



**Richard Habersham, MA**  
NY Eagles CEO  
US Congressional  
Candidate

**A**s president of the New York chapter of the Eagles Foundation, I have seen and know how the Taking Wings program transforms criminals into tax-paying citizens. But back in 2011, when John Wareham invited me to fly to New Zealand's sacred Otatara Pa to help deliver a *Taking Wings* weekend retreat for Black Power and Mongrel Mob gang leaders I was concerned. Would our innovative *Taking Wings* philosophies have the same life-altering impact at the other end of the world upon an essentially Maori audience? Well, I needn't have worried. John customized the program to address local issues—including the tragic imbalance of Maori rates of incarceration—and the results were astonishing. Lives were changed, and then, spurred by Black Power life member Denis O'Reilly, the gangs drew up a formal Otatara Accord which resulted in the significant reduction of local crime. As the locals say, “ma te huruhuru, ka rere te manu—with feathers the bird can fly.”

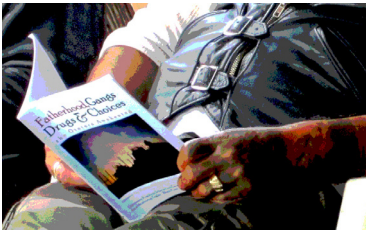
# Hawke's Bay gangs shake on better tomorrow

*Hawkes Bay Today, Jan 31, 2011*

John Wareham guided more than 50 gang members and parents from the community through a wananga, which started on Friday night in the open-air of Turauwha's Whare, on the ridges above the pa site, and continued on Saturday and yesterday at nearby Waiohiki Creative Arts Village.

Side-by-side in respective patches but shelving traditional rivalries, they spent more than 15 hours talking family, violence, drugs and gang pasts, and a future they hope will be better for children and grandchildren.

The focus was a booklet of readings *Fatherhood, Gangs, Drugs and Choices*, selected for the occasion by Mr Wareham, who moderated a similar retreat in Hastings in 2005. "The difference this time was to focus around fatherhood and, right from the first night up at Otatara," said Mr. Wareham. "The guys opened themselves up from the heart," he said, "and most showed profound insight around the readings"—which led Mr Wareham to "push the envelope".



Social activist and organiser Denis O'Reilly said: "It was challenging for everybody. John is not easy. The subject itself was hard. It's a difficult side of town, there's a lot of misunderstanding, and a lot of cynicism... But it was a start, with representatives committing to taking the message back to members and, in time, to other chapters." That commitment came at the closing in the form of "The Otatara Accord"—

*Having met in wananga, at Otatara, the leaders of the Mongrel Mob and Black Power who are resident in Hawke's Bay, collectively declare the following intentions: to improve our parenting skills; to support whanau ora; to strive for understanding of each other's issues as a step towards peace on the streets and in the jails."*

## Violence absent at gang summit

*NZ Herald, March 7, 2005*

Fears of violence between rival gang members meeting alongside the Sensible Sentencing Trust at the weekend dissolved as patched gang leaders sat side by side listening to the positive messages delivered at a summit relating to law and order, drugs, gangs and community leadership. The head tutor, New York corporate psychologist John Wareham acted decisively, setting the peaceful tone for what some would later call a miracle.

By the end of the weekend, gang members from both sides pledged to take messages back to create better family situations, and to regather at



some stage to keep the process alive. Veteran Mob member John Nepe-Apatu, who sat throughout side-by-side with a Black Power leader from Wellington, talked of the seed that had been put in the ground, and what the leaders had to do “to make it grow”.

Sensible Sentencing Trust’s spokesman, Garth McVicar, spoke with confidence of what he had heard, as did the organisation’s patron Sir Russell Pettigrew. Both men said they had learned much, and could take messages back to others to help guide change towards the ultimate goals of a society where family prosperity and community safety prevailed.

