

CPO Ministries

Chicagoland Prison Outreach P.O. Box 63 South Holland IL 60473 708 331-3301
www.cpoministries.org

CPO's 1st Auto Service class

CPO's Outreach Christian School began its first auto service training with a small pilot class in April and graduated 4 students at a ceremony on June 30. The course included classroom teaching on the theory of a 4 cycle engine and all components of a car from front to rear. Practical teaching included fluid maintenance, tires, brakes, replacing various parts, etc. (And, of course, daily Bible study) We believe the students were sufficiently trained for entry level employment which we hope they will soon gain.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Recently I have wondered "How do you measure success in ministry?" I think most of us know that it's not measured in numbers, although numbers can be one indication of the effectiveness of a ministry. It also isn't always demonstrated by a verbal testimony of a person proclaiming how such and such a ministry "changed his (her) life". God knows that we at CPO have seen not just a few testimonies go south after a period of time. We have however also seen many individuals who have experienced a true life change by God's grace through the ministry of CPO - and the test of time has confirmed it.

How do you measure success in ministry?



I believe that true success in ministry is measured by something that God has repeatedly brought to my mind lately – FAITHFULNESS. And may I say that over the years I have witnessed an incredible measure of faithfulness in the work of the volunteers and staff of Chicagoland Prison Outreach.

1 Corinthians 4:2 says "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." No matter how much "fruit" we do or do not see in our ministry, God's primary requirement of us is faithfulness – faithfulness in doing the work to which He has called us. I am reminded of the Parable of the Sower. Nowhere in the parable did the Sower concern himself with "results". He just faithfully planted seed and trusted God with the results. Shouldn't we do the same?

I am convinced that it's faithfulness that most clearly demonstrates God at work in the ministry of CPO. And, by the way, it's also the faithfulness in prayer for CPO and sacrificial giving to CPO from people like you that enables it to continue. Way to go!

..faithfulness

Dan Swets



A Chat from the Chair

I've been asked to share with our readers how I became part of Chicagoland Prison Outreach Ministry. So I am taking a moment to reflect on what God has done for me during the years I have been involved with CPO as a volunteer and Chairman of the Board.

My adventure began a few years ago when I took a good look at my life and began seeing what a day in my life meant. I was asking myself what do I really accomplish in a day. As that thought came to me over and over again, I began to see that my life was good and that I was very blessed, but **"what was I doing for Christ"**. Could I stand before Him and possibly hear "well done good and faithful servant"? I wondered and began to challenge myself. Even though my daily work routine seemed good, I clearly wanted my life to mean more. My family and friends witnessed my zest for life... I strived to enjoy life to its fullest, but I knew something was missing. As they say everything starts with the thought process. I knew what the message in God's Word meant "you have been created for such a time as this". When was I going to act on it? It was time to get out of the box and **serve Christ NOW**, but how?

Out of nowhere, I was asked if I would be interested in volunteering for CPO. I was not too familiar with this ministry that shared God's word with the incarcerated, but I accepted an invitation to attend a CPO dinner. My heart was touched by the testimonies I heard from several inmates. These men told of how they previously had no hope in their lives but through the ministry of CPO they found victory in Jesus. They spoke about our awesome God who took the impossible and turned it into a miracle. It was the voice of God telling them to try again. The Holy Spirit planted a seed in my heart that evening. **...they found victory in Jesus.**

God's plan for my involvement at CPO began to unfold in spite of my uncertainty of proper training or equipping for this task. I began going to Cook County Boot Camp with a couple of men from church thinking it would only be a trial run and I could always bail out, however that wasn't what happened! With just one visit God opened my heart. I realized the inmates' anxiety and overwhelming need for hope. These inmates were eager and they had a hunger for God's Word which offered them forgiveness and a promise for their future. God began using me to help them in the midst of their grief and sorrow. It's been almost ten years now and I am there every Tuesday evening, each visit as humbling as the first. I thank the Lord for leading me down this path.

