

THE LINE-UP

Buckeye Border FCA Monthly Ministry Newsletter • January, 2008



Tragedy and Temptation

*"I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.." Psalm 121:1-2*

No doubt about it, this has been one of the hardest times of ministry in our office. On Christmas Eve of 2007, Wauseon experienced a life changing tragedy. With great sadness, we are mourning the loss of David Mealer and Hollis Richer, as the result of a deadly car accident.

Hollis, a senior at Wauseon High School, was the kind of girl that loved God intensely. Her faith was known by everyone—she was bold for Christ. I knew Hollis from coaching, church youth group, and FCA. She didn't play volleyball or basketball this year, choosing to focus on academics and her role in FCA at Wauseon. It's thought that over 2,000 came to her viewing, and over a 1,000 attended her funeral at the high school. She has made a huge impact on her school and community...I struggle with writing this letter, because of the closeness of Hollis and her family.

Elliot Mealer lost his girlfriend and his father in one night. His mother, Shelly, is okay, his brother, Brock, has a broken back, and we are praying that he will someday walk again. Elliot has helped with a few FCA events and is part of the Wauseon FCA Huddle. Again, I struggle trying to find the words to express the impact that these two families have on this community. How do I express the strength of their faith, the salvation message at their funeral, and their involvement in FCA?

Unfortunately, there are many stories like this across America, but when it happens in your home town to people you know—life changes. Sporting events were cancelled for a week, bracelets were made to honor the family, life is now different in Wauseon. Unexpectedly, life has changed in Wauseon for these families, the students, and others.

Fortunately, their faith in Jesus Christ will help bring peace, joy, strength, and hope for the future. God is at work - even though we don't fully understand. I thank God that in the midst of this tragedy, the ministry of FCA was present to meet with the basketball teams (Elliot was a big player for the boy's team and Hollis's sister plays on the girl's team). I'm thankful that God could minister at the school, the funeral, and the practices of these teams through this ministry.

Through this tragedy, church attendance has dramatically increased in our area, youth group for our church has doubled, the Huddle at Wauseon has been impacted, and the memorial money given to FCA from Hollis's funeral will be used to send her peers to FCA camp! Team Times and prayer with both basketball teams are now a weekly thing in Wauseon. In praise to God, we report that the lives of Hollis and David have created a ripple and God is going to bring something beautiful out of this tragedy.

God works through tragedy...and God works through temptation.

Recently, one of our staff had the opportunity to help a coach. Without going into detail, a coach was struggling with a certain temptation. With much prayer and love, our staff member confronted this coach and shared the dangers of this temptation. Praise God that the coach accepted this loving confrontation. The coach remarked, *"thank you, this is why you are here—to spiritually coach us coaches..."*

Personally, tragedy and temptation are probably in the top three things that no one wants to touch when it comes to ministry. Praise God that through the ministry of FCA, His Spirit is present to empower us to help during these times. **THANK YOU** for supporting this ministry financially, **THANK YOU** for praying for us! Your being a part of this team—encourages us to be obedient to the call God gave us. We share the good news of how God is expanding this area, but you also need to know that it doesn't come without pain and frustration. Continue to pray for the Richer family and the Mealer family during this time. Continue to pray for our staff as we need God's wisdom and strength in ministering during these emotionally and spiritually exhausting times.

Rex Stump, FCA Area Director

FCA Vision: To see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influence of athletes and coaches.

CAMPUS NEWS

Patrick Henry High School FCA Huddle had a fun night planned in December. The night was full of music, devotionals, food, and activities. One of those activities was Archery! Jim Creager and Todd West are both licensed instructors through the National Archery Program. They planned to have the kids shoot at wrapped gifts to win those gifts!

Wauseon High School FCA Huddle was in charge of the Christmas School Assembly. Students led the assembly with scripture reading, Pastor Vic Cales spoke, and they did a "Deal or No Deal" skit involving Santa and teachers. Last month, at Thanksgiving, the Huddle held a fund-raiser to help out some families in need. They sold cans of pop for "a handful of change or \$1" during lunch for two days and raised over \$200.

Burr Road Middle School (Wauseon) held a bake sale at Wal-Mart for two hours and raised \$169. They sold out! All proceeds are going towards the Fulton County Heartathon, along with all the proceeds from a school dance. The Huddle also raised \$143 in loose change. During 7th and 8th grade lunch, they set out jars for kids to toss in their loose change. This money was used by the Huddle to help out a local family that needed a little Christmas cheer. The Huddle leaders and students shopped and delivered a nice gift to this family before Christmas.

Delta High School is using the money they raised from their chicken dinner this past fall and donations from the students, to shower love on a family that this Huddle adopted from a local city. The Huddle went shopping and supplied this family's three children with toys and snow gear. They also bought this family a \$100 gift card to help them make necessary purchases. The Huddle personally delivered the presents.

We praise God for the wonderful stories that have been shared with us from local FCA Huddles. This is a testimony to what God is doing in this area through the ministry of FCA and the hearts of these students. We praise God for the Huddle leaders, their time and efforts in encouraging and influencing our young people to give back to the community, showing God's love to everyone!



Above: Bryan Middle School FCA Huddle went Christmas Caroling at Harborside Nursing Home and the kids took Christmas cards they made at their huddle that morning to the residents.



Above: Fayette High School continues to meet and push forward in presenting Christ to their school. The student leaders are making plans to gather with area Huddles for an event this Winter.

Buckeye Border FCA Board Members

Kevin Bock, LuAnn DeNoi, Joe Friess, Ken Jones,
Gary King, Dave Nafziger, Phil Nofziger, Kim Pepple,
Rex Rice, Scott Smith

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