Mr. Wareham credited Black Power life member and Napier-based gang behaviour consultant Denis O’Reilly with coordinating the successful gathering. Mr. O’Reilly emphasised that it was not about getting the gangs together, but teaching leaders their role in their own destinies, and the destinies of those who relied on them. - *NZPA*

John  
 you have helped me  
 so much. I know many but you  
 taught me how to make my intellect effective  
 (2007 & 2008 Public Speaking class) Thanks  
 Daniel C.

Thanks John  
 for everything I  
 learned so much  
 you've made me  
 a star  
 Sean

God bless  
 you through  
 out the rest  
 of your day  
 thanks for both  
 believing and  
 helping

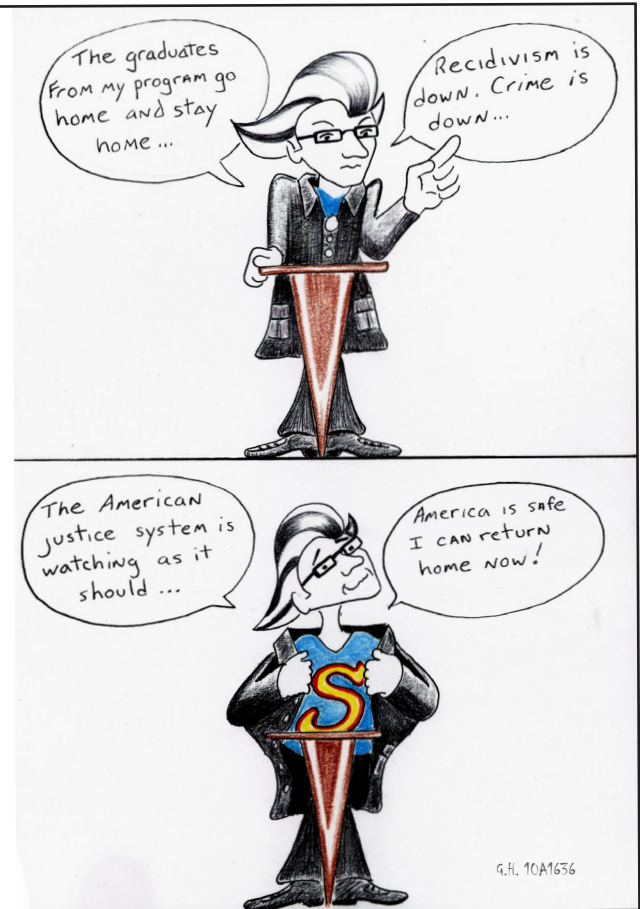
Teddy J  
 (Malcanx)  
 Class of  
 2011

thanks For All THE  
 Good work and Time  
 you put in with Helping  
 us To Be Better..  
 God Bless..  
 J. MARTIN B. JGA

Our gift to you, John.  
 Thanks for everything  
 from the graduates of your  
**TAKING WINGS**  
 Eagles Foundation Class

Downstate  
 Maximum Security Prison  
 Fishkill, New York  
 4th February 2015

2015  
 Jubilee, the Gift of  
 Liberty. John, I  
 Gladly appreciate your  
 Time that have  
 Shown the Skills  
 you have come to  
 Proudly realize  
 Benjamin



A surprise gift card from the graduating class of the Taking Wings program, at New York's maximum security Downstate Prison

Thank you  
Daniel Phillips

Thank you for help us to see  
the best in us but most all for  
planting seed of love may christ be  
with you  
Andy!

I want to thank you  
for giving us one more  
opportunity to embrace a  
being as intelligent as yourself  
I also want to thank you because  
I have found a new sport  
of energy because of you.

Much Love John.

Jory Siz.

Thanks A lot John! You gave us hope,  
You gave us a chance when others wouldn't!  
You gave us a skill and set us free from our  
imprisoning Beliefs. You have convinced  
us, and proved to us we are eagles. We are  
free from the chicken coop and will never  
return! May the force be with you!!

Frank Javier.

