



# Urban Youth Ministry

AN UPDATE FOR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF URBAN YOUTH MINISTRY



*“Sowing the seeds for tomorrow”  
Matthew 13:3-8*

FALL 2010

*real stories...real Hope*

## Why We Play Baseball

By Ryan

“The Aurora Neighborhood Baseball League (ANBL) has been a great blessing to me and my family! This season was truly an amazing year! I decided last year to coach in the league and I could think of no one else that would be better as assistant coaches than my parents. I was so truly happy to make this a family affair!! God blessed us this season with a great group of your boys and girls, filled with personality.



*Dodgers having fun in the dugout.*

This season as a team, we had ups and downs and a few lows, just as every team does. However, we worked our hardest. During the times that the team was down, we explained the love of God. We used those times to share what God has done in the low times of my life; and how God can use these times to demonstrate His Glory . . . even in times that we did not expect. He can!

Having a pre Middle School coed team that is very impressive was valuable. God used us to play a tremendous role, giving these young people an alternative to the streets, learn the game of Baseball, while sharing the love of Christ! One player in particular comes to mind.

A two year veteran on my team experienced God’s opening of doors. I was excited to begin taking him to church and sharing with him my faith. The first time that he went with me to church was on a Wednesday night, to a Junior High service. After the service he said “This is not what I was

expecting, your church is way better!” He was excited. Since then, he has been coming to my Church. It has been four months now and he is loving it! On the car rides to and from Church, I use that time to share with him more of my testimony and what God has done for me.

Coaching in ANBL has been a great experience! The ANBL is only possible because of the love of Godly people who want to see lives of young people transformed. This has impacted my life; as well as the lives of my team players. God is working in this league; and in the lives of players! I can only rejoice!”



*Hanging out with Minnie Minoso.*



*Baseball legend, Minnie Minoso.*

# Director's Corner



**Scot Thurman, Director  
Urban Youth Ministries**

When I think back to this summer, I can only say . . . WOW! God truly blessed UYM with the opportunity to reach out to so many more children in exciting ways. UYM's summer staff had a blast; as you can see from some of the articles that they shared. We were blessed with the opportunity to expand our Brady Summertime Superstars VBS Day Camp from 40 to 90 children. We were blessed with the opportunity to reach out to 90 more children through a partnership with the City of Aurora and Communities in School . . . via an Education Summer Camp at Bardwell Elementary School. Close to my heart . . . , we were blessed with the opportunity to expand our Aurora Neighborhood Baseball League from 8 to 10 teams; launching our new instructional T-Ball League. Below is a photo of one of those teams. I thank God for the work that he sets before us and the ability to work with partners LIKE YOU, who help make this happen.

It was also UYM's fifth year partnering with local area churches and local not for profits to host the Annual Celebrate Our Children event in McCarty Park. In this event, we are able to give and share with hundreds of children in our community. It was a classic hot summer day. It was full of fun, games, gifts, food, etc.



**Some of our T-Ball Superstars.**

## How can I help?

1. Become a volunteer (coach, mentor, tutor, etc.)
2. Become a financial supporter (see enclosed card)
3. Become a prayer partner
4. Other

**If your response is yes to any of the above, you may also contact Scot Thurman at [sthurman@waysidecross.org](mailto:sthurman@waysidecross.org) or 630-723-3408.**

Please note that all of UYM's programs are provided AT NO CHARGE! As such we rely on friends, volunteers, financial supporters, and prayer partners like you to help make this happen. We are committed to freely giving what God has given so freely to us . . . His Son Jesus and His loving-kindness.

UYM continues to seek new and exciting ways to reach out to youth in the Aurora community and anyone whom God sends to us. So please pray for us as we endeavor to sow seeds of love into the lives of children; . . . our future. Above are ways that you can help UYM share God's love. We can not do it without you! Praise Him!

***"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."* John 15:9**

# I'm So Excited!

**By Emily**

Dreams about how to reach students with the love of Christ once filled my mind. God's continuing work in my life now fills my life with real opportunities that I could never imagine. I had plans for ministry after graduating from Moody Bible Institute in May, with an Urban Ministry degree. I desired to work with Wayside as the Camp Coordinator as I did for the previous summer. God stretched me! He also taught me during my previous summer camp experience. As such, my excitement to see God work this year grew!

God demonstrated His supreme wisdom through a significant change in the dynamics of His summer ministry. Last summer, 45 students attended the camp on any given day. This was stretching for me, because of the size of the group and other factors. Evidently, God was not content with that amount because this summer, the enrollment expanded to 90 children. The thought of handling 90 campers with the same number of staff and volunteers as the previous year overwhelmed me. As the Camp leader, I asked how I could handle and oversee this many kids. My uncertainty about the situation caused anxiety as to the summer's outcome. However, God knew about the dilemma and chose to use it in ways I didn't think possible.

