



The WINGS Flyer—

Issue #2

WINGS Ministry
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Spring 2004

WINGS Foundation is Formed!

Your generous response to my request for donations in November of 2003 has allowed me to devote full time to the WINGS Ministry since January 1, 2004. I have been so blessed each and every day, and I know I am following my calling. God is opening doors and really blessing our work!

On March 1, 2004, our WINGS Foundation documents were signed and mailed to the New Mexico Christian Community Foundation (NMCCF). Inmates from the Crossings Unit at Los Lunas Correctional Facility had donated funds to start the WINGS Endowment Fund. Their generous contribution of \$350 inspired other donors to add to this fund which enabled us to start the WINGS Foundation.

Robert Perea, NMCCF Director of Development stated the following:

"We would like to congratulate WINGS Ministry for taking a vital step toward continued growth and success! The step I am referencing is the establishment of a WINGS Foundation (WF) through NMCCF. WINGS Ministry is committed to serving individuals in the New Mexico community and around the United States; because of this focus they are now developing a strategic long-range financial plan. There are many components to the plan, which includes the WINGS Foundation. The ability to accept unique types of gifts is critical to this strategy.

A gift of highly appreciated asset, such as a business interest or real estate, is one of the wisest ways to give. In most cases, you receive an immediate charitable tax deduction that's usually based on the full value of the asset —

- Real estate
- Closely held business interest
- Retirement plan interests
- Tangible or intangible personal property
- Life insurance

Some of the other giving vehicles that WINGS will now be able to work with are:

- Charitable Lead Trusts
- Charitable Remainder Trusts
- Charitable Gift Annuities

If the Lord is placing the desire to support WINGS Ministry on your heart, please contact Ann Edenfield for more information about these effective planned giving instruments."

Request for Donations

I am asking for you to prayerfully consider making a donation to the WINGS Ministry. WINGS was granted "committee approval" for several NM State contracts, but unfortunately there is not funding available. I am continually applying for grants and contracts, but there is only one small contract with the State of NM that has officially been approved so far.

Donations of any size will be greatly appreciated! The WINGS Ministry is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.

Thanks! Ann Edenfield

Upcoming Dates & Events:

April 29, 2004

National Conference of Catechetical Leadership—Albuquerque, NM

May 8, 2004

New Jersey Faith-based convention—Atlantic City, NJ

May 23, 2004

WINGS for L.I.F.E. Begins—ABQ

June 13-19, 2004

Oklahoma New Day Camp

June 26, 2004

Santa Rosa, NM Prison Party

Aug. 1-7, 2004

Sonlight Christian Camp Backpacking

Aug. 12, 2004

Las Cruces Prison Volunteer Banquet

Aug. 28, 2004

Albuquerque Wings Back-to-School Party—St. John's Episcopal Cathedral

Oct. 23, 2004

South Carolina School Blind & Deaf

Dec. 4, 2004

Albuquerque Wings Christmas Party

Training Contract Approved with NM Corrections Dept.

Ann Edenfield, WINGS Ministry Executive director and founder, has recently signed a contract with the State of New Mexico Corrections Department to coordinate four training seminars for corrections officials, probation and parole officers, school teachers, counselors and administrators, volunteers, congregational leaders and other organizations.

The training seminars will be held in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and Roswell. Leaders from at least 21 New Mexico cities will be invited to attend the trainings, with the focus on reintegration and ideas about how to start a program like **WINGS for L.I.F.E.** for family members of inmates in their cities.

The goal is to provide similar training to leaders in all these cities so there will be consistency of support and programs for all the residents of New Mexico. The WINGS Board is hoping that once this model is created, we will be able to share it with every community in America.

Reflections about the WINGS Valentine's Party

Grants, NM Women's Prison by Cindy Davis



Valentines of Love.



Above: Everyone is making Valentines for their loved ones.

Below: Chaplain Shirley Payne leads a blessing for the children.



"Surely the Presence of the Lord is in this place." Words from the renewal song rang in my mind as I watched the gathering of volunteers, family members and residents of the Grants Women's Correctional Institute. The volunteers, both youth and adults, efficiently completed preparations for crafts and photos and the meal while others sat amid the family groupings chatting. Prison Chaplain Shirley was preparing to lead a Bible study focusing on "Let the Children come."

All at once, I felt as if scales had fallen from my eyes. Every single person in the gym, from the tiniest of infants to the most elderly of adults, was one of the 'little ones' called to come into the embrace of the Loving Father. God makes no distinction in the Love freely handed out. It makes no difference if you are a convicted murderer or a life-long church-goer. The loving kindness of the Lord of all has no qualifications. All alike are welcomed as children. Each one is a beloved son or daughter.

