



## **IT'S OUR SILVER ANNIVERSARY**

### **A Special Message from Joni**

"The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined..." (Psalm 12:6).

Let me quickly clear that up. It's not Ken's and my anniversary (we will only celebrate 22 years of marriage together). It's the 25th anniversary of Joni and Friends! We will mark this year with many celebrations and thanksgivings to God for His faithfulness in guiding Joni and Friends through a quarter of a century of ministry to people with disabilities and their families.

I can recall the single-room office which BGEA provided to us rent-free so many years ago. Back in 1979, Joni and Friends consisted of me, two staff workers, and a huge group of volunteers. With help from an excellent board of directors providing much wisdom – and with assistance from several great churches who were excelling in disability ministry – we kick-started Joni and Friends in the summer of '79. My books and the movie JONI were generating thousands of letters from mothers and fathers of disabled children. "How can I help my church understand our needs?" and "Why hasn't God healed my daughter's disability?" We were hoppin' from the get-go!

Yet from the first day of ministry, Joni and Friends kept its uncompromising distinction. It's summed up in our Mission Statement: To communicate the Gospel and to equip Christ-honoring churches worldwide in evangelizing and discipling people affected by disability. During the unfolding years as we developed Family Retreats, Wheels for the World, and other programs, evangelism remained our goal. Our staff and volunteers, across the country and around the world, have a single passion: to see disabled people and their families come to Christ and embrace His plan for their lives.

Friend, it's happening because of prayer. (I'm still feeling the repercussions of prayers offered on my behalf when I was first injured). Through your intercessions, God is continuing to move mightily among thousands of disabled people and their families wherever we go. God bless you richly for helping us reach this 25-year milestone and may He carry us forward into the next 25 led by your prayers!