engage in specific battles about the registry, residency and travel restrictions, and the curse of lifetime civil commitment and the beliefs that undergird them. But beyond this huge task, I would ask you to see these specific battles in the context of a broader struggle, a critical struggle, to call our country to its senses, to distinguish truth from falsehood and sanity from lunacy.

To value redemption over condemnation, justice over hysteria, respect over shaming, and our common brotherhood and sisterhood over all that is tearing us apart.

The problem is that, as a country, we have substituted the pursuit of demons in our midst for the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

We are a country that lives in fear. Instead of addressing our many problems — including sexual violation — in ways that make sense, we seek to destroy the monsters that we believe infect our society and whose destruction we think will make us safe.

Look at what we have done in pursuit of these demons at home and abroad. We have become like Ahab, chasing the great white whale, hoping to destroy it, to his own peril and the peril of his entire crew.

Who will free our country from such madness? Who will carry the torch of common sense, fairness, justice, and even forgiveness?

Who, if not those who themselves are victims of such demonization and madness and who stand at the epicenter of the hysteria from which this emotional plague spreads out to all the other parts of the body politic as we address more and more of our complex problems within the framework of panic and hysteria?

For this lunacy infects the minds and hearts of every one of us, making it impossible for us to address our social problems — such as sexual violation — in ways that could solve them and even begin to bring healing.

We throw billions away trying to destroy monsters of all kinds instead of supporting the lives of real people who carry heavy burdens on their shoulders as they deal with heartbreak and illness and loneliness and economic pressures and homelessness.

Is this really the way we want to live?

This is the question we need to address to our neighbors and fellow citizens, whether they live in the red world or the blue world: Is this really the way we want to live? — squandering our opportunity to make our country into a place where we all find the respect and support and connection that all of us need.

“Friends,” we need to figure out how to tell them, “can’t you see that banishing people accused or guilty of a sex offense — as well as other monsters you seek to slay — is undermining your own lives and the lives of your children?”

“That you are causing our country irreparable harm at a time when we most need to come together to effectively address our problems — whether they be sexual offending, the drug epidemic, pandemics, our mental health crisis, climate catastrophe, crippling social polarization, or war and peace?”

It is time to come to our senses, to base our lives on reality, so we can make our country into what we really want it to be.

As we struggle for justice for ourselves, and for the registrant and civilly committed community, I hope we will all take up this broader challenge on behalf of all of us, so that in fighting for our own dignity, we are also fighting for the dignity, respect and justice that we all deserve.

Thank you for your attention. And thank you for your work.



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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



LIFE VERSUS DEATH by Alice Johnston

One of my best friends with whom I often ate lunch at our favorite eatery died. We had a lot in common as we both worked in favorite churches, we both had several children and our husbands were in church leadership. Bonnie at 88 was a few years younger than I but we loved the same food, we often met at our favorite restaurant and chatted for an hour or two over a delicious lunch. I drove by our favorite eatery the other day and the place was closed and dark. I had tried several times to call her but got no answer. In scanning local news recently, I read her obituary and details of a family based funeral. Then I wondered how soon I might be joining her again. I try to avoid the subject of my death since most of my relatives including my parents and two of my brothers are with the Lord. I have been known to avoid the thought of my future departure by going to Las Vegas and driving a race car. Does that make any sense at all --- since I have done it twice? Yes, I had every excuse as I explain to eve-

ryone who asks that I was trying to make contact with one of my children in the area! "Oh, sure, of course!"

Which would you rather have – LIFE or DEATH? Obviously we get both of them, first one and then the other. We do have vital choices to make – not do I drive a race car, but have I turned my life over to Jesus Christ? I did that at age 5, oldest child of a church pastor and God has been with me ever since. Perhaps that knowledge has encouraged me to do some crazy things at times knowing that God was there to keep me safe! I desire that each of you reading this testimony make sure that you have asked Jesus to be your savior, that you know when you are lying in that box you have nothing to worry about! You will be joining for all eternity with the One who died to make you a part of His family.



Circle of Concern has gone **ZOOM**

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 citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on August 21 2022 at 3 pm—4 p.m. MST. We will meet on Zoom. 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.. He will send you the link to join by computer or phone. You can contact him at the number above or email him at

donmagicjohnston@gmail.com