



The ECHO

Evangelizing Children's Hearts in Omaha

Official voice of Child Evangelism Fellowship® of Omaha

November 2011

Pastors say partnership with CEF® is effective tool for churches

Working hand in hand with churches is vital to the mission of CEF! We want to see children in our Good News Clubs® become established in local congregations.



Pastor Evenson

One way this can happen is for a church to partner with us in starting GNCs. This relationship provides training for children's workers, a vision for the harvest field, and an amazing place to serve — inside our public schools!

So it's been exciting to see more churches recognize the opportunity GNCs present and become involved.

Last year TriPointe Baptist Church was looking for a ministry to begin that would show people they cared, said Pastor Chris Evenson. Several factors were pointing them

"We are reaching families we would never reach any other way!" CHRIS EVENSON

towards children when they received our newsletter.

Within a short time, the church selected Parkview Heights Elementary School, and a new club was begun.

"Having a Good News Club in public schools is a miraculous opportunity that churches have available now," Chris noted. *"So many of the kids we've ministered to have never had a Bible of their own and have rarely, if ever, gone to church. We are reaching families that we would never reach any other way!"*

Just last year as a result of their GNC, TriPointe:

- ▶ Saw 12 children make decisions to trust Christ Jesus as Savior;
- ▶ Was able to help a family whose home burned;
- ▶ Saw a mother come to know Jesus as Savior; and
- ▶ Saw three new families begin getting involved in their church.

"And all of this with free usage of the public school building as soon as the bell rings!" Chris added.

Pastor Daniel Bear, Director of Family Ministries at Community Bible Church, said a desire to strengthen

the evangelistic portion of their children's ministry was a factor in leading them to begin a Good News Club at Mockingbird Elementary.

"God has blessed," Daniel said. *"Seventy children have put their faith in Christ over the last six years as a result of this club!"*

This year CBC chose to start a second club at Meadows Elementary where they have already seen two decisions for Christ.

"Now, if someone asks if we feel we are being effective in fulfilling all of the Great Commission, we can give a resounding 'Yes!'" he said.

He added that working with CEF has given their church *"an easy way to show their faith to the community and to reach the lost. Instead of waiting for them to come to us, we can go to them right inside the public schools. Children are hungry for the truth and the Body of Christ knows the truth."*

Both Chris and Daniel encourage other churches to consider hosting Good News Clubs.

"I challenge you to find a more effective outreach program at a lower cost..." DANIEL BEAR

"I know we are all extremely busy with what we are already doing," Chris said, *"but I believe as pastors we need to always be asking how effective each program is currently. We need to be willing to make hard decisions about those that are zapping all of our energy and yet not seeing lives changed through those efforts."*

Good News Clubs can be the answer.

"I challenge you to find a more effective outreach program at a lower cost to your church," Daniel said. *"Imagine if we were able to reach 10 percent of Omaha's children for the Lord. Now imagine if we were to reach 50 percent. What would that do for our city? What would that do for the spreading of the Gospel?"*

New clubs can be started in January. Call us!



Pastor Daniel Bear

CEF of Omaha

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Getting to know members of the CEF of Omaha Local Committee

Each CEF chapter is governed by a board of believers who are concerned for the spiritual needs of children and believe in both the necessity and possibility of their coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

We'd like to introduce you to our newest member.

Hello, my name is Renee' Popelka. I have been married to my wonderful husband Tim for 32 years and we have three adult children, one grandchild and one due in June.

My husband has worked for First Data Resources for the past 28 years and I had the privilege of being a stay at home mom. I now work as a sub in the kitchens of the Millard School District.

We attend Community Bible Church, and over the years have been involved in drama, Awana, and Bible studies. Our youngest daughter and I also helped with a Good News Club at Mockingbird Elem. that CBC sponsors.

I grew up in a church home, but came to know the Lord through Youth For Christ my senior year of high school. After school I served as volunteer staff for a couple of years with YFC. I attended Capernwray Bible School in England for a year and then came back home to



Renee Popelka

work as a counselor in a group home for girls in Des Moines, Iowa where I grew up.

