

# Crossroad

## NETWORK NEWS

MAY 2006

### CBI INSTRUCTORS HELD UP BY CELLPHONE BANDIT!



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- 2 CBI INSTRUCTORS HELD UP BY CELLPHONE BANDIT!
- 5 NUMBER OF HISPANIC MUSLIMS IN U.S. ON THE RISE
- 6 IOWA: A SEX OFFENDER-FREE ZONE?
- 7 INMATE HAS NO SPACE TO COMPLETE HIS LESSONS
- 8 ANNUITIES FOR CROSSROAD BIBLE INSTITUTE
- 8 CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINARS

# MAY 2006

The Mission of *Crossroad Network News* is to promote partnership in the ministry of CBI through communication

# CBI INSTRUCTORS



**CBI  
INSTRUCTORS  
HELD UP  
BY  
CELLPHONE  
BANDIT!**



| By Dr. David Schuringa

## “I HAVE A GUN UNDER MY SHIRT. GIVE ME YOUR PURSE OR I’LL SHOOT YOU.”

On March 13, at dusk, two CBI Instructors were mugged in a condominium parking lot in Bradenton, Florida. I have firsthand knowledge of the incident because the two Instructors are my 26-year-old daughter and my 75-year-old mother.

My daughter, Rebecca, and her family were visiting my folks. The evening before Rebecca was to return to Michigan, she and my mother walked to the drugstore across the street from my folks’ condo. As they were returning, they saw someone lurking in the shadows who they thought might be following them. Rebecca kept her eye out and, sure enough, when they entered the condo parking lot, the young assailant—he looked 15—was suddenly right there behind them.

“I have a gun under my shirt,” he warned. “Give me your purse or I’ll shoot you.” He was eyeing my mother’s purse; Rebecca didn’t bring one along. To my daughter, the solution appeared obvious and simple. When a man threatens you at gunpoint, you give him the purse and pray that he doesn’t shoot you anyway.

“I’m not giving you my purse,” my mother replied.

“What?!?” thought Rebecca. I’m not sure who was more shocked, she or the bandit. “Grandma, give him the purse! GRANDMA, DROP THE PURSE!” my daughter kept repeating.

But Mom said, “No way! I have pictures in here. I’m not giving him my purse.”

“Don’t make me do this,” the thief threatened. “I don’t want to do this. Just give me the purse!”

He was clearly irritated and things were looking less hopeful by the moment. Maybe Grandma was ready to stare down the gun barrel of a drug addict, Rebecca thought, but she had a husband and two little children

she’d like to stick around for, if at all possible. So she planned her get-away while Mom and the boy kept talking. She reasoned to herself, “I can get shot when he gets tired of arguing with Grandma or I can get shot trying to escape.” Heart pounding, she went for broke and started walking. She kept walking. To her utter amazement, the thief didn’t fire! “I kept expecting a bullet in my back,” she told me.

Dashing up the stairs, Rebecca burst into the condo: “Grandpa! Jeff! Call 911! There’s a bandit downstairs holding Grandma at gunpoint and SHE WON’T GIVE HIM HER STUPID PURSE!” On the phone, Rebecca explained to the dispatcher that the thief was young—mid-teens—Caucasian, medium-build, dressed in a red shirt, blue jeans and sneakers. A squad car was soon on its way, lights flashing.

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As Rebecca was leaving the scene, Mom continued her conversation with the bandit. “Are you a Christian?” she asked.

The kid was taken aback and muttered something like, “Sure.”

“Well then,” asked my mother, “you shouldn’t be doing this, should you?”

“Oh no, now she’s going to call the police,” he moaned as he saw Rebecca running up the stairs. “I’m outta here.”

“Oh no, my granddaughter wouldn’t do that!” my mother assured him. He didn’t buy it, however, and made a run for it, fast.

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Meanwhile, the police on the way to the scene were flagged down by a teen who told them that his friend just called for

Continued on page 4

help on his cellphone. "He says he's in a whole lot of trouble," he said.

"What does he look like?" they asked.

"Medium-build, red shirt, blue jeans and sneakers," the teen explained.

