

Support For Prison Ministries “Do Not Miss” Auction

There are benefit auctions and then there is the Support For Prison Ministry Auction. The auction has an atmosphere that has caused it to become a “Do Not Miss” event. Great food, top quality auctioneers, top quality goods, enthusiasm, and an appreciation of those that give and buy have made this such a success over the years.

Glenn Hoover, one of the original founders of Support Prison For Ministries and early auction volunteers, had the following to say about how special the auction has become over the years: *“The auction has been much more than just a fundraising event over the years. It has served as a great social event also; almost an opportunity for a ministry reunion for churches, prison workers, and volunteers.”*



The auction began in the mid 1980’s by a group of men who decided to raise money for Martin Weber’s We Care Program in Alabama. Later this auction spawned the beginnings of Support For Prison Ministries and expanded into helping other prison ministry groups. Today the auction raises funds for SFPM, We Care, Potter’s House, Freedom Gate, and Spirit and Word Ministries.

We Care is still very involved with the auction and the present director, Don Metzler, writes the following paragraphs, *“I have been involved with the Support for Prison Ministry Auction ever since I began serving with We Care in 2003. I have attended most of the auctions in person and have appreciated the opportunity to work with a group of people who love the Lord and have a heart for prison ministry.”*

It blesses me to see the variety of people who pitch in to help with the auction, whether it is by donating items to be sold, helping with advance preparations, working during the event, buying items, or helping to clean up afterward. It truly is a team effort and I appreciate seeing the body of Christ come together in this way.

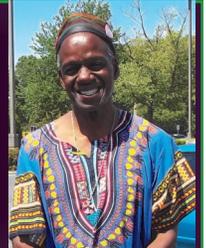
We Care has been blessed by the significant donation we receive from the auction each year. The auction income truly helps make it possible for us to continue, ‘Proclaiming Christ and Discipling Inmates’ in the prisons of Alabama.”

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making a difference



Often when an individual is arrested and sent to Lancaster County Prison on some horrendous crime, such as murder, he will quickly receive a visitation request within the prison. The individual walks into the visiting room and there sits a stranger. The first questions asked to Charles Ray is, "Who are you and why are you here to visit me?" The 72 year old affable Ray tells who he is, that he too had wandered in his younger years, and he is there to let them know there is hope and that hope is in Jesus Christ.

Charles Ray was brought up in a Christian family. His father was George Ray, pastor of the Church of the Living God. He first began visiting prisoners in 1970 and has been visiting ever since. He visits a list of inmates, 8 to 10 a month, every Monday and counsels them in the ways of God. He usually becomes the father figure to the many who have never had a father active in their lives. He maintains a list of inmates, many in prison for life throughout the state, who he writes to and sends literature to on a regular basis.

While Ray talks to all cultures of people he has a special calling to the African-American community whom he has a burden for and its young people. Charles draws his inspiration from Hebrews 13:3 which includes, "remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them." (NASB) His life motto is, "Only what you do for Christ will last."

We at SFPM are thankful for the faithful dedication of Charles Ray who is making a difference in the lives of prisoners.



**COME TO THE 32nd ANNUAL AUCTION
OCTOBER 23 & 24, 2015
EPHRATA BUSINESS CENTER
400 W. Main St, Ephrata**



Big John's Chicken Dinner
Friday night from 4:00-7:00



Our auction goal is to clear \$100,000 after expenses, to be shared with Lancaster County Prison and Youth Intervention Center Chaplaincy Programs, Freedom Gate, Spirit & Word, Transition to Community/The Potter's House, and We Care Program.



Since the SFPM annual auction began in 1984, over \$2 million has been contributed to prison ministries.

Check our website's Annual Auction Pages for more information at www.supportforprisonministries.org
Or our facebook page for pictures of items for sale.



Nelson's Reflections

Nelson Martin was the director of SFPM for 15 years. He retired in 2014 but still works one day a week for the ministry doing accounting and public relations.

When I became director of SFPM in 1999, the auction proceeds after expenses were about \$60,000. That amount has grown steadily until we are now almost double that amount. In 2013, we passed \$2 million that was given to SFPM and other aftercare ministries. The auction outgrew the Farmersville Auction Grounds so in 2014 we moved to the spacious Ephrata Business Center.

I have many good memories of past auctions. One year we sold a 1932 Model B Ford Truck. We sold several tractors and large value gift certificates. In October 2011 we were surprised by a wet snow storm that made travel hazardous, broke trees and power lines, but we finished the day with strong receipts. A beautiful large hand carved 3-D picture (many of Amish farms or rural mills) was sold almost every year. Gift baskets, lovely quilts, framed pictures, hardware and tools always did well. And delicious food has been a favorite. As one person wrote, "The chicken dinner was delicious and a big plateful."

We are looking forward to our "best auction yet" this 2015 year. As one prison leader stated, "The SFPM auction is always well organized. I am humbled by the generous spirit of those who attend."

