



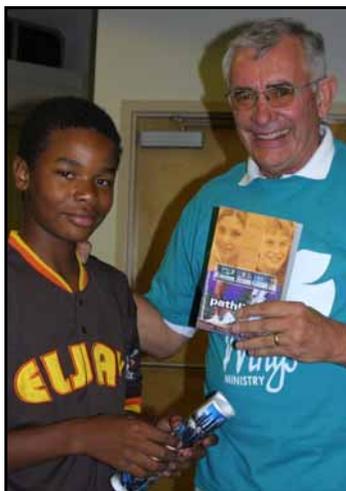
The WINGS Flyer

WINGS Ministry
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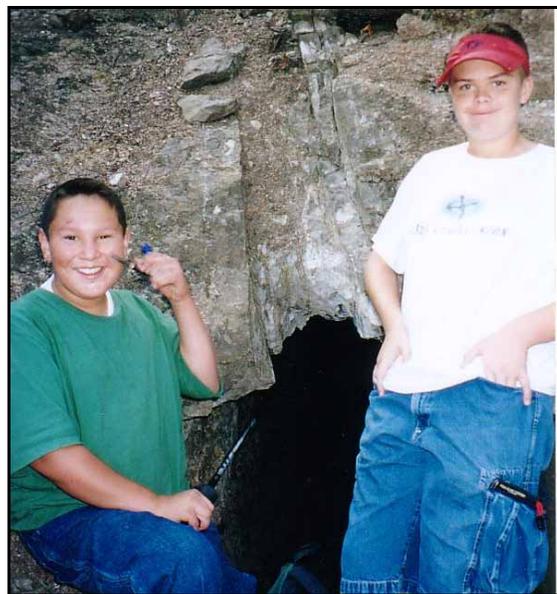
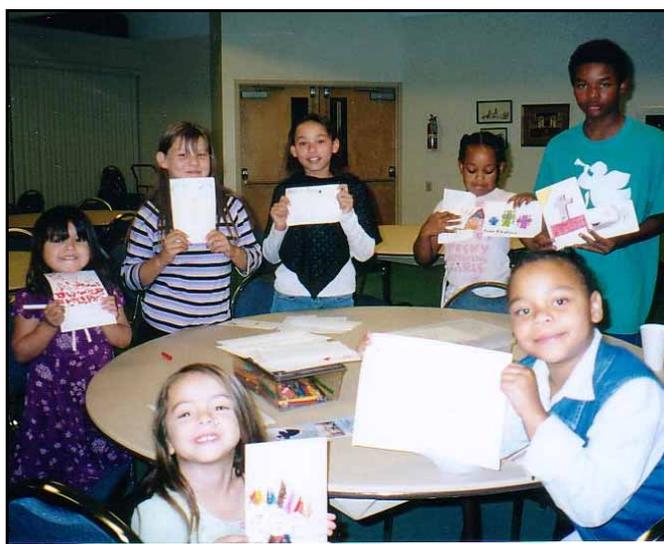
Issue #4
Fall 2004

WINGS for L.I.F.E.

Life-skills For Inmate Families & Education/Mentoring



Photos: New Bibles, cards, & hiking



Wings for L.I.F.E. is a program for the whole family! We meet twice a month and talk about issues that involve having a loved one in prison. Every 5th meeting we do "community outreach". Last month we took a hike in the Sandia Mountains and some teenagers discovered a hidden cave. (Photo above.)

Mentors are matched with children and youth in the program. The goal is to build healthy relationships in families.

We plan to start a clown ministry where we will visit an area hospital. We will learn face-painting, creative balloon making, and teach our **Wings for L.I.F.E.** participants/clowns, how to reach out to others.

To join us or start a **Wings for L.I.F.E.** empowerment group in your area, call Ann Edenfield at 1-505-291-6412.

Wings for L.I.F.E. Dates

Catholic Center— Sandia Room

4000 St. Josephs Place, NW—St. Pius HS
 I-40 W to N Coors, right on St. Josephs Place
 to Catholic Center

Sundays 6:30—8:00 PM Albuquerque

Nov. 21, 2004 Jan. 23, 2005

Dec. 12, 2004 Feb. 13, 2005

Dec. 28, 2004 Feb. 27, 2005

Jan. 9, 2005 Mar. 13—TBA

Manners for L.I.F.E.

