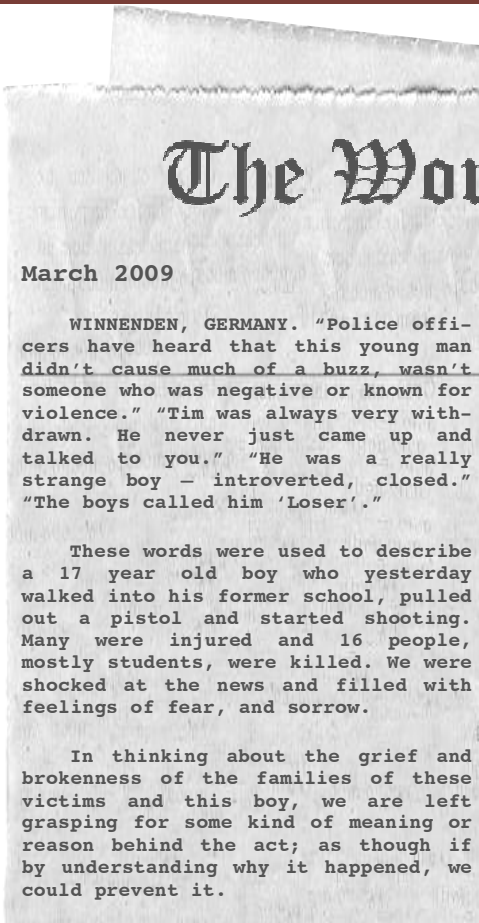




The Covenant World

Spring 2009



Covenant Players Provides an Alternative to Violence in School

After the school shooting in Germany in March, the words to the left were written by CP veteran Larry Blatterman who is currently serving in our European Continental Office there. Ten years after Columbine, news reports continue to bombard us with scenes of senseless violence—not only in schools, but on the highway, in shopping malls, in the workplace, and most recently in a nursing home and an immigration assistance center.

The profiles of the perpetrators share common elements: “loner”, withdrawn, introverted, strange, “loser”. These, too, are victims; faces lost in the crowd, troubled souls who need—something. We ask ourselves, “Is it possible to change the course of a life and prevent such tragedy? And if so, how can we make a such a difference?” The problem looms like a mountain that refuses to be moved.

Yet, we in Covenant Players believe



Oxnard fifth graders create living sculptures as part of CP workshop

that such change is possible and that we can make a difference. We are witnesses that an experience, an encounter, a play, a message, a parable as it were, can truly be the catalyst that brings about a change in point of view, perspective, perception—even attitude. That is cause for great hope and the beginning of life change.

A troubled teen in California at-

(Continued on page 2)

The LORD Adds To Your COVENANT WORLD Giving

In the Fall COVENANT WORLD we asked our Friends and Supporters to help with the need to upgrade our contact management software—and you responded with great generosity. The contributions came very close, but not all the way, to the amount we needed for the upgrade. The upgrade was important, because each unit and office worldwide needed it to continue to keep track of its contacts and ministry opportunities. We were close, *but the company was not budging on its price.*

However, on the day that we decided to go ahead in faith and place the order, we received a phone call from

Adam, the sales representative from Sage Software. He had just attended an impromptu staff meeting where he told his supervisor about Covenant Players, who we are, and that he'd been in contact with us over the last several months.

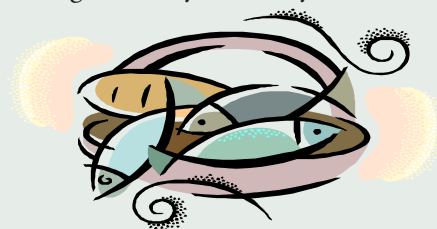
His supervisor told him to offer us a 29% discount. That meant nearly \$2,000.00 in savings for us. With that phone call, the amount that you gave immediately became enough to make the purchase—with a little left over.

Adam asked me, “Have you been praying about this?” to which I answered, “Of course we’ve been praying about this!” He said that the meeting was “out of the

blue” and that there was definitely a “higher power at work in this.”