"Hop in, and we'll help you find him," offered the police. They had him call his troubled friend and put him on speaker phone. The bandit confessed the attempted robbery to his friend, unaware that the police were listening in, and then gave his location.

The police showed up at the condo and Officer Barritt said, "We know where he is. We'll be back for you in a few minutes." After they had apprehended him, they returned and asked Mom and Rebecca to identify the bandit from the police car.

He is 19 years old. His name is Jordan. There was no gun. During the holdup, he was holding a cellphone under his shirt. The police said he had been using drugs that day and needed funding to replenish his supply. The officers guaranteed that he could get 5-15 years in prison for attempted robbery. 10 days later he was out on bail.

\*\*\*\*\*

Naturally, I was curious as to why Mom wouldn't give up her purse. "Hey Mom," I asked the next day on the phone, "What's up with that, anyway?"

"He was just a baby, just a kid. He wasn't going to shoot us."

"Easy for you to say, Mom, but people do get killed thinking like that," I argued.

"I suppose so," she responded, in a less-than-convincing concession.

"I'm grateful everything turned out OK, Mom," I said. "But next time," I instructed the Instructor, "PLEASE GIVE THE MAN THE PURSE!"

"OK," she said. "Can we get a CBI enrollment form to him?"

I later complimented Rebecca for keeping her wits about her and for her bravery. "I learned on Oprah," she said, "that in such situations, you memorize a detailed description, drop the purse and run as fast as you can!" (I'm glad she doesn't watch Jerry Springer.) She also hoped that we could get him signed up for CBI's program.

Next month, I want to analyze this incident with you from the perspective of punitive vs. restorative justice. Under the present system, an errant teenager is bound to end up in prison, just as the police said. Our first reaction might be, "Good, lock the rotten kid up!" We know, however, that he will likely come out and return to crime, in fact "graduating" to the next level of criminal behavior.

On the other hand, let us examine my mother and daughter's response. Is there anything from a restorative justice perspective that would not only punish him for his crime, but also bring healing for the victims and rehabilitation for the criminal? And would I think any differently on the whole issue had my mother or daughter been shot and killed?

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# PRISON

NEED NOT BE A WASTE OF TIME

Crossroad Bible Institute provides inmates faith-based reentry educational programming. Scientific studies show that recidivism rates drop dramatically for inmates who participate in faith-based programs during incarceration. Please "remember those in prison" (Hebrews 13:3) by supporting Crossroad Bible Institute's church-based discipleship program. Your tax-deductible gift will change lives.



# Number of Hispanic Muslims in U.S. on the Rise

| By Kathryn Shane



**T**he number of Hispanics in the United States who practice Islam is growing, according to estimates by many Islamic organizations. Although the U.S. Census Bureau does not collect data on religion, various Islamic groups estimate that the number of Hispanic Muslims has risen from 25,000 a few years ago to as high as 75,000 today. As Islam is one of the fastest-growing religions in the country and in our prisons and Hispanics represent one of the fastest-growing minority groups, the convergence of these two parties was almost inevitable.

Many Hispanic Muslim organizations, including the Latino American Dawah Organization (LADO), are taking action to bolster their numbers around the U.S. as they translate the Quran into Spanish and distribute other religious literature to Latinos both inside and outside of prisons. According to the LADO website, part of their mission is to provide “assistance and guidance to anyone interested in Islam, particularly Latinos” and to provide “English, Spanish, and Portuguese Islamic literature, such as books, brochures, and audio/videotapes.” They also focus on

“delivering presentations at mosques, high schools, colleges, prisons, churches, and at various organizations.”

Some experts claim that 30,000 U.S. inmates a year are converting to Islam. With groups such as LADO committed to presenting Islam to prisoners, that number is sure to include many Hispanic inmates, who make up almost 20 percent of the prison and jail population. At a conference of the Islamic Society of North America in July 2005, Mustafa Carroll, a Dallas resident, told *Voice of America*, “We have a very dynamic inner-prison group right now in the Dallas, Texas, area, which helps a lot of inmates to come out. They start the transformation in prison and then they get help to stay out of prison once they get out.”