- *The server takes the first bite.*
- *The hostess or host is always correct.*

YOU are invited
Thanksgiving
Dinner

Thursday—Nov. 25
2:00 PM

Trinity United
Methodist Church
3715 Silver SE

Albuquerque, NM

2 blocks E of Carlisle, 1 block S of Central

RSVP 254-7600

Volunteers Needed!

Upcoming Dates & Events:

- November 20, 2004
El Paso Wings Party
- November 25, 2004
Thanksgiving Dinner—
- December 4—Albuquerque
Christmas Wings Party—
Heights Cumberland Pres-
byterian Church 2-
4:00 set-up, Party 4-6:30
- January 9, 2005—American
Correctional Association National
Convention—Phoenix
- January 29, 2005—Youth Diag-
nostic & Detention Center
(YDDC) Wings Party—ABQ
- February 19, 2005—Grants
Women's Prison Wings Party
- March 19, 2005—Albuquerque
Easter Wings Party
- August 27, 2005—Albuquerque
Back-To-School Wings Party
- December 3, 2005—
Albuquerque Christmas Wings
Party

FREEDOM by Karen Sivils



Karen and new friends.

In September I spent an afternoon and evening at the Los Lunas Correctional Facility, volunteering at a Wings Party. While I was not always comfortable (this was my first party inside a prison), it was also a time of blessing and being blessed.

I had a hard time talking to the men at first. It wasn't until I finally sat (stood) at dinner with some of the guys that I finally "connected". We got to discuss important things, like how God has helped us through hard times and what my relationship with God is like.

About 3:00 AM the next morning I woke up with a realization that God was reminding me that not all prisons have metal bars.

There are many types of prisons, and all of us have been "imprisoned" at some point in our lives.

1. Physical Prison

A prison can be made of bricks, barbed wire, locks, and keys. But there are other physical prisons. I work with young children who have trouble moving their bodies because their muscles don't work right. Usually it's something that they were born with. One of my favorite kiddos is a little guy named John. He is a sweet, charming, bright-eyed 2-year-old who has muscular dystrophy. This means that John's body, which should help him run and jump like other kids his age, has become a prison for him.

2. Emotional Prison

Many people are held captive by pain, anger, fear or a variety of other emotions. This is not the same as a physical prison. For some, it's much worse. People may live their lives in a constant state of

fear. Perhaps they are afraid of failure or an abusive relationship with a parent or that they won't be able to keep food on the table. Some people live as a captive to anger. Some people are imprisoned by guilt or shame; others by worry. All they have ever known are feelings of fear, anger, hatred, and shame. These people will eventually shut down, and no longer feel anything at all.

3. Intellectual Prison

An intellectual prison is seen in a person who searches for truth by reasoning alone. God is not part of their equation for a healthy and fulfilling life. However, Jesus himself said that if we know the truth, we shall be "free indeed". Only in God do we find the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Even Christians can get distracted and take their eyes off of Jesus when they try to limit God to only what they can understand or explain. We are assuming an awful lot to think that our finite brains can wrap around an infinite God.

4. Spiritual Prison

Every person ever born in this world has been in spiritual prison. The Bible tells us that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." God watches over you and cares for you, whether or not you believe He exists, whether or not you care about Him in any way. All are born into spiritual prison. Some choose to leave it.

I think I can safely assume that all the men I met would rather live outside their physical prison. But I know if they leave that physical prison, and stay in a spiritual prison, they will have missed out on the greatest freedom they will ever know.

Freedom in Christ is called salvation. Imagine you are standing outside a home on a frosty fall afternoon, just as the sun is going down. As you look in the window, you see a table all set for Thanksgiving Dinner. The people you love are gathered around the table, just getting ready to sit down and eat. They have set a place for you. Are you going to just stand outside and watch? I wouldn't! It's the same way with God. Why stand outside in the cold, observing Him from the outside, when you can knock on the door and say, "Please, Jesus, let me come in and enjoy the love that you want to give me?"

Since God adores us, everyone is invited to the feast. But Christians are sometimes seen as exclusive. We say that if people want to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, they need to accept Christ's payment for their sins. And some people see this as the "strings" attached to that great Thanksgiving meal. This is the way I explained it to some mid-school kids I work with:

God is like a glass of cool, clear, pure water. If you lift the glass, you can see right through to the other side. On the other hand, my glass is cloudy

with all these little bits of dirt, dust, germs and so forth. Don't get me wrong, I am about as straight-laced as they come, but I have spoken harsh words that have cut a tender heart. I have made selfish decisions that have hurt others. I have ignored the needs of my neighbors. God counts all those as sins.

