

Joel & Veronica Culberson

E. KS / W. MO Awana Missionaries

2007 Annual Awana Ministry Report

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

What a privilege it is to be alive and serving in Awana and seeing lives changed for eternity. We, along with our Ministry Team, have done many presentations and trainings for churches over the past year. We trained over 375 leaders at regional and local Orientation and Role Trainings. We continue to thank the churches that host these important trainings for new leaders. Once again, the biggest blessing was hearing about 900 known decisions for Christ in our area. Praise the Lord for these souls!

As our year progressed, we added 27 new clubs to the Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri Awana family. We had 18 churches drop Awana this year, which gave us a total increase of 3% in the area. That puts the total number of churches we serve to 277. The CARE Groups we introduced last year continue to be an effective tool of communication to meet the needs of the clubs. Our ultimate goal is to have one CARE group for every 10 churches. We currently have 19 groups in our area.

Our leader participation in the Leadership Conferences was extremely done this year. We only had around 475 leaders attend one of the three conferences with about 28% of the churches represented. We ask that you please pray with us in how we can be more creative to promote our future conferences so more leaders will be involved.

We had a great event season in the spring with the three Regional Bible Quizzes, two Regional Sparks-a-Ramas and AwanaGames, and the 24/7 Ministries competition. There were approximately 430 boys and girls that participated in quizzing over material in their T&T books. The AwanaGames and Sparks-a-Rama competitions were BIG as usual. We had a total of 82 teams that participated in our region. What a joy to see the smiles and enthusiastic spirit in these kids competing in the AwanaGames. At the Midwest Regional Youth Day, we had our 2nd annual volleyball tournament and pizza fellowship on Friday night before the Saturday activities. There were approximately 150 youth that attended on Friday night. It was a great time of food and fellowship. On Saturday, there were 20 Trek and 27 Journey Quiz teams and 12 Trek and 15 Journey AwanaGames teams with about 350 youth in attendance. We continue to praise God for the growth of this event. What a joy to see teenagers that are excited about their walk with Christ!

In May, Veronica and I attended our Regional Conference in Chicago and the North American Missions Conference in Monterey, CA in November. It was a great time of fellowship and relaxation with the other missionaries as well as a time of renewal for our ministry.

Joel continues to volunteer at Red River Valley Honors Camp in Arkansas as the High School Director. There were over 200 campers with 55 supporting staff. Our area was represented by 118 of those campers. The theme was "Facing The Giants." The highlight of camp was seeing many youth make decisions to draw closer to God in their Christian walk.

The field structure change of the Awana missionaries continues to be a work in progress in our area. We are grateful for Chris Driggers who is in the process of raising her financial support as the Outreach Missionary for the state of Kansas. Once this happens, we will slowly shift our responsibilities to being the Ministry Development Missionaries for the area, along with being the Team Leaders for Kansas and Missouri. Part of our responsibility as Team Leaders will be getting the other missionaries working together as a team so we can be more effective in helping churches reach more children and youth with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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 90% 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 our travel safety and our volunteer Ministry Team. 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.

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