Spanish Bible studies such as CBI’s *Grandes Verdades de la Biblia* (*Great Truths of the Bible*) give Hispanic inmates another option when they are reaching out for help. Since its advent in 2001, the Spanish program at CBI

grew to almost 1,500 students in 2005. Almost 200 Spanish-speaking Instructors disciple and encourage these students as they search for truth from behind bars, counteracting outreach by Muslim groups. More CBI Instructors who can read and write Spanish are desperately needed at this time.

*Grandes Verdades* clearly teaches that Jesus Christ, the God of the Bible, is the only way to salvation. As Lesson 6 in this course says, “We can be saved *only* when we believe with all our hearts that Jesus died for us.” As more Spanish-speaking people outside of prison get involved with discipling inmates through CBI, more Spanish-speaking inmates behind bars will learn about the truth that will truly set them free—truth that will allow them to “become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life” (Philippians 2:15-16).

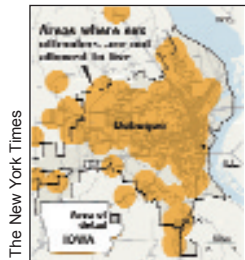
*Kathryn Shane serves as the Spanish and International Programs Coordinator at CBI.*

## Spanish Instructors Needed!

CBI’s Spanish program is growing at a fast pace. Additional Instructors are needed to disciple inmate Spanish students who are enrolled in the program. Please help us spread the word to those you know who can read and write Spanish, have a love for God’s Word and desire to share their faith as a CBI Instructor. Please contact the CBI office for more information (616-530-1300 or [kathryn@crossroadbible.org](mailto:kathryn@crossroadbible.org)).

# IN THE NEWS...

KUNST-ESSAY:  
Situationistisk  
Internationale, A  
Theoretisk Grupp  
Workers' Coalit  
Kampfer fra



## Iowa: a Sex Offender-Free Zone?

**CEDAR RAPIDS, IA**—A state law here recently went into effect that bans sex offenders from living within 2,000 feet of a school or day care center. Many Iowa cities have responded in kind, banning sex offenders from parks, swimming pools, libraries and bus stops. As a result, there is little living space: 90 percent of Dubuque is off-limits, for instance. “The truth is that we’re starting to lose people,” said Don Vrotsos, chief deputy for the Dubuque County Sheriff’s Office, to the *New York Times*. Nearly three times as many registered sex offenders are now missing than before the law took effect, as they deem the law too restrictive to obey. Continued Vrotsos, “We would rather know where these people are living than to have the restriction.”

## In Shackles and in Labor

**NEWPORT, AK**—Currently, only two states and five departments of correction have laws against shackling inmates during labor. Explained spokeswoman Dina Tyler for the Arkansas DOC to the *New York*

*Times*, “Though these are pregnant women, they are...sometimes violent in nature. There have been instances when we’ve had a female inmate try to hurt hospital staff during delivery.” Despite this claim, there have apparently been no escape attempts by such inmates. “This is the perfect example of rule-following at the expense of common sense,” said William F. Schulz, the executive director of Amnesty International U.S.A., to the *Times*. “It’s almost as stupid as shackling someone in a coma.”

## Once Incarcerated, Now Ordained

**BERKELEY, CA**—After serving a twenty-year sentence for orchestrating the “thrill kill” of a homeless man, James Tramel recently won parole and is believed to be the first Episcopal priest ordained while in prison. While incarcerated, he earned a master’s degree in theological studies and occasionally preached to his congregation via telephone. He will now serve as associate pastor of that church. Explained the head pastor, Rev. Jay Johnson, to the Associated Press, “This isn’t about covering over what happened. This is about how we can move forward from that day, doing the work of atonement and forgiveness.” Not all felt this way, however. Said Edward Stephenson, father of the victim, to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “If he wants to do his preaching, there are plenty of people behind bars he can preach to.”