Adam is right! There certainly is a higher power at work in all that we do, and we thank our risen Lord daily for the call on our lives and for the partners who so graciously give to the work of His kingdom. You are all an answer to prayer!

Again we say—thank you.



Honor Gifts

Honor Gifts are a way to remember special occasions, or just to recognize someone who is important to you. CP's International Director, Bobbi Johnson-Tanner, and CP acknowledge the following honorees. (Gifts received as of September 2, 2008—March 31, 2009)

Howard Bannister
Barbara and Jim Willford
Occidental, CA

The Catalyst East Unit
Carol Ann and Ed O'Connor
Pinnacle, NC

Marian and Bill Coburn
Jim and Margaret Bennett
Arroyo Grande, CA

Covenant Players
Conrad and Joan Brown
Pipe Creek, TX

Bart and Pam Cowser
Clark and Karen Driscoll
Kennesaw, GA

Gilbert and Jane Michelotti
Bloomington, IL

Elise Prayzich
Jackson, WY

Darla Dee and Don Turlington
Westfield, NJ

Gail Crabtree
Rebecca A. Perry
Charlotte, NC

Scott and Kathy Hamilton
Walter and Pota Meier
Chatham, MA

Peter Iversen
Chaplain Eric and Mrs Martha Renne
Chantilly, VA

Bobbi and Mark Johnson-Tanner
Don and Nancy Johnson
Tempe, AZ

(Covenant Players Provides Alternative...—Continued from page 1)

tends an alternative high school, the last chance for students who don't function well in a regular high school setting. Teachers suspect abuse at home, but their hands are tied. He is walled off, closed, impenetrable, and unreachable. They don't know how to help him. Then he sees Covenant Players perform Charles M. Tanner's *CHANGE-OVER* in his classroom; immediately afterwards he heads straight to the counselor's office, where they talk for several hours. Intervention takes place; the young man graduates high school. His counselor later says, "It was a breakthrough."

A fourth grader in Florida sees a play featuring Stanley Blodgett, a child character who is a positive role model. After the program the young boy writes, that because of



Nancy Shalkey (CP) and Oxnard California Fifth Graders "Take A Bow"!

the play, he started thinking differently about "how I judge people and to keep my temper under control so people won't be afraid of me." He also writes that CP should come back to his school because "the plays are really good and they are so kind to us."

The power of drama and the impact of student participation continue to transform classrooms around the world. One teacher here in Oxnard, California, Lynn Coleman, writes about the effect of a two-week drama workshop on her fifth graders. "The change in student knowledge, behavior, and attitude is remarkable. I have seen growth in the self confidence and public speaking skills of every student.... The skills learned and self confidence gained are carried into the upper grades as witnessed by the stories of returning junior high students." If one child or teenager begins to see her world or herself differently as a result of a play or exercise, then we have set powerfully positive wheels in motion.

Not far from the site of the school shooting in Germany, a very different encounter takes place. An educator tells a CP unit, "The boy you picked for the saloon keeper in the western movies [exercise] never says a word. He is so shy that he won't even respond to a direct question; he just looks at his desk. The teacher was so nervous when Penni [Jo Blatterman] picked the boy he almost wanted to stop her; but when he actually repeated his lines [in English], out loud, and in front of the whole class...! Well, it was amazing."

This scenario of picking "just the right person" is repeated in countless reports from CP units mission after mission all over the world. The uncanny selection of students who are often forgotten, overlooked, or thought of as incapable is a testimony to the presence of the Holy Spirit in our school programs. It also demonstrates His love for the students and His continued desire to commission a small unit of unknown actors to become messengers of hope and catalysts of change in a young person's life.

An ancient Jewish text declares, "Whoever saves one life, it is as if he saved the entire world." In our effort to change and prayerfully save lives, we thank God for this very special venue of ministry, to the educators who open their classrooms to us, and to all of our hosts and supporters who enable us to be on the road and available to serve in this way. If you would like to schedule or sponsor a program, please contact us at CP@covenantplayers.org or call 1-805-486-7155. God bless you!