What happens when I (the dirty water) want to be together with God (the clear water)? If you pour the dirty water into the clear water you have just two glasses of dirty water, and neither one is good for anything. God made a way to purify my heart so that I could become pure, and come into the house of God, and be with Him. Jesus paid for my sins on the cross. He took the punishment I deserved, and washed me as clean as snow. Or as a glass of pure, clear, cool water. Now I can join up with God, enter into His house to join that Thanksgiving feast, and be filled to overflowing by the love and goodness and mercy of my Father.

God wants us to be free from our intellectual prisons. He is a rational God, but He is not limited by our rational abilities. God wants us to be free from our physical prisons.

I desperately want to see each man, woman, and child I met in Los Lunas when I get to heaven, so I will pray for them all daily.



Above: "Olympic Champions"

Below: Chaplain Vincent Duran gave a great Bible study!



Going for the Gold!

Los Lunas Correctional Unit Wings Party—September 23, 2004



Letter of thanks from an inmate—

"I pray that the prison system always continues to acknowledge special groups like Wings and never turns their head the other way so that other inmates can be blessed through you for everything that you and your helpers do for others... So that they may have the privilege to at least for a little while be able to cry tears of joy with our loved ones and also get a little crazy "going for the gold". Most of all it was having fun being in the company of people who really do care. I will always be very thankful to the Lord for allowing me to meet one of his many angels. Thank you again for you are truly my family's guardian angels."

Your brother in Christ, R. Moya

I came to the Wings Party because —

- I needed to be taken out of a bad depressive mood.
- I wanted to see my grandpa & to hear about God because I haven't been to church in a while.
- I came to praise God & to eat something besides turkey. I thank God & Wings.
- I wanted to get reunited with my family & spend quality time with my loved ones.
- I wanted to come support my dad since he is in a church program here.

Why Wings Parties should continue in prisons—

- It will motivate inmates to stay out of trouble so they can join their families sooner.
- I got to meet people that have the same spiritual belief & I have seen that there are people on the street that care about me & my fellow convicts.
- It's a blessing because nothing like this ever happens in prison. It brings families & their loved ones close to God.
- Everything I heard today made a difference in my life.
- It brings unity & love not only for family but also among inmates. It brings dignity back to an individual. Wings brings out the joy & contentment for the inmate as well as the family. Inmates need & look forward to family support. It's a chance for all to get together & share some happy moments until the inmate is released. I think Wings is a great program —keep it going & growing!
- This is what makes a difference. When a person gets locked up he thinks everyone has forgotten about him. This helps. People really do care.

Photos—Top to Bottom

1. Balloon Games
2. New friends
3. Pizza, cookies & punch
4. Music fun for all ages

Thoughts about Camps for Children of Prisoners By Ann Edenfield

This summer I participated in two camps specifically designed for ONLY children of prisoners; a camp that has been in existence for 10 years in Oklahoma and our first-ever Wings Backpacking trip in Colorado.

As a mother of four children of a prisoner and a former Youth Director, I must admit I have not ever felt separate camps were a good idea. However, I felt I should have an open mind and see if my concerns had any validity.

These are my observations.

1. The campers/youth (children of prisoners) had few or no positive peer role models and often the group dynamics followed the patterns and behaviors of the most troubled youth.
2. Follow-up with the youth after the camping experience was very difficult. In Oklahoma the youth didn't attend camp with youth in their neighborhoods and there were few, if any adults, from their neighborhoods.
3. I feel strongly that the best camping experiences for ALL young people, regardless of family history of incarceration, is to attend a summer camp with peer and adult leaders, and pastors in their immediate neighborhood congregation. Ideally, the youth will be mainstreamed into the life of the congregation and youth group, so that when everyone returns home "from the mountaintop experience" to the "valley", they will have peer and adult leaders of faith to turn to.