My husband Tim and I met while working with the Evangelical Free camping ministry of Iowa. After we were married, we started the singles ministry for Brookside Church.

We were first introduced to CEF when our oldest daughter Nikki got involved about 15 years ago.

However, it wasn't until our youngest daughter Alicia asked to go to Christian Youth in Action that God got my attention about the impact CEF has on the lives of children and the teens trained to teach.

I met Jackie that summer as I volunteered in the kitchen at camp. I am thankful for her vision for Omaha and have been in awe of God's working through CEF over the past eight years. I count it a privilege to serve on the board here and covet your prayers as God continues to lead this ministry to glorify Him in Omaha.

CYIA EAST FALL RETREAT 2011



Great weather. Terrific food. Challenging messages. Funny jokes. Corny jokes. Blonde jokes. Lots and lots of blonde jokes.

Quiet time with God. Really quiet. Outside in the autumn sunshine.

Good times with friends. Box hockey. Cool games. 'Do you trust me?' games. 'Drawing my dream' game. Plenty of laughter. A few tears. Super testimonies. Announcements about CYIA East 2012.

(Yep, we're thinking about it already.)

See you at the winter party! (To be announced)

Working together.
Trusting each other.
Enjoying friendship.

CYIA teens.
CYIA camp.
CYIA retreat.

It's all good.



Mickey was back!



Up and over!



Jackie's Jottings - - From My Heart

"Even so it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish."

I came across an old paper recently in my basement — a certificate for perfect attendance in Sunday School when I was two. Now rest assured, I am not keeping that in the hopes of winning any jewels in my crown! It just got saved with other memorabilia.

But it reminds me of something: I have been part of Bible-believing churches all my life.

I've been in S.S., Training Union (remember that?), Girls Auxiliary, revival meetings, prayer meetings and missionary conferences. I competed in Sword Drills, went on visitation, sang in choirs and served on boards.

I've heard preaching that has convicted me, taught me and comforted me. I've had a church family that has been a huge source of blessing. Well, most of the time!

How thankful I am for church.

It's a privilege 80 percent of children know nothing of. It's hard to believe that figure, but every study seems to come up with the same cold, heartbreaking fact: most of the next generation never goes to church.

It makes me cry as I sit here writing these words. How cruel to bring a child into this world and not take them to Sunday School where they can sing, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." Where they can learn about Noah and the ark, Zacchaeus, and the Good Shepherd who loves the little lambs.

I can't imagine Sundays without church, much less *life*. **But I can't make parents take their kids to**

God's house. All I can do is take God's Word to the schoolhouse.

We're so glad when children come to Good News Club. Some of them are so hungry, so ready to admit their sin and trust Jesus. They want Bibles of their own, even though they hardly know what a chapter or verse is.

I'm so glad God saves these kids, whether or not they can be disciplined as I'd like them to be. We try. We sign them up for the Mailbox Club and give them devotional books. We pray for them and beg others to pray also.

But all the time, I know what they need. They need to go to church. But how can that happen when most parents are indifferent or antagonistic or just too busy?

The answer is for churches to start Good News Clubs in nearby schools. As members take ownership of the outreach and get to know these kids, they meet parents. They invite them to church. Sometimes they get to go pick up the children and bring them to Sunday School.

The kids don't know how to behave, of course, but they can learn. They'll probably never win a certificate for perfect attendance, but they can be nurtured and loved and taught biblical truth. Their lives can be changed, and they can even impact their own parents, who may just decide that church, after all, isn't such an unimportant thing.

I'm convinced that Jesus who loves children and loves the church would like to see them come together.

Good News Across America heading to our nation's capital in July 2012



Capture a city for Christ! That's the battle cry of over a hundred workers from across America who join together each summer to "jump start" a Gospel outreach to children in a target city.

In 2011 Good News Across America went to Salt Lake City. Now 15 Good News Clubs have begun, with five more slated to start in January. Pray that God will use these in an extraordinary way in that spiritually needy city.