How can we set obstacles between ourselves? How dare we claim to be better, just because our house doesn't have concertina wire? Jesus was very clear that to be angry with another is the same as murder, to have lustful thoughts, the same as adultery. If God welcomes us despite our anger and condemnation of others, how

then can we not open our hearts and minds to those who have acted on a wrong decision?

The further dimension is that we need to show and manifest the loving acceptance of God to the children caught in the cycle of prison (and other dysfunctional lifestyles). WINGS is certainly one concrete way to express unconditional love to families and children. In each volunteer present I felt the reality of Paul's words:

"Love is patient and kind; Love is not jealous or boastful; It is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; It is not irritable or resentful; It does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.

Love bears all things, Believes all things, Hopes all things, Endures all things." I Cor. 13: 4-7

The tangible expression of love outpoured from the volunteers toward the inmates and their families was in itself a convicting reminder that "If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." (I Cor. 13:3) I could "feel the brush of angels' WINGS" and "see glory on each face" within the prison setting. It caught me totally off guard. I needed the reminder of the awesomeness of God's love to break me out of my complacency and self-sufficiency.



Above: **Guideposts** calendars held by inmates in the Grants prison during the Valentine's Day Party.

Below: A family photo taken at the Valentine's Day Party.



**Special
Appreciation
and
Thanks
to
All Our Donors**

Tony's Story Valentine's Day Party Grants, NM Women's Prison

I met 11 year-old "Tony" and his parents when we rode in the same church van to the WINGS Valentine's Day Party in Grants, NM. I taught the songs we were going to sing at the party to everyone in the van. Tony paid close attention, and I asked him to help me lead music once we got to the prison. Tony sang along with me and helped teach motions to the 368 inmates and guests at the party.

Recently I got a call from Tony. He wanted copies of the music for the songs we sang at the WINGS Party! He had been given an old guitar and was trying to teach himself the songs we had taught him. When I asked him what the highlights of the WINGS Party were for him, he enthusiastically said, "The music!" His mom said he had been singing the songs since leaving the prison, had taught all his friends the songs, and they "wanted more words".

Sadly, his grandfather, father, two stepsisters and one step-

brother have all been in New Mexican prisons. And yet Tony WENT to a prison and came out singing praise songs about God and is now sharing these songs with his friends in rural New Mexico! What could be more wonderful and hopeful?

I am also working for 1150 AM radio in Albuquerque. On Good Friday Tony sang on the radio, "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High". His sweet, precious voice melted my heart as he shared God's love.

Maybe, JUST maybe, Tony will avoid the family pattern of incarceration. MAYBE, a few minutes in a van and a few minutes of singing in a prison have changed one young man's life. His positive actions of teaching his friends "the songs" are already changing his small world.

"Tony's Story" is one of those 'rest of the story' tales that is still unfolding. But believe me, I will do everything I can to help Tony.

80 inmates, 241 family members, 43 volunteers, and 30+ prison staff attended the Wings Valentine's Day Party on February 21, 2004.

Letter received from an inmate—"I would like to **THANK ALL of YOU** for making this event happen and (so) wonderful. You were all so kind and warm and I appreciate you so much for bringing my daughter and my grandbaby. They had no way up here but God used you all.

My daughter left to California that same night and I was so blessed to have spent that day with her and my precious Angel before they left; to have quality time with arts and crafts; to hear the Word of God and Praise "TOGETHER"; to sit down and eat with thanksgiving because sometime she (my daughter) would visit by Greyhound and not have enough money to eat in the visiting room.

I just want to say once again **THANK YOU** from the bottom of my heart and God bless you all abundantly as he has me by placing you all in my life and heart and prayers. I can't begin to express my gratitude for it runs too deep for words.

God bless you and you'll all remain in my prayers. The spirit of God's love **SURELY** shined through you and the Wings Party! I pray I too can do the same for someone's family as you have done for mine!

P.S. The pictures are extremely good, for when they were taken, they were taken by "Angels of God", and I know angels were all around and his Holy Spirit filled the air and our pictures show God's love also. They were **TRULY** smiles of joy, of **GOD'S JOY**. I'll treasure those pictures **FOR-EVER!**

Love in Christ and from the depth of my heart." Roberta

Sage LaTorra Earns Eagle Scout Rank by Starting the WINGS Ministry in Las Cruces, NM

November 15, 2003

Sage LaTorra, a 17 year-old Las Cruces resident, has targeted a unique and largely ignored and shunned segment of the population for his Eagle Scout Project — the family members of inmates.

Sage, who has been a Scout for 11 years said, "I chose WINGS Ministry for my Eagle Scout project because it will have a very positive long-term effect on the community as a whole, as well as on those that are involved. The goal of the party is to help everybody involved to grow and make the community a better place. I have never seen another project with the same potential to improve the lives of so many people, and I am proud to have been able to bring the WINGS Ministry to Las Cruces."

