

Central and Western Kansas Awana Newsletter

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Ministry Update

As you may know, in August 2004, our family left behind family, friends and everything familiar to **follow the Lord's calling to central and western Kansas**. As we write this newsletter to the churches we serve, Awana leaders, friends, family and ministry partners, we are amazed that we are **beginning our fifth year** as Awana missionaries.

It has been a tremendous privilege to serve the Lord in this way and we have been **enriched individually and as a family by the relationships** that we have built these past four years. We love what we are doing and have seen God work in wonderful ways through the Awana ministry here in Kansas.

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Kris' Korner

By Kris Reed

I cannot believe it is already October! Things have not slowed down in the Reed household. The summer went by in a blur and the fall appears to be following suit. We started our summer celebrating my parents' 50th wedding anniversary. They took my family, my sister's family, and my aunt to Hilton Head, SC. It was wonderful family time and time to celebrate the years my parents have had together. We also were able to have a short visit in Ohio a couple of days before and after Hilton Head.

Upon arriving back in Kansas, we hit the ground running. Mike continued working in earnest on the fall conferences. Ben and Emily both got summer jobs ☺. I headed up our VBS along with our children's ministry council. For those of you who don't know, I am the Children's Ministry Director at our church. As soon as VBS was over, we had to invest many hours planning for our church to move to three services and double Sunday school. God in His mighty graciousness supplied all of the workers needed.

"...as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" -- Joshua 24:15

Please see [Kris' Korner](#) on page 3

Awana Alumni More Grounded in Their Faith

A landmark study has found that Awana participation for at least six years is as important to a person's spiritual foundation as the rest of the church's activities combined. The study asked 716 former Awana participants the same questions as a 2005 national survey by Baylor University so that the results could be statistically compared. The study measured the influence of Awana on respondents' lives in their religious beliefs, faith-driven behaviors and moral attitudes. Alumni surveyed found Awana to be as important to the development of their spiritual foundation as the rest of the activities of their childhood church combined. The full report can be downloaded at www.awana.org/moderndayjoseph/docs/alumni-survey-report-08-web.pdf.

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So far in 2008, we have made **27 club visits**, put down eight game circles, visited in-person with ten pastors, and conducted two club leadership meetings/trainings. Mike also gave the message at two Sunday services, spoke at two chapel services, conducted Awana Orientation training and **presented Awana to 13 churches**.

Ten churches have started Awana this fall for the first time with another two churches considering beginning a club in early 2009. We are very excited that the **first Hispanic church** in our territory has started Awana this fall using a combination of English and Spanish materials.

We rejoice over the **great event season** that took place earlier this year. Over **200 T&T clubbers** competed in the four Bible Quiz events held in Derby, Salina, Hoxie and Liberal. We also held two AwanaGames™ and Sparks-a-Rama events in Valley Center and Garden City. It is a thrill to have the opportunity to **present the Gospel of Christ** to the clubbers' families and friends who attended each one of these events.

We were very pleased to partner with Joel and Veronica Culberson, Awana missionaries to eastern Kansas and western Missouri, as we offered **two Commander College 101 (CC101)** trainings this year. In January, there were 32 commanders who attended the CC101 in Kansas City. Then in July, we had 25 commanders attend in Wichita. It was a wonderful time of **encouragement, fellowship and training**. It is our prayer that every commander who attended has been energized and equipped to more effectively serve the clubs for which they have been entrusted. We look forward to the **CC101 and CC201 trainings scheduled for 2009!**

It is no secret to many that the **best Awana clubs** are those that place a priority on training their leadership and that have dedicated leaders. In August and September, our ministry team conducted **seven Regional Basic Training** events across our territory with **over 200 leaders attending**. Our two fall Awana Ministry Conferences took place in August and we were thrilled that over **600 leaders participated** in a great day of training and fellowship! The theme for this year's conference season was "**BEE: A Servant.**" At both conferences, our keynote speakers challenged us with a message on being God's servants. One speaker mentioned that "Christianity is always one generation away from extinction." As another Awana club year has begun, we are so encouraged by the many leaders who **see Awana as a ministry** to serve so that Jesus Christ may be glorified and be made known to children and youth.

In May, Mike attended a week-long **regional missionary conference** at Awana headquarters. This is always a great time to connect with the other missionaries in our region. It is also an opportunity to hear updates from many of the departments at Awana to find out what's new for the upcoming club year and to hear about long-term initiatives as well. Both of us look forward to going back to headquarters in early November for our fall regional missionary conference.

In July, we met with many of the **30 ministry team** volunteers who help in ministry and presented to them **an update on the Awana ministry** in central and western Kansas, showing them the new products and programs that were introduced for the 08/09 club year and reviewed the ministry goals for our territory over the next three to five years. It is such a blessing to have so many volunteers serving alongside us. Each one is a vital part of our ministry as we serve the **135 churches that use Awana in central and western Kansas**. We pray that many more churches will begin using Awana to reach kids and youth for Christ in their towns and communities.

On October 4, we **traveled to Minneapolis** as guests of Dale and Jean Gerard, missionaries to southern Minnesota, at their fall Awana Ministry Conference. We both presented workshops throughout the day. It was such a blessing to get to meet Awana leaders from all over southern Minnesota and see their **hearts for reaching children** for Christ. We even had time to spend a few hours walking around the Mall of America while we were there, which was quiet a sight to see!