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Potter's House Director, Lloyd Hoover, has a long history of working with the auction. The auction helps raise money for their aftercare work in returning men to society after prison. Lloyd writes, *"SFPM has helped the chaplaincy program in Lancaster County Prison to become one of the strongest evangelistic outreaches in our county and creates great opportunity for mentoring ex-offenders through prison aftercare. The auction has been a lifeline to The Potter's House ministry; providing funding over the past years that has seemed divine by filling a need at a time of exasperation for funding. We praise the Lord for SFPM and all who become involved in ministry simply by supporting the auction."*



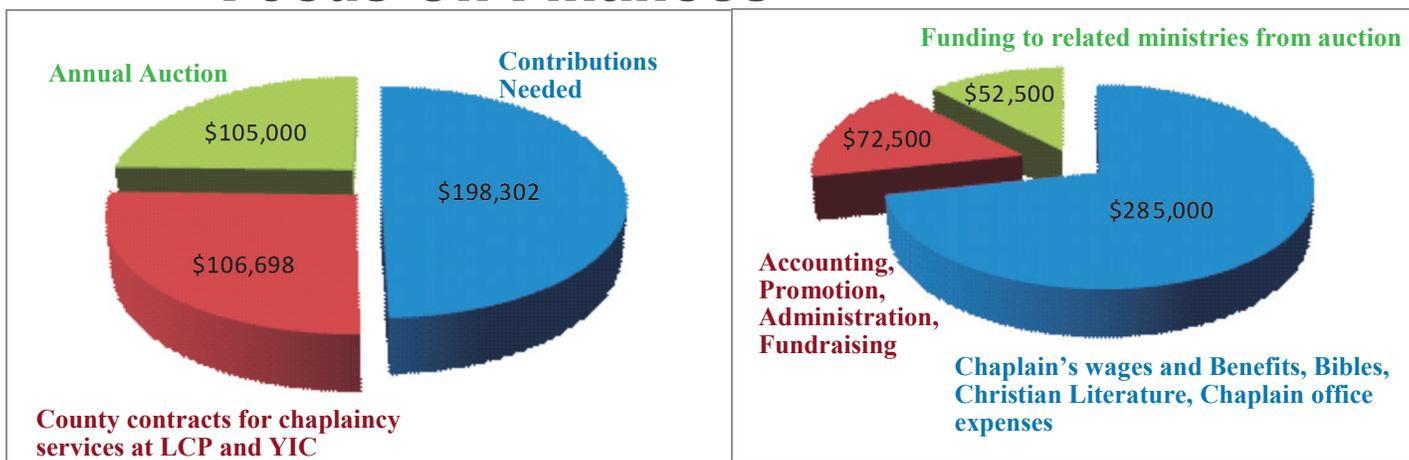
Al Redcay, a Freedom Gate Board member who has participated in the auction over the years, remembers the 1932 Model B Ford Truck, which they ran through the New Holland Parade to advertise the auction. The truck was then sold at the auction for a nice amount.

One of the dedicated volunteers who showed up at businesses for many years soliciting goods for the auction was Eugene Hoover and he writes: *"I was privileged to be with Support for Prison Ministries for 30 years. I was on the board 19 years. That was a wonderful experience. I want to thank the many people who gave items for the auction each year. The auction is a worthy cause. It is time for me to give up helping with the auction. My prayers are still with prison ministry."*

It takes many groups and people to run the auction. At SFPM, Board President, Ken Martin, takes a truck around collecting goods, and Board member, Cliff Martin, is seen at the front of the auction selecting items to be sold. Dennis and Sharon Sensenig are running the kitchen helping prepare the delicious food. And these are just a few of the many people past and present that have made the auction a special event.

Be sure and put this "Do Not Miss" event on your calendar for October 23 and 24 and join us at the Ephrata Business Center!

Income **Focus On Finances** Expenses



INCREASING YOUR CHARITABLE GIVING: Donors can maximize their tax deductible giving. In addition to cash contributions, Support for Prison Ministries can receive gifts from wills, trusts, donations of stocks or real estate, life income plans and bequests. Professional counsel is available through SFPM staff and Everence Financial advisors.

Check out our website for updated photos and information: www.supportforprisonministries.org

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #1746
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DIRECTOR'S REPORT By Del Burkholder, SFPM Director

As we get ready for our exciting Support For Prison Ministry Auction I think of the story in the days of slavery of how a young lady was put on the auction block and after she was sold her buyer came and said, "I have bought you to set you free."

In reality that is what Jesus Christ has done on the cross for us with His shed blood; He has bought us to set us free. This is what we try to do in our prison programs; to set captives free in a new life with Jesus Christ. Only when an inmate is released from the bondage of their sin can they walk in the freedom of Christ.

Paul tells us in I Corinthians 9:19 that after we are released and free we should then become a servant (Greek doulos-slave) for God.

We ask that you remember us with your prayers and resources as we continue to do His work in prison.

