

# ROCK NEWS

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## President's Note



David P. Walton

With the summer over, I write with a voice of celebration as well as one of challenge.

This summer we ran 36 camps in four states for around a 1000 kids. Of those kids who attended, 42 put their faith in Jesus Christ for the first time. Praise God that we can see a direct impact on the lives of many kids as we are faithful to spread the name of Jesus Christ. Praise God even more, for the work He does in each individual's heart. While we do not always see an immediate impact, we rejoice in knowing that it is God who touches hearts and changes lives. We count it a privilege to be His messengers.

One of our staff members shared the following story of her interaction with one of our young campers. At the end of every day, they closed the camp day in prayer and she would ask if any of them wanted to pray. Many raised their hands and it was such a blessing to hear their prayers each day. About mid-way through the week, one young boy raised his hand to pray and she invited him to come kneel beside her as they all bowed their heads together. After a moment of silence, she heard a small whisper ... "I don't know how." She whispered a few suggestions back to him and he took it from there. For her it was an awesome privilege to teach one of God's little children how to pray to Him, and to show the kids that Almighty God, who made the trees and the grass and controls the rain and sun, is listening to their tiny whispers, their timid pleas, and their humble gratitude.

We were particularly blessed by the camps we ran in the inner cities of Miami, Chicago and Trenton and were thrilled to hear of the 13 kids who made first time decisions for Christ. Most of these kids have no other opportunity to hear the Gospel. One of the coaches in our Miami camp shared how it was well worth the 1000 mile car ride to lead one of the troublemakers on his team to Christ. A pastor shared how thrilled he was to work with a former camper

who was serving as a junior staff member for the first time. A mother wrote to thank us for the scholarship we offered her children. She said her daughter jumped up and down over and over when she found out. I was personally blessed to hear stories of the martial arts camp from the counselors who stayed at our house. They shared about the eight kids who prayed to receive Christ that week. I could go on, but I think you get the idea of how God was working in the lives of our campers.

It was also a busy and hectic summer for us internationally as we sent teams to Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Zambia. Over the last few years we have sent multiple teams to Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic and each trip offers additional opportunities to build credibility for PTR and the local churches we work with. It is amazing how quickly special bonds form when the Lord is involved and when you take the time to invest in people's lives. In a few weeks Chico and I will be traveling to Europe to take the next step in setting up offices in the Czech Republic and Italy for year round ministry.

Bulgaria and Zambia were new ventures for us. The trip to Zambia was especially critical as we also anticipate setting up an office there in a few years. Like many African countries, Zambia has been greatly impacted by AIDS. Several of the schools we went to had a large population of kids who had lost family members, including parents, to AIDS. It was difficult at times for

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## Lehigh Valley Camps

This summer our theme at camp was "Our Greatest Goal." Throughout the week we studied the 10 Commandments with a focus on the greatest commandment, "To love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength," which ought to be our greatest goal.

Nearly 400 kids came to camp throughout the Lehigh Valley and more in other areas such as Chicago, and even as far west as Seattle. We even branched into a new sport and held a Martial Arts camp this year. Whether the camper is four years old and coming to camp for the first time or fourteen years old and returning for his or her tenth year, it is exciting to know that each camper heard the message of Jesus Christ, and the hope of salvation that is found in Him alone. Some responded by putting their faith in Jesus Christ for the first time, while others responded by committing to live their lives in such a way that reflects the "greatest goal" both on and off the playing field.

Praise God that we can see a direct impact on the lives of kids as we are faithful to spread the name of Jesus Christ. Praise God even more, that although we may not see the impact, we can be confident and rejoice in knowing that it is God who touches the heart and changes lives in each individual and He is faithful to carry the work to completion as we move ahead into a new year.



Ann Walker

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our team to listen to their stories, but it did reinforce in several team members' minds their call to Africa and AIDS work. One of the highlights for everyone was spending one evening eating dinner and playing games with 27 kids at a boarding school designed to meet the needs of vulnerable kids and orphans due to AIDS. It never ceases to amaze us how sports are able to transcend language, cultural and religious barriers, but we are both humbled and excited to be intimately involved in what God is doing around the world! As we plan for these future offices we desperately need your prayers as we sort through all of the issues.