Join Us in Our “Faith Walk”

Twice a year we publish the *COVENANT WORLD* to keep you up-to-date with the ministry of Covenant Players, to let you know of the needs we have and how you can help us with those needs. In the last issue we asked our Friends and Supporters to help us with the purchase of *ACT!* contact management software. (See the article on page 1) Not only did you respond with your gifts, but the Lord truly participated with us in making the purchase possible. Thank you for your participation in that appeal!

This, of course, should be no surprise to us who serve Him daily and see His miraculous provision on a regular basis; but we are creatures of the flesh and often have a hard time “walking by faith” as we should. In this issue of the *COVENANT WORLD* I feel prompted to stretch those legs of faith a little by trying something a little different; but this “faith walk” is not a solitary one. It requires your participation—but first, a little background information is in order.

A few weeks ago I read a brief, but inspiring biography of Pastor George Muller. In the 1800s, with the equivalent of 50 cents in his pocket, he felt the Lord was calling him to start an orphanage. Without telling anyone except the Lord about his needs, he established and maintained a complex of five large buildings capable of providing for two

thousand orphans. Even when the pantry was bare, last-minute provision always came and the children never missed a meal. The secret: George Muller talked to God, and God moved on the hearts of the people. George Muller’s story is a true testimony of faith—and to the faithfulness of God.

How does this correlate to the operation of an international itinerant drama ministry?

As you can imagine, Covenant Players, like any ministry, has a multitude of needs at any given moment. Some are exciting and enable immediate mission goals; others are more mundane and are not quite so glamorous. One big decision that goes into the planning of each *COVENANT WORLD* is which of those needs will we place before our faithful Friends and Supporters—which need is most important?

And that is where the stories connect. God knows the needs of Covenant Players; and He knows how to talk to His people. This “faith walk” appeal is a challenge to us as a ministry to trust the Lord with our needs in a different way this time. It is also a challenge to His people, our faithful Friends and Supporters, to hear His “still small voice” prompting them to pray for or provide for those needs.

Enclosed with this issue is a response card. On it you will have the op-

(Continued on page 4)

Honor Gifts

Beverly Jordan
Cleora and Robert Galt
Ventura, CA

Sarah Kitch
Bonnie and Bernie Kruizenga
Walworth, WI

David Kitch
Jack and Betsy Kitch
Centerville, OH

Steve and Elaine Leroy
Bill and Inez Leroy
Tuscon, AZ

Alicia Livingston
Doris Ward
Jacksonville, FL

Jan and Jim McGinnis
Charles and Ruth Nichols
Kent, OH

Donna Shambaugh
Newport, PA

Christina Morris
Fred and Vreni Schiess
Granada Hills, CA

Bob and Betty Palme
Bob and Eileen Hern
Galveston, TX

Kimberly Rigney
Jenney E. Smith
Orangeburg, SC

LoWaine Robison
Dorothy Cavins
Port Hueneme, CA

Shari and Tom Smith
Elise Prayzich
Jackson, WY

Andrew W. Smith
Pittsburgh, PA

Jini Van Cleave
Pasadena, CA

Jeremy and Bethany Stefano
Arnold and Caroline Rathbun
Cranston, RI

Runnin’ the Race

This summer, on July 26, 2009 Robin Goettl, Gerard Bynon, and Jay Zimmerman will be participating in the San Francisco Marathon to raise funds for Covenant Players. Robin and Jay will run the full Marathon and Gerard will run the half. Please keep them in your prayers as they prepare for this challenging event.

Also keep in your prayers the ten other CPers who will take part in our



annual Swim-A-Thon on July 12. The funds raised in both events will help pay for the expenses of our Summer training as well as our Summer Retreat this year. (See “Go on Retreat with CP” on page 4) If you would like to sponsor a runner or swimmer, please contact Bart Cowser or Sue Blough in the Covenant Players’ Development Department at 1-805-486-7155 or development@covenantplayers.org. Thank you!

