

Joel & Veronica Culberson

E. KS / W. MO Awana Missionaries

2003 Annual Awana Ministry Report

Our Hope

That all children and youth throughout the world will come to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

To be a strategic partner with churches in Kansas and Missouri to ensure the opportunity for all children and youth to be evangelized and disciplined in Christ.

Our Mission

To work with our pastors and commanders in giving our leaders the proper tools and training that will equip them to evangelize and disciple children and youth for Christ

1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service.

This year has been a year of great change and steps moving in the right direction in our Awana ministry. It has been a blessing for us to present the ministry to churches and then train their leaders in reaching lost souls for Christ. We had approximately 800 leaders trained this year at our Basic Trainings and Advanced Commander Trainings. The biggest blessing was hearing about the 1000 known decisions for Christ from kids in our area. Praise the Lord!

As our year progressed, we added new churches to the Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri Awana family. We started 24 new churches this year, but unfortunately we had 13 churches that dropped Awana this year. That puts the total number of churches we serve to 241. Pray that we can work with the churches that are struggling, so we can have 100% of the churches we serve continue to use Awana to reach their community for Christ. We thank God for the churches and individuals that do understand and share our hope, vision, and mission.

We had a great event season in the spring with our three Regional Bible Quizzes, two Regional Sparks-a-Ramas and AwanaGames, and the JV/J247 competition. All of the regional quizzes saw a 5% growth in participation. Next year, the Kansas City Quiz will have team speed introduced to allow more participation from the churches. We are always looking for ways to get more kids involved with the regional events. The KC and SWMO AwanaGames and Sparks-a-Rama competitions were BIG as usual. Since introducing Division 3 (coed) we have seen many new churches participate and get involve with this event. We had a total of 103 teams that participated in our region. What a joy to see the smiles and enthusiastic spirit in these kids competing in the AwanaGames. Our annual Teen Day for JV/J247 was exciting. The Bible Quiz brought out 28 teams from around our region and 13 AwanaGames teams. Praise God for answered prayer! What an encouragement it is to see teenagers memorizing and studying God's word.

Red River Valley Scholarship Camp was a blessing this year. There were 315 campers with 71 Counselors and supporting staff. Our area was represented by 128 of those campers. Praise God that He is answering our prayers with the teen ministries. The JV and Journey 24/7 camp speakers were used by God during the week to change hearts and minds. They stretched the teens' Christian walk and many decisions were made to follow more closely after the Lord and to change their lifestyle making it more pleasing to Him. Continue to pray that God will excite the teens in our area to participate in Scholarship Camp. We also attended Mountain High Scholarship Camp in Big Bear Lake, California. It was a great opportunity to make new friends from the L.A. area and also see many teens rededicate their lives to Christ.

We are always excited to see the churches in our area participate in the Fall Leadership Conferences. We had around 750 leaders attend one of the three conferences with about 60% of our churches represented. We offered a conference in Topeka this year and 200 people showed up to get more training for their Awana ministry. We were amazed with the turnout! We continue to be creative in thinking of diverse workshops to meet the changing needs of not only the kids, but also the leaders. We pray that we can increase the participation in our conferences in the future and that leaders will continue to seek additional training to be effective as they reach lost souls for Jesus Christ. We also introduced the Rorheim Institute and the potential of training thousands of children's workers to get the Biblical worldview back into the hearts and minds of kids and teenagers. We are thrilled to see what God is going to do with the Rorheim Institute.

After our conference season, we had the opportunity to help teach workshops for the Leadership Training Conference in Seattle, Washington. After the conference, we took a couple days to take in the sights of the Northwest. What beauty that God has created. After getting back from Washington, we had our 3rd Annual Regional Grand Prix event. Continue to pray that God will grow this event.

We are so grateful for all the prayer and financial supporters that believe in our hope, vision, and mission. We thank you for each and every gift we receive. Our financial support is 92% and we can't express the joy in seeing churches and individuals working with us in this ministry. We trust the Lord will meet our needs and will bless us as we serve Him in Awana. Continue to pray for not only our travel safety, but our Ministry Team as well. They continue to work with us in coordinating events, presentations, trainings, club evaluations and ministry visits. As a team, we will be focusing on building our relationships with the churches in our area. Please pray for the new and experienced Awana churches that their focus will remain on reaching boys and girls with the Gospel of Christ and training them to serve Him.