



Sharing Hope Ministry

# Sharing Hope N • E • W • S

**DECEMBER 2004**

ISSUE NO. 29

— PHONE NUMBER —

Sharing Hope Ministry  
358-7803

— ADDRESS —

P.O. Box 19985  
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— STATISTICS —

Total *Life Recovery Bibles* Distributed:  
**24,432**

Total Bible Study Workbooks Distributed:  
**10,823**

— VOLUNTEERS —

Pen Pal Volunteers: **100**

Office Volunteers: **30**

Prayer Group Volunteers: **3**

Stepping Stones Volunteers: **3**

Visitation Team Volunteers: **18**

Teaching Team Volunteers: **4**

— BOARD OF DIRECTORS —

Brenda Blakley, President

Chip Garrison, Vice President

Angela Lust, Secretary

Jim Burgess

Connie Hodges

Rod Jones

George Snell

Sammye Stark

David Thurman

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*The Race Is Not Always Won By The Swift,  
But By Those Who Keep On Running*

As we close another year this saying rings true for Sharing Hope Ministry. In 2004 alone, about 7,000 women will have received the *Life Recovery Bible* and about 4,000 will have received Bible studies. Pen Pals will have spent hours on encouraging letters and the Prayer Team will have lifted up thousand of requests for women incarcerated in the State of Texas. Since the beginning of Sharing Hope Ministry, over 24,000 incarcerated women have received the *Life Recovery Bible*, materials, and notes from our volunteers encouraging them in their spiritual walk. It takes an enormous amount of time and energy to keep up with the requests but we never question if the outcome is worth the effort.

Those associated with Sharing Hope Ministry continue to provide their time, prayers and money for women who are incarcerated in our jails and prisons regardless of set backs or disappointments. God has laid this burden on our hearts to be the light of the world for Him. These women are living the consequences of their actions but how will they find a way to change their behavior and their cycle of bad decisions? Is it by sending them back to their same lifestyles unequipped to take the hard road to change? We can not change their behavior but God can change their hearts. He alone can put the desire to withdraw from their comfort zone and change lifestyles. At Sharing Hope Ministry, we realize that by providing God's word to these women, we are also touching untold numbers of husbands, children, and friends.

For all the volunteers that teach in our local jails, those that come to the office and see the ever growing piles of requests, for the women who write letters that sometimes don't generate responses, and to those who support us through pray and funds, we offer our thanks for your commitment to step up to God's call. We look forward to where God will lead us in 2005. The need has not dwindled; instead we've seen an explosion of requests for God's word. As we move into 2005, our desire is to follow God's path as we continue to provide the Bibles and studies to these women. Our prayer is that God will continue to send the resources in the form of volunteers and funds to keep up with the demand.

# MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

*Sharing Hope Ministry has several different ministry opportunities available. Volunteers come in to mail Bibles and Bible study material, write women in prison, pray for the requests submitted by female inmates, help with the Stepping Stones aftercare program and go into Potter and Randall County Jails to lead studies and for visitation. This month we will highlight the ministry opportunities at Potter County Jail.*

Not every Sharing Hope volunteer is called to go face to face with incarcerated women in our jails, but our Potter County Visitation Team has provided weekly Bible studies for inmates for the last 4 years. The first time walking into the prison is intimidating for most. Waiting for guards to take you into the Pod area brings out certain expectations about what you will be seeing once inside. This expectation is normally dismissed as the guards announce the team. This announcement brings women from different dormitories to the front of the glass walls begging to be allowed to attend the study. The women who are chosen by the guards file into a large enclosed room and sit on the concrete floors. These women are diverse. Some don't seem old enough to be in jail while others have difficulty getting down and back up off the concrete floors where they sit. They represent every nationality, age group, and economic background. The women that have Bibles bring them in and share with those who don't. Each takes a passage of scripture to read and often help each other with pronunciations and meanings. The discussion that follows is open and honest about sin and God's love. Many of these women struggle to keep their emotions intact. Other women have obvious joy on their faces as they have established a personal relationship with Christ and are eagerly learning from the devotional studies that are provided in the *Life Recovery Bible*. Affirmation that God is working in these women is shown through a letter sent to Sharing Hope. Nancy wrote, "My faith in Jesus Christ brought a turn-about in and of my life. Through God's grace and mercy I have the opportunity to start my life all over again; and his son is there, through the Holy Spirit to guide and direct me. I have given my life and my will over to His care. I live in victory. My life is filled with his love, hope, peace, joy and serenity. I can deal with all aspects of my life now because I have Him to lean on."