Thank you for the  
wonderful journey.  
Your love & friendship  
have been a blessing.  
Thank you Chris Nade

"Note" Thanks for  
Everything!

John you are a rarity  
and all you've done will  
never be forgotten nor  
unappreciated. So thank you  
for simply being you! - Thomas Quiñones

Thank you  
from the bottom of  
my heart John for  
giving me the chance  
to speak in front of  
people convincingly.  
I'm an eagle now!!!  
Christopher

Thank you for  
everything. Have  
the books when I  
get there  
Ben Gooden

John you so  
think for all your  
much for all your  
time & effort!  
Pekert.

John, words  
can't express the  
gratitude we have  
for all that you've  
shared. You have  
truly changed lives.  
Thank you. Talkman

You HELPED OPEN MY MIND!  
- MR. BIRCH

John you'll never be  
forgotten. May the  
force be with you!  
- Nova/Me

John  
we love you  
for everything  
you done for  
us here in Downstate  
you inspire and gave  
me confidence  
Thank you  
Mr. Padilla

I never  
could forget  
you, I never  
would. is  
speaking is  
what I will  
do, speaking is  
good!! William King

Gandalf's silver  
tongue is no match  
for mine!

Thanks  
John  
the reddest  
man in the  
land

Thank For  
Everything!  
Sheldon

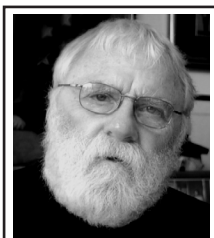


John:  
Thank you for everything,  
and a unique thing. I  
have thoroughly enjoyed  
learning all you taught.  
I am grateful for your  
time and very person, Thanks much!  
you are appreciated.

Hope you not speaker of  
the house like silver  
Good luck in life

John thank  
4 changing my life  
and giving me  
the way to express  
myself. Thank you  
Angel

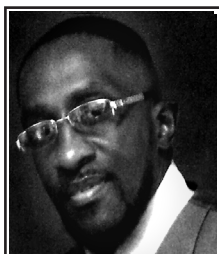
ARK  
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**Jess Maghan Ph.D.**  
Professor and director,  
Forum for Comparative  
Corrections, Ct. USA

## TRIBUTES

**A**s programs director at New York's Rikers Island Correctional Facility, and then director of training for the New York Police Department, I was closely involved with many prison programs. So, when the Eagles Foundation's *Taking Wings* program came on the scene I was intrigued. A program that introduced inmates to Platonic philosophy, Adlerian psychology Shakespearean sonnets, civil rights leadership, and parliamentary debating! What kind of starry-eyed crusader could possibly make this work? The answer turned out to be an expatriate New Zealand business leader working as an unpaid volunteer and applying Kiwi creativity. To the surprise of many prison officials, inmates gave the program top ratings for practicality and presentation—and the recidivism rate for graduates plummeted. After running the program in New York prisons for twenty years, John Wareham and his wife recently relocated back to New Zealand, a loss for the USA but a win for the Kiwis.



**Anthony McFadden, MSW**  
Taking Wings Graduate

**I**served fifteen consecutive years in New York prisons, and enrolled in many prison programs. But so many graduates reoffended and returned it was depressing. When John Wareham showed up with the Eagles *Taking Wings* program, I was a skeptic. What could this weedy white guy possibly have to say to any of us? Well, suddenly he was sharing a bunch of big ideas and treating us as equals. It

was like getting pulled into a cram course at a great university. The discussions were electric and the debating and poetry was life-changing. When I got out of jail in 2006, my Eagles credential helped win me an entry level case manager job working with returning ex-offenders. Then my public speaking skills landed me a directorship role and I've never looked back. With other Taking Wings graduates I completed a masters degree in social work. Then I became a licensed drug counselor (CASAC). John also pulled us back into prison—but this time as respected speakers to debate current classes. Taking Wings sure changed my life, and, best of all, the single digit recidivism rate is unequalled.