The leaders of the ministry needed volunteers and made the decision to allow some neighborhood students to serve as "Junior Leaders." David, Mario and Jorge offered their help at different times throughout the first few weeks of camp. Giving them a positive place during their summer days would benefit them because of the dangers of gang-infested neighborhoods. As a staff, striving to follow Christ in faith, we proceeded without certainty about how the situation would develop! We didn't know if the boys would be a hindrance or a help.



**David during lunchtime.**

God was gracious to me and the other staff counselors, and, although it was not always easy, David, Mario, and Jorge were Christ-like pictures of servant hood to the kids of the camp and to us. The boys offered help in whatever capacity we needed them and many times personally acted out Bible stories for the other kids, during our Bible time. Many times, after Bible lessons and acting out stories, the boys would

# My Camp Experience

By Anna Maria



Jorge and the summer camp staff.

ask questions about the Bible and the truths we learned in Bible time. God showed me that these boys were “seeking” and looking for something more in their lives than gangs and drugs; and the things that other youths in their community were seeking.

One night, I decided to invite David, Mario, and Jorge to a Student Ministry meeting at a church in Aurora where my husband is the Family Ministries Director. I honestly did not think the boys would be interested in going to church on a Sunday night. But to my surprise . . . all three of them were excited to come that following Sunday. They have consistently attended that meeting every Sunday night for more than two months. My husband (David) and I have enjoyed sowing into the boys; even after the night winds down, by going deeper in spiritual discussions with them. Their faithfulness has also helped me maintain relationships with some of the parents in the community while picking the boys up from their homes. It is a blessing to see people take an interest in my love (Christ’s love) for the community, as I share His Gospel.

I am delighted to see David, Mario and Jorge learn more about the Bible and Jesus Christ! Please pray that Jesus will use these three boys as catalysts in the community. Please ask God to impact the hearts of those on the east side of Aurora; and use UYM to further the Gospel and His Kingdom.

***And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, for they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”***  
Matthew 9:35-38



Sharing with the group.

I first heard about Wayside’s summer camp in 2008. When I learned that a Christian organization was in charge of such a thing I wanted to be a part of it. My first summer is one that I will never forget! I got to know and love the kids at camp; and was able to freely share my faith and love for Christ with them. It was such an enormous experience that I worked with UYM’s camp for the past three summers! One of the things I love most and remember about my job, as a counselor, is that this was no ordinary summer job. It was a ministry . . . that “I” am involved in.

All of the workers there saw it the same way. There is a different atmosphere when Christian workers know they are there for a greater purpose! We were there to share, with these kids, our amazing experiences with Christ! I got the opportunity to pray with kids, share my testimony, and most importantly, share the Gospel! I got the opportunity to watch as kids learned more about God and grew closer to Him!

I have been blessed with the opportunity to work at Brady Elementary School during the school year. I’ve worked as a student leader in the after school program for two years. Because I have been able to work this program, during the school year and summer, I’ve been able to remain in contact with the kids that I’ve met. I have been able to form valuable relationships with these kids and have grown to love them. I know that part of my purpose here on Earth is to work with children; and to share God’s love with them. It is also to work with UYM’s summer camp, as God permits.



End of camp celebration.

## Bardwell Camp

Bardwell Camp:  
Touring  
Mastodon  
Gallery.

Bardwell Camp:  
Enjoying our field trip to  
Lebanon Park.



Bardwell Camp: Science experiment with Mustard and Polka Dot Plants.



Bardwell Camp:  
Sunny and sandy with 75 degrees of fun!

## Celebrate Our Children

Celebrate Our Children:  
Children enjoying the  
competition.



Celebrate Our Children: Children having fun with a clown.



## Walk-A-Mile in My Shoes

“Save the Date”

**Saturday, February 12, 2011 8:30 a.m.**  
Wayside Cross Ministries, Aurora

**We need you and your organization/church** to be part of an exciting adventure in helping those in need. **Can your group’s walkers each raise \$100 or more** to aid hurting youth, children and mothers?

**Wayside Cross Ministries** is planning its fourth annual **winter walk**, one mile in length, to help at-risk youth and the ministry’s transitional living center for homeless women and children.

Walk proceeds will benefit **Lifespring** and **Urban Youth Ministry** of Wayside Cross Ministries.

For more information about **Walk-A-Mile**, call (630)723-3408,  
email [info@waysidecross.org](mailto:info@waysidecross.org) or [sthurman@waysidecross.org](mailto:sthurman@waysidecross.org).