In this historic first WINGS Party in southern New Mexico, Sage coordinated volunteer efforts from the Boy Scouts, members of nearby congregations from several different denominations, as well as area corrections officials. Family members from the prisons and jails in southern New Mexico and west Texas were invited to attend the party.

Ruth Stafford Peale, Chairman of the Board of Guideposts & Peale Center for Christian Living wrote,

"I want to join your family and friends in congratulating you upon coordinating this special WINGS Thanksgiving Party and I pray for its success in your community. Your many long hours of work and effort will bring you a wonderful sense of accomplishment in your life, as well as ministering to those in need. You bring honor to your loved ones, to the scouting program, to your community and to our country."

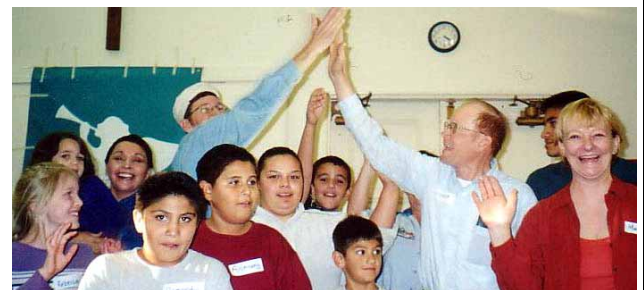


Eagle Scout Sage LaTorra with a party attendee.



"I didn't want to miss out on something new. My brother has been in prison, and I myself have been in and out of jail different times. "

"They are fun and good to make contacts with others in the same 'boat'."



"This is a wonderful experience, watching volunteers & families interacting together & having fun. It was incredible. God was truly in this place!"

Comments from Teen Challenge Girls

Albuquerque Christmas WINGS Party - 2003

We were blessed to have the girls from New Mexico's Teen Challenge lead us in music at the Christmas Party. From these comments, it seems like the volunteers & guests weren't the only ones touched by the Holy Spirits' presence during our WINGS Party.

— "When we stood in that circle and held hands, it showed me that there is no limit to God's love. WINGS has really made an impact on my life."

— "It touched my heart to see that so many innocent little children learned Christmas is not about presents but Jesus."



"To see the light of Jesus shine in the broken, hopeless lives helped renew my dim vision of reaching souls."



"I loved the way Christ's birth was shared. Everyone was involved in the gift that was born for everyone. I know the Christmas story was sealed in each life that night."



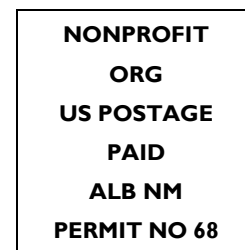
"If I could put into one word what the WINGS Party meant to me, it would be compassion. Little lives were changed by helping hands and open hearts."



"I watched the loneliness and hurt turn into comfort and joy within the souls at the WINGS Party."



"The WINGS Ministry is following God's will by opening up the doors of restoration and new life. I'm so thankful for the opportunity of being at the Christmas Party and having my own life changed."



The **WINGS** Ministry
is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit
organization.
All donations are tax deductible.

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Vision:
To share Christ's unconditional love
with all families of prisoners.

www.WingsMinistry.org

WINGS To Start NEW Program!

WINGS for L.I.F.E.

Life-skills for Inmate Families and Education

The WINGS Ministry will soon start a new program for family members of inmates and newly released inmates called WINGS for L.I.F.E. We feel the name says it all, and are excited to start this program on May 23, 2004. To our knowledge, nothing like this exists in the country. Our program will be positive, up-beat, teach social skills and identify Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets. We will teach each participant how they can build more assets in their families. There will be time for "group support", a separate program for the younger children and a special mentoring program for children ages 6-14 will also be offered. This is a collaborative program with Big Brother Big Sisters, Safe 2000, the NM Conference of Churches, and the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

Issues that may be addressed include: facing the community; facing friends and family; helping children and teenagers cope; holding a marriage together; court - how to dress, act, what to do & what not to do; single parenting; developing self-esteem; time management skills; children, chores and discipline; communication between inmates and families; how to maximize a visit to a prison; holidays; how to stretch a dollar; substance abuse/signs; and homecoming issues. Every 5th program will be varied, and may include picnics, games in the park, a social outing at a sporting or community event, or community service.

WINGS WISH LIST

- Infant and toddler toys
- Game Boards and Books
- Craft and art supplies—markers, paper, scissors, paints, crayons
- Website assistant with HTML knowledge
- Overhead projector
- More great volunteers
- Copy machine—or access to copier for newsletter duplication
- MENTORS for children ages 6-14
- Punch, cookies, snacks
- Rubbermaid pitchers for drinks
- Paper cups, plates, napkins
- Clerical help