## SATURDAY WORKDAY

Several members of the Soroptimist of Texas Panhandle met at Sharing Hope Ministry to volunteer a Saturday morning to help with miscellaneous office work. These volunteers assembled folders, stuffed envelopes and prepared Bible studies for distribution. This work allowed our regular volunteers the ability to spend more of their time with hands-on ministry with the inmates.



*The Saturday Workday. Jim Burgess, Sharing Hope board member, Laurie Miller, Jody Piper, Sharri Miller, and Liz True, Soroptimist Club volunteers.*

Do you have a church or business group that would like to donate a Saturday morning to Sharing Hope Ministry?

**Contact us at 358-7803**

# Hope Fest Silent Auction

How could anyone forget last year's tropical table complete with an inflatable palm tree and fish or the elegant treasure table. 2005's



Hope Fest promises to be just as adventurous. We are gearing up for another exciting Hope Fest Dinner and Silent Auction on April 15, 2005. Anyone interested in volunteering with this event should contact Paige Beller at 351-0822.

Needed are:

- \* Table Hostess or Host: responsible for decorating one table for eight, complete with centerpiece, silverware, glassware, dishes, and a party favor.
- \* Auction Helpers: contact 10-15 pre-determined businesses to collect donations for the silent auction.
- \* Other: we will need help with ticket sales, greeting, set up and cleanup.

## ***Listen***

*Written by a Potter County inmate to honor the ladies who visit them from Sharing Hope Ministry.*

**I** laid my precious hands on you,  
At your troubled times...  
You paid no attention.

**I** blew your window open  
With fresh air to open your eyes...  
You paid not attention.

**I** let the sun shine as snow covered your car,  
You had nowhere to go...  
You paid no attention.

**I** even blew fragrance for you to smell  
You had no flowers around...  
You paid no attention.

**I** even melted the snow on your house,  
So you could hear the sound of the rain,  
The promise I made to wash away all my children's foot prints...  
You paid no attention.

**I** even covered you with warm love,  
When time got hard...  
You paid no attention.

**I** even walked with you through the park,  
As the children wrote compassionate words in the sand...  
You paid no attention.

**I**, my child, what more can I do or say to let you know I am the  
First and the Last?  
So you can reach out and take my hand,  
I'm the man with the plan for everlasting life.

***Stephanie G.***



P.O. Box 19985  
Amarillo, Texas 79114

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# WANTED

- Speaking Opportunities - We need contacts in all area churches and women's groups to present Sharing Hope Ministry.
- A Concordance for the mail room
- First aid kit
- Paper towels and kleenex
- Brushes, toothbrushes and razors for the Stepping Stones hygiene bags
- One white or gray topped seminar table (6'x 18")
- One hour of housecleaning
- Office volunteers to help mail Bibles and Bible studies

## Do Your Christmas Shopping at the Sharing Hope Office



We still have a wonderful selection of Christmas and special occasion gift bags for sale at the Sharing Hope Office along with beautiful ceramic crosses that make great stocking stuffers for friends and family. All proceeds help provide Bible and Bible study material to women incarcerated in Texas jails and prisons. The Crosses start at \$12.00 each and the bags range from \$1 to \$3 depending on size. Stop by and let us help make your holiday season a little easier.