Memorial Gifts

Memorial Gifts offer tribute to the memory of a loved one, while helping meet the specific needs of Covenant Players. The families whose memories are honored receive acknowledgement from CP's International Director, Bobbi Johnson-Tanner, and Covenant Players. (Gifts received as of September 2, 2008—March 31, 2009)

Blanche Anders
Bill and Marian Coburn
North Hollywood, CA

Kathy Meyer
Jim Meyer
New Brighton, MN

Mae Hannah Baker
Barbara Young
Corning, NY

Bob Pearce
Barbara Pearce
West Hills, CA

Rosie and Romolo Bugli
David De Vecchis
Providence, RI

Joseph and Ana Richard
Romeo Richard
Gardner, MA

Stacy Ellis
Bea Findlay
Juneau, AK

Darrel Schroeder
Steve and Nanely Schroeder
Copperas Cove, TX

Stephen and David Lo Russo
Alice Lorusso
Baltimore, MD

Dorothy Schroeder
Steve and Nanely Schroeder
Copperas Cove, TX

Covenant Players' 2008 Cash Flow Report

A copy is available on request.

Please email

development@covenantplayers.org

or write to the address below.



You Can Make Donations Online

Just point your web browser to:
<https://secure.covenantplayers.org> or simply
click on the red "Donate Now" button on our
home page (www.covenantplayers.org).

COVENANT PLAYERS

P.O. Box 2900 • Oxnard, CA 93034-2900

Tel. 1-800-79-DRAMA

development@covenantplayers.org

Founder: Charles M. Tanner

International Director: Bobbi M. Johnson-Tanner

Editor / Layout: Bart Cowser

Visit our website! www.covenantplayers.org

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(FAITH PROJECT—Continued from page 3)

portunity to let us know what need the Lord has placed on your heart to pray for. You will also have the opportunity to give toward that need. As we receive your responses, we expect to hear the voice of the Lord speaking to us through you. As individuals, we may each have a strong idea of what ministry need is most important at this time; but as the Lord speaks to us collectively, I anticipate that His very own specific agenda will soon emerge; and I am very excited to see what that is. Aren't you?

Please join us in our "faith walk" by filling out and returning the response card enclosed with this issue of the *COVENANT WORLD*—whether you are enclosing a gift or not. We truly want to know how the Lord is directing your prayers for our ministry. We realize that these are difficult times economically, and it may not be possible for some of you to respond with a monetary gift; we still covet your prayers. We put our trust in Him who is trustworthy, believing that prayer is powerful and that the needs we have during this current season will be met through that power and by the Lord's miraculous response of provision. "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." (James 5:16 NASB)

Thank you for going on this "faith walk" with us. May the Lord richly bless you!



Go On Retreat With CP!

Mark your calendar for July 27-30, 2009. Covenant Players in North America will be going on Retreat—and you are invited to join us! Our retreat site is Tahquitz Pines Christian Conference Center, Idyllwild, CA. We look forward to a time of spiritual renewal and refreshment. If you would like to join us, please RSVP Pam Cowser as soon as possible. Thank you!

GoodSearch

Raise Funds While Using the Internet!

Raising money for CP is now as easy as using your favorite search engine. When you go to www.goodsearch.com and designate CP as the charity you 'goodsearch' for, then every search you make generates a donation for CP—at no cost to you; and when you shop online using GoodSearch, a small donation is made to CP every time you make a purchase—also at no cost to you. So if you ever Google, buy books, or book flights online you can now raise funds for CP while you do it! Happy Surfing!

Honor Gifts

Ted & Marge Stanton,
Robert Stanton
Bill and Marian Coburn
North Hollywood, CA

Lisa Victoria
Peter Mancillas
Woodbine, MD

Dorie Tanner
Evelyn Maynard
Woodland Hills, CA

Jim and Shelby Young
George and Carolyn Lindsay
Afton, TN