Pray also for Washington, D.C. where GNAA will be held in 2012. Coordinator John Luck says it is being unusually difficult to get appointments with area churches there. Please pray God will do a supernatural work so that partnering churches can be found to take God's Word into public schools in our nation's capital.

Strategic Praying

"Prayer is the supreme way to be workers together with God." ~ Wesley L. Duewel

Pray for more churches to adopt schools in their community and start Good News Clubs

Pray for children attending our GNCs that they will listen and understand God's Word.

Pray for an open door into Bellevue Public Schools.

Pray for additional board members, donors and prayer warriors for the strengthening of our ministry.

Pray for our volunteers, our staff and our board to fully rely on the Lord in all that they do.

Pray for state director Jonathan Musgrave to be able to contact people across Nebraska who have a heart for children so we can see new work begun.

Prayer Alerts are emailed each Monday. Please let us know if you would like to receive these brief updates.

Celebrating 10 years of taking the Good News into public schools!



This summer marked the 10th anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision that opened the school doors to Good News Clubs.

The story began when a Good News Club in New York led by Pastor Steve Fournier was denied access to the school. The superintendent even refused to meet with Pastor Fournier, asking him, "Where are you going to get the resources to take this to court?"

Steve said later, "What this man didn't count on was the power of God. While I didn't have the resources, God certainly did!"

On June 6, 2001, the court reaffirmed that religious speech is entitled to the same protection as non-religious speech.

CEF President Reese Kauffman declared, "Today the



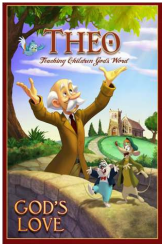
people of America have won a battle. Freedom is still a part of our great nation."

Ten years later, children across America gather in public schools each week to enjoy Good News Clubs. Last year, 3,560 GNCs were held and 133,647 children were reached with the Gospel.

Mat Staver, president of Liberty Counsel, said, "The most positive thing to happen to public schools is the Good News Club. Many youngsters will never attend church **unless the church comes to them.** These clubs provide an unprecedented opportunity to restore the culture, one young person at a time."



CEF hopes to one day have a Good News Club in every elementary school in America. But we are also aware that this door may not stay open forever. Now is the time for us to act!



The creators of "Theo" and CEF have launched a "Buy One – Give One" campaign that will make the new animated series available to children around the world.

"Theo" uses high-quality animation, Bible stories and humor to guide young-at-heart audiences through a systematic study of the foundations of

Christianity.

The first DVD in the series, "God's Love," is now in Christian retail stores. Everyone who buys a "Theo" DVD can participate in the "Buy One – Give One" campaign. Whitestone Media, which produced the cartoon, and CEF will match the purchase by sending a child in need a free "Theo" DVD, and the buyer can designate the region of the world they want it sent.

"Theo" DVDs will be also distributed through the CEF Boxes of Books initiative, which mails more than 1,000 boxes per month to CEF chapters in needy parts of the world. For more information visit www.theopresents.com.

GNC TESTIMONY

Four children accepted Christ as Savior in the last two weeks at our Good News Club! Two of the children are long time attendees — four years and three years — and two of them have just started coming this year. Please pray for understanding and support for these children from their families to help them grow in their faith.

GNC TESTIMONY

This week, as we were walking up to the school, a mom grabbed me and asked, "Are you the ones I saw last week praying around the flagpole?" She told me how seeing that made her cry, because her kids were just reprimanded at their previous school for praying before eating their lunch.

Now they're in our school, and she filled out the paperwork right there to add them to the club! They go to church already, but I'm glad our GNC gets to be a refreshing light even for the believers.

Please help us share the life-changing Gospel with the children of Omaha and Council Bluffs

It is our desire to end 2011 on a sound financial basis, without having to dip into our limited reserved funds. If the Lord lays it on your heart, would you make a gift to help us reach this goal?

In these economically-challenged days, we can promise all funds are used with frugality and integrity.

Investing in children's souls.
It's worth it.



**eGiving is available.
Safe ... Convenient ... Effective**

Visit our website to set up an account or call for details!