

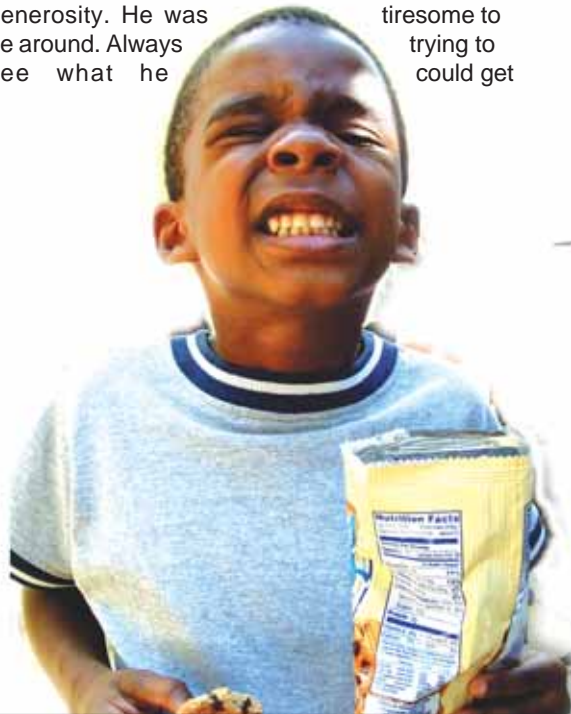
Las Vegas News

youth with a mission
July 2004

“Who the *?#! are you?” he said to me. I turned to look and saw no one... until I realized that the one who’d asked me this question only came up to my waist.

His name was Willy, a Latino kid, only nine years old. He had babyish features and was very short and chubby. To look at him would make you smile and you’d want to play and have fun with him in order that he might smile back at you, exposing his pearly white teeth, three of them missing. But all I saw was his frown, fists clenched ready to hit.

I saw Willy frequently that week and every time I was met with a barrage of curses. Every time I’d try to play with him he had devised some new plan to abuse me or to take advantage of my generosity. He was tiresome to be around. Always trying to see what he could get



***“don’t go,
don’t leave,
where are
you going?!”***

away with, always pushing the limits. Without any tact he

would say whatever he thought which was always either sexually vulgar, or insulting to someone or both.

He was rough; about as rough as they come - definitely the roughest I had ever encountered, which was why I was so surprised when he latched his arms around my legs as I was getting into a van never to see him again. He kept saying over and over again “don’t go, don’t leave, where are you going?!” I embraced him one last time, as tears welled up in both our eyes, and told him I loved him and Jesus loved him.

I left that week in Watts, Los Angeles never to be the same again. It was a totally different world out there but it opened my eyes to the world

just beyond my own doorstep.

The kids of the inner city, Las Vegas are in desperate need. They are kids from broken families, from hurting homes. They are fatherless and unruly. They are unwanted, uncared for and unloved. They are exposed to abuse and violence, drugs and alcohol, sex and pornography at the same

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Have you ever considered how a few hours of your time can make a huge difference in the lives of others?

This was the experience of myself and our staff team recently when we took a day out to visit two different residential nursing homes in our city.

Perhaps due to physical limitations, sickness or living away from family many of the elderly in our society are often in need of social interaction or a friendly face to take the time to talk. One sweet lady of 95 years told me her fascinating life-story and shared with me her family pictures. Just sitting on her bed and talking I felt like we'd been friends for years. With others there are often limitations and yes, sometimes the conversation is a little muddled, but one thing was clear to me: that these precious elderly folk were enthusiastic and eager to talk and listen and they clearly loved our being there.

In the first home we gathered the residents in their social room. We sang worship songs and a few of us gave short devotionals. One of our staff guys even breakdanced for them - and they loved it!

A number of them either knew the Lord or had been raised to acknowledge Jesus. It was good to be able to remind them of the Lord's love for them and no matter what life had looked like or what choices had been made it was not too late to surrender their lives to Him. At the second care home, where the guests were less mobile, we visited them in their rooms. During each conversation we sought to encourage them in their walk with the Lord and before departing were able to pray with each of them.

It was such a huge blessing for me. Although far away geographically from my own 87 year old grandmother, I was reminded of her. I'm often so conscious that due to distance there are times that I can't be the one to visit her, but somehow if I can share a smile with those that I am able, I feel sure there will be those who will encourage my own Gran.

Sarah Hamilton



cont'd from page 1....

age they learn to read. They are becoming decreasingly educated; they are learning basic skills later and dropping out of school earlier. They are becoming too street wise for their own good. All this over the years has contributed to a cultural breakdown in many areas of the city. Satan has declared war on our children by stealing their innocence, the very thing that makes them children.

HANG-TIME

Hangtime is YWAM Las Vegas' way of fighting back. It's sad that many people would reject these kids only because of the fact that they are rude, impolite and disobedient. But Jesus said "let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."(Matt. 19:14). Many of these kids rarely experience love in their lives and thus they don't know how to give or receive it, but Mondays through Thursdays from four to five o'clock we have a window of opportunity to pour out all the love and grace that God gave us when we didn't deserve it.