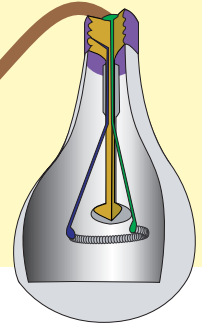
## Musical Exposes Harsh Prison Conditions

**SEOUL, South Korea**—The South Korean musical “Yodok Story” chronicles life in Yodok prison camp, one of many in North Korea’s gulag system. Typically a light-hearted medium, this musical touches on themes of rape, starvation and an oppressive government. In efforts to maintain peaceful relations with its neighbor to the north, the South Korean government pressured director Jung Sung-san to abandon the production. Undeterred, however, even to the point of taking out a loan using his own kidney as collateral, Sung-san completed the work, which draws from his actual experiences. He ended the musical on a theme of redemption, as castmembers recited the Lord’s Prayer.

## Husband of Nagging Wife Pleads for Jail

**PIACENZA, Italy**—A week after being sentenced to house arrest for nine months, Ahmed Salhi returned to the court and pleaded for jail-time. He begged the judge to take him into custody, as he explained, because he could not bear his wife’s nagging. He had been sentenced for breaching immigration laws. “I need some peace,” Salhi told the Italian newspaper *Corriere Della Sera*. The judge obliged and Salhi will finish his sentence behind bars.

# QUESTIONS FOR CROSSROAD



## INMATE HAS NO SPACE TO COMPLETE HIS LESSONS

**Q.** My student says he is in an upper bunk (which only allows room enough to lie down) and he cannot work on his lessons unless he stands at the foot of the bed. He is so discouraged, as it is difficult to do the lessons standing up. He says a third of the men in his facility have an upper bunk and no place of their own to sit down to read or write. How should I reply to him?

*Instructor in Michigan*

**A.** When we think of the situations in which inmates find themselves, we are amazed that so many continue on as students like they do. They are completing these lessons in the harshest of circumstances, physically and spiritually. In overcrowded prisons, the situation is more difficult than ever. Please do all that you can to encourage him to keep on and not give up on the lessons. Let him know that you will be praying for him and encourage him to pray as well. Also, suggest he talk with a chaplain, as he/she may be able to get permission for him to find a place where he can sit and study or even have enough clout to request a bunk change for him. Whatever the outcome, I hope that he will be able to experience God's faithfulness and provision through this challenging time.

**Q.** My student asked how often we send out the *Crossroad Connection* and how he can submit his artwork and poems. What should I tell him?

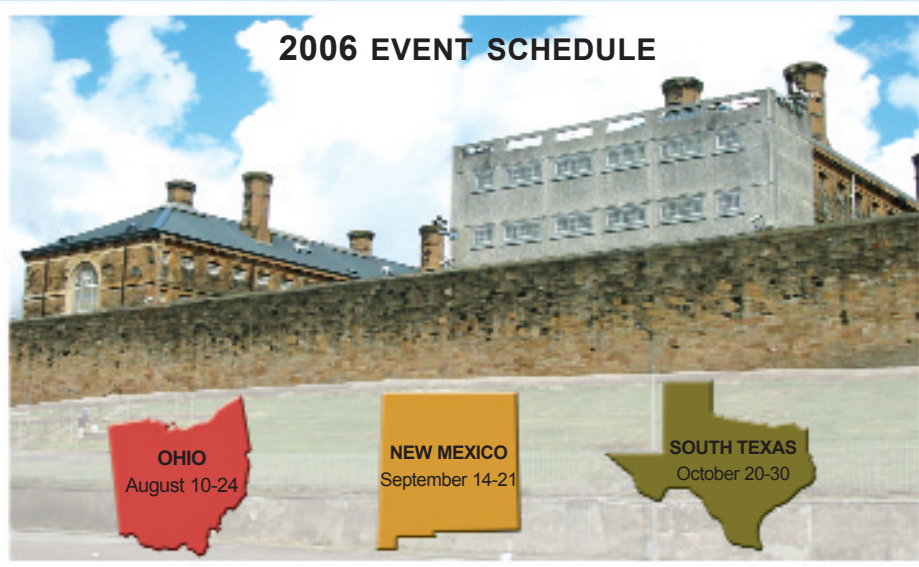
*Instructor in South Dakota*

**A.** *Crossroad Connection* is a newsletter that is inserted into the CBI lessons and sent to every student four times a year. Due to high demand, we also mail this publication to Instructors and our constituency separately. *CC* consists mostly of student artwork and poems, quotes from Instructors and students and typically an article from Dr. Schuringa.