The blessings have been twofold as God also made a miraculous change in my life. To set aside time to serve Christ has made my life richer and more rewarding. It's a tremendous blessing to serve. My relationship has deepened with my Savior. At one time I thought I was just bringing hope to the incarcerated, but my faith is so much stronger as I continue to witness God's transforming power. I am very grateful for His gift of grace and salvation that He gives freely to us all. If asked "how is life different now? I would say "now my life has a deeper purpose and a stronger meaning". I live daily in the awareness of God's presence and God is using me! Now I can truly relate to the plaque that was on my childhood bedroom wall that read:

"only one life t'will soon be past... only what's done for Christ will last"!

George A. Kreykes
Chairman of the Board

Giving Back

Brian is one of the graduates of CPO's 1st welding class. With the help of CPO, he was hired by a steel company in Chicago Heights. With the downturn in the economy Brian was laid off from his job and is currently unemployed, however that hasn't dampened his passion for things of God. Brian has been and continues to be active in his church, particularly with youth. And every day he sends to Roger (our welding and auto instructor) a text message to share with the students. The messages include scripture and a word of encouragement. Brian hasn't forgotten "where his help comes from". (Psalm 121)



Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

S.E.R.V.E. Project



YOUTH UNLIMITED
a ministry of Ontario Youth Services

PO Box 7209
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49509 USA
Box 1100
Newell, Ontario M0T 1P0 CANADA
616.241.5638
missio@youthunlimited.org
www.youthunlimited.org

2009 LIVING INSIDE OUT
SERVE & ENCOUNTER GOD'S LOVE

Dear Roger,

We were touched by your ministry and wanted to help out in a small way. We were given the opportunity on our serve mission trip this week to find a place in the community to help out. We received \$500 and decided to buy automotive supplies to further your ministry. We pray that the men that come to your classes will be blessed by the gifts. By spending just a few hours at the CPO and attending the bible study there, we have been greatly impacted and have seen God's work present. We will pray that God will continue to bless this ministry.

In Christ,

Caroline Slaughter
Zach Hartman
Dana Veer
Brandon Dugals
Abigail Benzink
Amy Hartzel
Tammy Kromer

Volunteerism is very important to the ministry of Chicagoland Prison Outreach. Volunteers lead Bible study at the jail, the Boot Camp, and at our CPO/Outreach Career Center in Roseland. With the addition of our career center, volunteers have been a wonderful blessing in providing their skills in painting, electrical, plumbing, etc.

Recently a group of young people from the S.E.R.V.E. Project, sponsored by Crown Point CRC, spent several days cleaning up in and around our vocational buildings in Roseland, as well as painting the interior walls of the automotive building and the work benches. A letter from them is included here.

CPO Banquet

Our annual “Evening of Thanksgiving” Banquet held in May was an evening of praise, thanksgiving, and celebration. Many may not know, but Chicagoland Prison Outreach is celebrating its 15th year! A proclamation signed and sealed by Don DeGraff, President of the Village of South Holland commending the ministry of CPO was read. In addition we heard from two ex-offenders who shared their testimonies of how God used CPO staff, volunteers and programs to turn their lives around. When



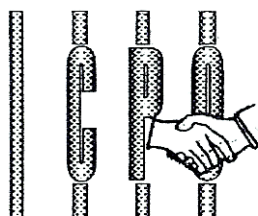
you hear them speak it humbles us and helps us remember that it’s only possible through God’s Grace.



This year’s banquet was completely underwritten by our faithful sponsors so that all the funds raised could be used for ministry programs. We also received a matching gift challenge from a few of our donors. This year, even with the economy in turmoil, we raised approximately \$100,000. We thank the sponsors, the donors who funded the challenge, and the donors who met the match. Praise God for His faithfulness!

CPO Bike-a-thon

CPO’s 1st Bike-A-Thon was held on Saturday, June 20 with experienced as well as casual riders participating at either the Indiana or Illinois site. We had many families who rode and then joined us at the Illinois site for a good old fashioned cookout. All expenses and prizes were underwritten so all pledges the riders collected could be used to further opportunities to present the Gospel to ex-offenders and provide them with vocational training taught at the CPO/ Outreach Career Center in Roseland.



**Chicagoland
Prison
Outreach**

www.cpoministries.org

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If you would like more information on CPO or would like to be a CPO volunteer, please call, write or e-mail us at:

cpoministries@sbcglobal.net

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