Halloween Alternatives for Club Night

- Plan a "dress up like a Bible character" night.
- Run an Awana fair with a "trunk or treat" concept. Set up booths outside in the parking lot next to leaders' cars, trucks and minivans. Kids enjoy the games and then "trunk or treat" at each car for sweets!
- Other ideas like the "Pumpkin Patch Party" can be found in the Awana Encyclopedia of Ideas.

Kris' Korner from page 1

Our children seem to be growing up just as fast. Ben is a senior this year and I don't know that I am quite ready for it. Emily is a junior, Megan is in 8th grade, and Katie is in 6th grade. Ben is playing varsity soccer this fall. We are in the process of checking out colleges for him. He has an incredibly heavy school load and is preparing for a significant role in his senior play as well as leading our Trek club, so we do not see too much of him (maybe God is preparing me for next year!).

Emily continues to run cross country. She will run regionals next week and hopefully in the state meet the following week. Emily has been busy with school work as well as her responsibilities as class president. She continues to play the piano and is helping in Sparks again this year.

Megan played volleyball for the first time this year. It was a delight to watch her and I think she enjoyed the experience. Soon, they will be gearing up for basketball. Megan is our little reading bug. She also has become quite the little cook. Megan continues to play the flute and piano.

Last, but not least, is our Katie. She is in her last year of elementary school. It is hard to believe that after this year that chapter in our life will be closed. She is hoping to play competitive basketball through our local recreation center this winter. Katie is our outdoor girl who would rather ride a bike or play outside than just about anything else. Katie, too, continues to play the piano as well as the trumpet.

In the midst of the busyness, our lives have been sprinkled with many blessings. We have had the privilege of having visits from friends and family as well as the opportunity to meet many new people from churches across our territory. We are extremely grateful for God's provision this past year.



Commander College 101 and 201 Scheduled for 2009

The typical Awana commander is not mentored into their current role, but instead likely "learned it on the fly." In fact, most commanders are picked out of a hat and thrust into a role with a minimum amount of preparation. Or, they may have received some training on the mechanics of running an Awana club, but not so much in regard to equipping and inspiring their Awana leaders to pour themselves into the lives of children to see them come to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are a commander, does this sound like you?

We are very pleased to be offering Commander College 101 again in 2009. It will be held at the West Evangelical Free Church in Wichita **January 15-17, 2009**. Special guests Jack Eggar, president and CEO of Awana, and his wife, Dona, will be the session speakers for this event. Also, for commanders who are graduates of 101, we are excited to announce that Commander College 201 will be held **July 16-18, 2009** at Pleasant Valley Church in Liberty, MO.

To find out more about both Commander College 101 and 201 and to register on-line (on-line registration will be available soon) go to www.awana.org/commandercollege. You can also contact Kim Evans at 316-721-4203 if you have any questions.

We Ask Prayer For...

...those on our ministry team who are preparing for the events season and the two Commander College training seminars coming in 2009.

...for the 10 new Awana clubs that started this fall and for those churches still considering Awana.

...safety as Mike travels many miles visiting clubs and churches across our territory.

...God to grant wisdom, discernment and providence to the executive leadership at Awana during this time of

economic downturn and uncertainty.

...our college search that is underway for our son Ben who will be graduating this year.

...the hundreds of leaders who serve faithfully in their local Awana club each week.

...our ministry to reach 100% of needed monthly support. Our current support level is at 85% of the amount needed each month.

Forever Postage Stamp Project

Awana missionaries mail information to churches and commanders several times a year—we are no exception! Again this year, we are offering a way to allow area clubbers and leaders to support our ministry through a Postage Stamp Project. The response has been great, but we need more stamps! As you may know, the letter rate postage went up earlier this year. Because of the likelihood of more increases in the future, we are asking clubs to purchase Forever stamps for our ministry. We would like to extend our deep appreciation for all of you who generously support us in this way!

Our Support

As you may know, we are 100% faith-supported through the contributions of churches and individuals. It is our responsibility to raise our support. Currently, we are not reaching our monthly support level need. In fact, our level of needed support has declined with the increases in our expenses, especially travel. If God is leading you to partner with us financially, please visit our website at www.wksawana.org and click on "Your Missionaries" to receive more information. As great as our financial needs are, nothing can replace the power of prayer. Please continue to lift our ministry up in your prayers as we answer the Lord's call to serve the 135 churches using Awana in our territory.

2009 Events Calendar

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| Jan 15-17 | Commander College 101 West E. Free Church Wichita, KS | Apr 4 | Bible Quiz <i>(Followed by AwanaGames and Sparks-a-Rama)</i> Old High School Gym Cimarron, KS |
| Jan 23 | Awana Night with the Wichita Thunder Kansas Coliseum Valley Center, KS | Apr 4 | AwanaGames™ and Sparks-a-Rama <i>(Preceded by Bible Quiz in the morning)</i> Old High School Gym Cimarron, KS |
| Feb 7 | Bible Quiz Calvary Baptist Church Derby, KS | Jul 16-18 | Commander College 201 Pleasant Valley Church Liberty, MO |
| Feb 14 | Bible Quiz First Baptist Church Salina, KS | Sept 12 | Fall Awana Ministry Conference Grace Community Church Newton, KS |
| Feb 21 | Bible Quiz Northwest Kansas (location TBD) | Sept 19 | Fall Awana Ministry Conference Garden Valley Church Garden City, KS |
| Mar 13-14 | Midwest Regional YouthDay Olathe South High School Olathe, KS | | |
| Apr 4 | AwanaGames™ and Sparks-a-Rama Valley Center High School Valley Center, KS | | |