For an hour each day we help them with their homework and school. We help them work through relational issues and care about their feelings. We teach them about the Bible and how Jesus came to love them. We laugh with them, cry with them, play games with them and hang out with them.

I think Hangtime provides so much more than just an hour of relief for parents and fun for kids. I believe it provides hope. Hope for the kids who believe they have no future, hope for the parents who've lost control of their families and hope for the desperate communities where there seems to be no good and morals seem to be in decay.

Our hope with Hangtime is to help the kids who need it the most, to love the unloved and reach this young generation with the message of hope and love - Jesus Christ.

Joe Fortier

If you love kids and are interested in helping with Hangtime, we'd love to hear from you!

Academic Adventure

in Mexico!

News from our director, Richard Thompson

We had an awesome and very challenging 12 weeks as we (Richard & Kara Thompson) with our 4 kids attended the YWAM LTS (Leadership Training School) in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The teaching was amazingly rich and deep, and our experiences were life-changing. To hang out with YWAM leaders (some very influential) from 52 nations was really wonderful. However, we faced many challenges as the facility that held the 300 staff and students was still under construction when we arrived. There was masonry everywhere, more bugs than I've seen in my entire life, and the schedule was very challenging. But it was well worth it. Some of the highlights were as follows:

We received teaching on a brand new paradigm for missions that will mold international strategies for the foreseeable future. It is called 4K – where the world is divided up into 4323 “Omega Zones**” – and soon there will be a website that anyone can use to view all of the needs of any area of the world. Although this initiative was developed by YWAM, all of the major missions and research

agencies are working together to make this happen.

One of the most emphasized teachings was that we as YWAM need to take a season to really focus on realignment with all that God has told us in the past. It can be very easy in our desire to achieve great things for God to actually employ methods that may not be pleasing to Him. For example, we were encouraged to move away from using a business model in areas where spiritual eldership is required.

LTS is a course of the University of the Nations. This, the YWAM University, has 30,000 students each year from over 170 countries in 438 satellite campuses worldwide and it's not like your regular educational body! Its only purpose is to effectively train and prepare people for missions – and not just “missions” as we often think about it – but literally to train people to go out and affect all of the major influencers of a society: government, family, media, celebration (art, entertainment &

sports), business (incl. science & technology), education, and of course, religion.

This was a truly life-changing time and we hope and pray that we will be able to pass on as much of what we learnt as possible. For more details and pictures you can visit the official website of our school at: www.ywamconnect.com/sites/lts

* *Omega Zone* - a classification scheme of world people groups that is more detailed than models currently used.



Above: The Thompson Family
Picture overleaf:
Guadalajara Street Outreach

12,000
ways
to get our
attention

As our friends we would like to share with you a major current need that we have.

For the first time ever, we as a base have found ourselves \$12,000 (US) in debt. Believe me this is the last place that we want to be in, but as you well know, bills will not wait. As missionaries it is very significant to be in debt, because this is the number one reason for them to leave the field, and thus, why we want to do everything in our power to deal with this right away and to prevent it ever happening again.

We have sought God on this and we do not believe that it is because of any

major sin in our lives, or because He is trying to move us somewhere else. On the contrary, it seems it is because we did not read “the writing on the wall” some months ago that our support was becoming increasingly short of our monthly needs.

Please pray for us at this time that we will be able to raise up 30 new regular monthly supporters to help meet this need and that we will see this immediate debt erased. If you are interested in helping us out in this area - or you think that you would be interested in becoming one of those 30 monthly supporters - please let us know!

Thank you.

CRISIS RESPONSE

Well, that was much more intense than I thought. I think that's what we were all thinking when the RescueNet training was over. RescueNet is YWAM's international disaster response arm and we just held a training course in Las Vegas for potential new volunteers.

Two solid weeks of training in search and rescue, triage, 1st aid/CPR, disaster psychology, international communication, fire suppression and so much more was quite a load to carry. Thankfully we had terrific teammates and amazing instructors who were all committed to pushing beyond themselves and reaching out to those in dire need in all areas of the world. And thankfully we all survived.

We learned a lot about ourselves, overcoming fears and limits, responding to crisis and ministering under tremendous pressure. At the end of the course, as our final exam, we took part in a huge training exercise which forced us to put into practice everything we had just learned. The instructors turned our office into a realistic-looking disaster area complete with mounds of debris, plenty of smoke, and screaming volunteer victims made up with realistic-looking wounds and blood. Alarms were sounding constantly and people playing panicked community members added to the

intensity. The pressure was enormous, but we all pulled through.

Pray for those of us who took the course - that we would know how to proceed from here. We need to keep building our skills and begin to pull together a lot of gear and finances to respond to the next disaster call-out that RescueNet issues. We don't know when or where it will be, but we know we want to be ready to minister the gospel in word and deed when it comes.

(If you are interested in learning more about RescueNet or would like to train with us, please call or e-mail us at the address / phone number on the front of the newsletter).

David Mansfield



UPCOMING SCHOOLS...
at YWAM Las Vegas

Fall Discipleship Training School:
September 26, 2004 - February 18, 2005

Winter Discipleship Training School:
January 9, 2005 - June 10, 2005

Join us for one of these exciting, life-changing schools!
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