If your student would like to submit artwork or a poem directly to *Crossroad Connection*, he/she may send it with a completed lesson and earmark it for the *CC*, or he/she may send it separately to CBI Headquarters. Due to the high volume, not all artwork or poems submitted will be chosen to appear in the *CC*. When we receive a poem or drawing, we scan it and submit it to *Crossroad Connection* before forwarding the lesson to the Instructor and also thank the student for sharing it. However, we occasionally miss something, so if your student includes artwork or a poem and we did not indicate that we received it, please let us know.

**Please note:** *Crossroad Connection* should not be confused with *Crossroad Network News*. Sometimes Instructors are sending *CNN* to students. PLEASE DON'T DO THIS. You place our staff and others named in potential jeopardy. *Crossroad Connection*, however, is for our students.

## 2006 EVENT SCHEDULE



## OPERATION STARTING LINE

OSL is soon visiting prisons in **OHIO**, **NEW MEXICO** and **SOUTH TEXAS** and you are invited to join us.

Operation Starting Line (OSL) is a multi-ministry collaboration bringing the gospel to every prison in the United States by 2010. CBI is pleased to provide every responding inmate long-term discipleship through its faith-based reentry education program.

Go to [www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org](http://www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org) > *Affiliates* > *Operation Starting Line* for more information.



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Annuities for Crossroad Bible Institute are administered by the Barnabas Foundation. Free consultations are available. Call 800-668-2450 for more information.

## MAY - JUNE 2006 SEMINARS

### Responding Helpfully to Muslim Students

Dr. Raymond Weiss  
First CRC, Sioux Center, Iowa  
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 2, 2006  
Registration Deadline: April 25, 2006

### How Restorative Justice Aims to Resolve the Crisis in Criminal Justice

Dr. David Schuringa  
Bethel CRC, Waterdown, Ontario, Canada  
10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Saturday, May 6, 2006  
Registration Deadline: April 27, 2006

### Teaching the New Survey of the Bible Course

Dr. Greg Schuringa  
Faith CRC, Elmhurst, Illinois  
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 9, 2006  
Registration Deadline: May 2, 2006

### A Day in the Life of an Inmate

Chaplain Bill Wilder  
Lorain Correctional Institution, Grafton, Ohio  
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Saturday, May 13, 2006  
Registration Deadline: April 27, 2006

### The Healing of Abba Father

Dr. Tim Spykstra  
Haven CRC, Zeeland, Michigan  
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 16, 2006  
Registration Deadline: May 9, 2006

### Aclarar la confusión doctrinal en la prisión Clearing Up Doctrinal Confusion in Prison

El Dr. Derk Oostendorp  
ICR Emanuel, Wyoming, Michigan  
7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.,  
Martes, el 6 de junio de 2006  
El plazo de entrega para la matrícula: El 29 de mayo de 2006

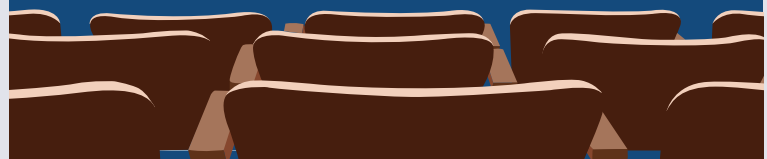
### Remembering Prisoners in Your Estate Planning

Mr. Don Long  
First CRC, Orange City, Iowa  
7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 13, 2006  
Registration Deadline: June 6, 2006

## The Center for Advanced Studies at Crossroad Bible Institute presents

# CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINARS

May - June 2006



All seminars are free of charge, but advanced registration is required. You can register online at [www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org](http://www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org) or by calling the CBI Headquarters at 800-668-2450. The seminars are sponsored by The Center for Advanced Studies at Crossroad Bible Institute.

OPEN TO CBI INSTRUCTORS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC



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