We wrapped up our fiscal year at the end of August with a number of financial challenges and need your help. While we had a great summer impacting kids and were able to give out a number of scholarships, overall we are disappointed in the number of campers we had. With many in our communities still recovering from the effects of the recession, we saw a decline in our overall numbers. We rely on our camp fees to cover some of our monthly operating expenses and ended the year with a shortfall. Without additional funds we will need to reduce some of our fall inner city programs. All of these programs are run for underprivileged kids who desperately need our

support. Based on the success of last year's programs we have received requests to expand in this area but may not be able to meet the demand. We will also need to defer technology purchases, which are becoming much more critical as we expand around the world. Over the years we have been blessed to have friends like you who have stepped forward to support our year round ministry, and for that we Praise the Lord! Please prayerfully consider how you can help us meet this critical challenge. As always, we trust the Lord to provide.

Mark Your Calendar!

On Saturday, **November 5th**, we invite you to join us at our annual **Celebration and Fund Raising Banquet** being held at Bethel Church in Emmaus.

Come hear what God is been doing domestically and internationally through Push The Rock. One of our guest speakers will be Nattie Gomez, a Costa Rican, who heads up our office in Costa Rica.

There will be an hors d'oeuvres hour which will feature a great silent auction, full of many great items to bid on.

We would love to have you join us! Why not invite some of your friends and introduce them to Push The Rock as well? Child care will be provided. For more information, check out our website or call the office.

## Greater Philadelphia Camps

This summer we ran 14 camps in 7 different locations within the region. While the communities we worked in varied by location, our purpose did not. That purpose was to share the Good News with kids. I had the opportunity to be present at a majority of our camps on Wednesday when we shared the Gospel. This important task falls either on the camp director or the pastor of the church. What struck me was how God used each of these individuals to share this valuable message in such different, yet very effective, ways. It was very evident that each kid at our camps heard a clear presentation of what it means to follow Christ, and that God was using those presentations to work in their lives.

It is very hard to recap an entire summer of ministry in a few short paragraphs, but I will highlight a few of the particularly exciting things that went on this summer. We

were privileged to establish two new camp partnerships with churches in Limerick, PA and Miami, FL. Both camps went very well and we look forward to continuing to work in these communities. In addition to this, due to the generosity of many of you, we had the opportunity to help a large number of families facing financial difficulty send their children to camp through our scholarship fund. I can assure you those donations were well used, and very much appreciated! Finally, a highlight for me was the opportunity to work with passionate Christ-followers intent on reaching others for His glory. Our staff this year did an excellent job loving kids, which is exactly what we ask of them. None of this could go on without the support structure that so many of you provide and we thank you for that!



Dustin Leatherman

# Everyone Needs Jesus

Two years ago, I met two sisters who came to a camp I was directing. I learned enough about their family to know that they had not come from a Christian background. I spent the week praying for them to come to know Christ through our camp. I had many conversations with them about treating each other kindly and the things that Jesus asks us to do. The girls left our camp without accepting Jesus as their Savior but they continued to cross my mind once in a while. This past summer they came to camp again and I was excited to reach out to them.

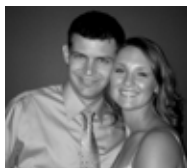
Three years ago a girl came to that same camp. Her background could not have been different than the two sisters. She came from a family that was very involved in the church and she clearly knew a lot about her faith. She not only knew the right answers but she was a role model to the entire camp. She ended up winning the Christian Character Award at

the end of the week. I didn't commit this camper to the Lord like I did the two sisters. This past summer, she attended the camp again.

During the week, I spent time praying for the sisters to experience the Lord through our camp. When the time came for the Gospel message, I anxiously waited for a response. The sisters seemed unaffected but the girl who had won our Christian Character Award three years ago reached out. I thought surely she was recommitting her life to Christ. I was surprised to find out that she was accepting Christ for the first time.

This experience reminded me that everyone needs Jesus, no matter how much it looks like they have it all together. The Lord gently reminded me that only He can see people's hearts and that I should be praying for all of our campers with the same intensity that I prayed for the sisters. Again, I am amazed that in spite of my human weakness, God has plans for each of His children.