Youth generally will follow positive leaders – especially peer leaders. I am recommending that monies given for "children of prisoners camping programs" be earmarked differently. Allocate the same money to provide partial scholarships for prisoners' children. (I believe each camper should earn part of his or her fees to instill a sense of responsibility and appreciation.) Find denominational camps and church



Backpacking in Colorado

groups that will be willing to assimilate these children of prisoners into their camping program. Friendships will be made on the camping trip that could change a youth's path for a lifetime. As faithful stewards and Christians, I feel we must find the best uses for our donations, and I can think of no better way to help a child of a prisoner break out of the cycle of incarceration than to be welcomed into a church youth program and join a congregation.

For full reports of both camping experiences, visit our website at www.WingsMinistry.org.



L to R: Judge John D'Amico, Jr., Chairman, NJ State Parole Board, Wings Executive Director Ann Edenfield, and M.A. "Bud" Scully, Community Partnership Coordinator, NJ State Parole Board. Rutgers University, Newark, NJ—*Back on the Block: Strategies for Parole Community Partnerships in Offender Re-entry Conference*. Sept. 23, 2004

**Eagle Scout
Sage LaTorra**



Sage LaTorra received his Eagle Scout Award on October 9, 2004, in Las Cruces, NM. Sage's project was starting the Wings Ministry in Las Cruces, NM. THANK YOU Sage!

Year-end Charitable Giving

By Michael A. Hughes
Wings Board Member

Another year has flown by and the holidays are coming up soon. This is an important time of year to stop and reflect about the most important areas of our lives; spiritual life, family, friends, jobs, and our family's economic status. This is when each of us can search our hearts, and pray for God's guidance to do whatever we can to help others in need. We ask you to help the Wings Ministry as we are trying to directly impact the welfare and well-being of spouses and children of prisoners. We need volunteers who give of their time and talents, and we are also asking for your charitable gift of money and/or other valuable assets to Wings.

The Wings Foundation is an endowment fund that can accept assets such as real estate, artwork, jewelry, vehicles, homes, life insurance policy death benefits, stocks, bonds, and securities. Wings can become an important part of your tax planning strategy. Through the Wings Foundation, experts can help advise you in estate planning, financial, tax, and trust planning options.

Thank you in advance for any charitable gift you make to the Wings Ministry or the Wings Foundation. Please contact us for more information, or mail your gift today! Your generosity is greatly appreciated! All charitable gifts or donations are tax deductible, as we are a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization.

† In Memoriam †

Linda Buffet in memory of Jane Buffet.

Back-To-School Wings "Going for the Gold" Party—Albuquerque

By Cynthia Davis

St. John's Episcopal Cathedral hosted a fun filled Back-To-School Wings Party for about 100 students and parents on August 28th. The theme was tied to the just completed summer Olympics. Dean Dennis spoke on Paul's call to 'run with endurance'. He shared with the group, composed mainly of families with a loved one who is incarcerated, some of his experiences in South Africa and encouraged them to hold fast to faith and the goal of God's love.

To start the party everyone joined in singing. Many of the children got to help with an assortment of bells, gongs, tambourines and other instruments. While the youngsters worked on a variety of crafts including making wreaths from vines, which everyone wore to dinner, adults and teens met in small groups for support and discussion about living life when you have a loved one in prison. Later, over the meal of pizza and homemade cookies, volunteers and guests shared impressions of what made the afternoon special. Some comments included, "I never get to eat with my family like this." "The Pastor's (sic) talk was really good." "I liked playing the instruments." "I liked wearing the wreaths on our heads!"

Photos from the Back-To-School Party—Gold medals & laurel wreaths, the tiniest "Olympian/Angel", hand-knit sweaters from *Guideposts Magazine*, crafts, and making pompoms.



www.WingsMinistry.org

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

E-mail: AnnEdefield@WingsMinistry.org

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

WINGS Ministry

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Special THANKS to all our donors!

Wings can accept United Way contributions from anywhere in the U.S.



“Going for the Gold” Wings Party

Picture frame for family photos, “gold” Olympic medals, & paper maché “laurel wreaths”. MOST important—FUN for all!

WINGS WISH LIST

- Clown ministry supplies—costumes, balloons, face paint, wigs
- Peachtree software experience
- Donate to Wings Foundation—Selling property, stocks, or bonds? We can show you how to save money on taxes & help Wings!
- Financial contributions
 - Postage & Copying expenses
 - Insurance
 - Buy books for inmates
 - \$50 feeds pizza to 40
- Overhead projector
- Colored & white paper—11x17 & 8.5x11
- Copy machine
- Mentors for children ages 6-14