Comments about Wings Parties from Warden Mark Saunders
Southeastern Correctional Institute – Lancaster, OH

- Serves as an incentive because the attending inmates must remain clear of major rule violations for several months leading up to the event to be eligible. Therefore, the offenders are held, inasmuch as possible, to the high standards that are set in order for them to participate—essentially we know that if they can do it for Wings, then they can do it all the time.
- Inmates who wish to repeat their experience understand and adjust to the fact that they must avoid internal discipline to attend the event the next year.
- Serves as a recruitment tool for our Chapel programs.
- Family involvement is enhanced due to Wings. The prison employees become “real people” to the inmate family members and the event has served as a springboard for greater family involvement in reentry planning. We believe family involvement has great value towards successful reintegration.

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- Building relationships that transform both the lives of the families, volunteers and Christian communities.
- Conducting joyful celebrations of Christ’s unconditional love that breaks down barriers.
- Providing interdenominational mission opportunities for Christian communities.

Wings Ministry Vision—Christ’s unconditional love shared with all families of prisoners.

Donations to Wings can make it possible to rehire our dedicated staff!

Wings Ministry Reunites Families & Restores Hope.

A child of a prisoner is faced with a daunting prospect. Children of inmates have a 70% chance of ending up in prison themselves!* But this does not have to be! Your gift can make a difference in the life of a child!

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift for:

☐ $25  ☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ Other $_____

☐ I would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities in my area.

NAME:_____________________________ ADDRESS:_____________________________

CITY/STATE/ZIP:_____________________ PHONE:___________________________ EMAIL:______________________________

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Thank You!  *Bureau of Justice Statistics

Letter From the Executive Director – Ann Edenfield Sweet

Wings Ministry

Wings Ministry Annual Report 2008

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Wings Ministry 2008 was another year of growth and expansion for the Wings Ministry. The opportunities in the Ohio correctional facilities continue to be an open door of ministry, due to the support of many dedicated volunteers and correctional officials. The State of Tennessee, under the leadership of Wings Director Mary Ann Gay, has been very open to the Wings Ministry in their facilities. Shelly Currier, Wings Director in Roswell, New Mexico reports great community support with the awarding of several grants. Colorado Wings Director Lorelei flagler had four parties in 2008 and is looking to expand in 2009. Because of this expansion, the board has spent much time in affiliate relationships and policies. Stable and consistent financial support continues to be a challenge for the Board. We were grateful for a grant in 2008 from CCF—Compassion Capital Fund, that made it possible to hire three additional part-time staff members, but unfortunately it was only a one-year grant.

We were appreciative of the addition of two new board members; Chaplain John Compton, Chaplain at the Central New Mexico Correctional Facility and Erma Sedillo, recently retired Deputy Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Corrections, One unfortunate news was the death of our volunteer grant writer, Holly Hickson, who was a great asset to us and to our affiliates. During the past year the Wings Board continued to develop our policies and procedures, updating many of our guidelines, strengthening the role of the committees, improving the web site, developing the financial record keeping, and overall refinement of our operation.

2009 promises to be a very exciting year as we look at several changes with Wings for L.I.F.E. We are to move to two new locations—Martineztown, near downtown Albuquerque, and the YMCA in the SE Heights. We are in need of help in the development of consistent funding, office space for the developing program, a Director for the Albuquerque area Wings Program, and a clear mandate for the expansion of Wings. We reaffirm our dedication to God and His Son Jesus Christ, and the mission God has given to us to be effective witnesses to the families of the incarcerated.

Lakeview, OH

Letter From Board President – The Rev. Dr. Paul Collins

Wings Ministry

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What a Grandmother has to say about Wings for L.I.F.E.

Wings for L.I.F.E. (WFL) has helped me a lot. It has given me a place to go and meet with people who have been there and understand. When you’re so caught up in the emotional side of the situation it is hard to be objective…Wings has steadied me – given me a base to look at different ways to handle the situation, and to help him (grandson) as much as I can. WFL has taught me to look for answers rather than looking at the problem all the time. Incarceration is not the end of the world and WFL has given me the ability to look positively to the future.

What a Warden Says about a Wings Party

Director Kevin Estep, Cheyenne Mountain Re-Entry Center in Colorado Springs, CO

On Dec. 20 CMRC was changed by an extraordinary program facilitated by Wings Ministry. This Christmas Party was extraordinary in that it was the first time we had allowed the residents (offenders) to invite their entire immediate families (wife, children, parents, whatever) into the facility to celebrate this important holiday, in as close to fashion as possible given the fact that one of the family members was incarcerated, and it occurred inside the walls.

I’ve been in the prison management business for almost a quarter century. I’ve seen plenty of special events held during the Christmas holidays within the prisons. But this was different…Wings Ministry recruited a small army of volunteers…Wings Ministry did an absolutely great job of coordinating the whole event…It was a success. This thing was off without a hitch, which clearly proved to us (often very cautious security personnel) that big things can happen safely, and when they do, they can produce grand results. The spirit of the season, of family, of being reunited, of restoration, of fun and excitement, of children smiling and singing, of people eating and talking, and the spirit of Christ, all permeated the facility. Not just the residents and their families, not just the volunteers, but even the employees and myself felt it. And this bleeds over to those residents who weren’t there, and hope to be for the next party.

It proved the importance of working toward ways to reunite the residents (offenders) with their families, especially their children in a controlled and safe environment.

A wise correctional system should readily seek the opportunity to engage in activities that include families.

I encourage all correctional systems to evaluate policy that results in impermeable barriers, or otherwise strangles the opportunity for that small and brief taste of what freedom is like…instills hope and desire.

It proved that the investment truly does pay dividends. These dividends were obvious at the moment, during the fun and excitement. But they were also present afterward in terms of resident morale and behavior and in terms of thanks, appreciation and hope in a future better than the past.

“Community Parties are also bringing families to church.”

This year, Wings and Wings for L.I.F.E. changed many lives in the United States. One inmate in a prison in New Mexico is currently serving a life sentence. He was so impressed with his experience at a Wings Party, he made a personal $15 donation and wrote a touching thank you letter to the staff and volunteers.

A family that attends Wings for L.I.F.E in Albuquerque was featured in an article about Wings in the Albuquerque Journal. Lillian spoke about how the program had brought needed changes in her life, as well as the lives of her daughter and grandchildren.

Across the country, stories pour in about the dramatic effects Wings has on everyone involved, from the participants and volunteers to the prison wardens.

It has become common for Executive Director, Ann Edenfield Sweet to hear “That party was the most fun I’ve ever had!”

Community parties are also bringing families to church. Several families that receive food boxes from Joshua’s Vineyard in Southeast Albuquerque had not attended church there until they attended the Wings Christmas Party. The next morning they visited the church worship service for the first time.

As the program continues to touch lives, more people ask if there are Wings parties or Wings for L.I.F.E. in states where their loved ones live.

We hope to soon say “Yes!”

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