Tiffany Landis



## Journey to Push The Rock and Czech Republic

I'm Mike Kauffman and I started full time at Push The Rock on August 1, 2011. My wife, Jayne, and I feel God calling us to use sports ministry to share the Gospel in the Czech Republic. While the journey to this point has been challenging at times, God has shown many signs and blessings along the way.

In 1998, I had the opportunity to go on the first short term trip with Push The Rock to Venezuela. It was a great experience but I did not have a desire to go into full time ministry. In 2006, I had the opportunity to go to East Africa on a short term basketball trip with Push The Rock. Through this experience, God placed a burning desire in my heart to serve full time in a cross cultural setting. Also, this is the trip where Jayne and I met. In 2007 and 2008, I had the opportunity to go to Italy with Push The Rock on short term basketball trips. Through these trips, God impressed on my heart the impact sports has in sharing the Gospel and He gave me a strong desire to be involved in sports ministry full time. Through all of these experiences, I felt God leading me to serve with Push The Rock. Jayne also had the opportunity to go on multiple short term trips with Push The Rock and through those experiences she also sensed God calling her to full time sports ministry overseas. The Lord brought our lives and our passions together in May 2010.

In the spring of 2009, I applied with Push The Rock, was accepted and started the support raising process. This process had its share of ups and downs, but we saw many blessings and experienced God's faithfulness and direction every step of the way. He began to open doors and eventually led us to the Czech Republic. It was amazing to see God confirm in our hearts the call to serve in a place we have never been. With a target date of 2013, we are excited to visit our future home on a vision trip this October.

At Push The Rock, I am serving in the Missions Department, helping prepare and lead our short-term teams that go out. I will also spend plenty of time getting intimately involved in the planning and implementing of all of our other programs. I'm excited to be here at Push Rock and to be involved in the ministry.

In the Czech Republic, we have the opportunity to serve with two organizations, Push The Rock and TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission). We will be part of a church planting team and we will be using sports ministry as a resource for the church.

Our journey is just beginning but we are very grateful to God for what He has done so far and excited to see what He has for us next.

Mike Kauffman



Catch This!

### Christmas Classic Tournament

Dec. 27 & 28, 2011  
At Bethel Bible Fellowship Church  
For 6th, 7th, 8th grade boys \*

### Volleyball Club

Open Gym at Bethel Bible Fellowship Church Oct 9th  
3-5pm and Oct. 23rd  
2-4pm for girls' 12-16 (turning 16 after 9/1) \*

\* Please check out our website for more information on these events.



# Mission Trip Summary

We had a busy year in the Missions department, and that's a good thing! There were eight trips, including three new destinations: Miami, Florida (All-Sports), Zambia, Africa (Soccer) and Bulgaria (Soccer). It was a blessing for us to reach these new locations and we are excited to see what the Lord holds for us in the future there. We are also grateful that we were able to return to some very familiar areas. Costa Rica (Volleyball / Soccer), Italy and Spain (Basketball), and the Czech Republic (Baseball) are all places where we have focused our attention, but more importantly, where we have developed great relationships with people! If you have not read the updates from the individual trips, we would encourage you to do that on our website. They would provide you with a much better

perspective on what happened and how the Lord was at work.

We continue to seek the Lord's wisdom for the future in each of these places, not only as we look to set up offices there, but as we build into lives for eternity. The Lord brought together a great group of individuals from all over the US who have a passion for Him to be a part of our trips. From Florida to Alaska, they each responded to God's call to impact eternities for Him through sports! We did not have as many returning members as we usually have, but that opened the door for many new faces, which was very refreshing. We are grateful that the Lord always provides the right people for the right opportunities. Was it a successful summer? Well, you be the judge ... the Gospel was presented clearly, trip members were encouraged and challenged in their walk with the Lord, some trip members are considering full-time ministry as a result and each of our hosts has invited us back. There



were certainly some challenges along the way, but I think the positives far outweigh them and would create quite an extensive list if all were to be put here. We praise the Lord for allowing us to be a part of His work around the world this summer! We also want to thank YOU for praying for and financially supporting our teams! Please keep us in your prayers as we plan for 2012 and beyond, that as we make our plans, the Lord would indeed direct our steps.



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