



Merry Christmas 
From the Staff at Streets Ministries

Streets Ministries would like to thank Danka Office Imaging for their printing services.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MEMPHIS, TN
PERMIT NO. 1872

STREETS MINISTRIES
769 Vance Avenue
Memphis, TN 38126

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Luke 4:18-19

Do You Believe in Miracles?

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

Last night my family and I were preparing to decorate our tree. While surfing the channels for a Christmas movie we found exactly what we weren't looking for, but it was the perfect movie for this occasion. The Bennetts watched as the 1980 Olympic team skated to victory and shocked the world, while Al Michaels asked the pivotal question, "Do you believe in Miracles?"

"For nothing is impossible with God." These were the words the angel used as he explained the virgin birth to Mary. Although scared, Mary embraced the fact that God is a God of miracles. Mary's response was almost matter of fact, as she told the angel that she was the Lord's servant and that she would accept this responsibility without reservation.

While in the middle of decorating our tree, the phone rang. It was Torey and J-Man from the penitentiary. Torey is an "original STREETS kid" doing his third round of time for robbery. J-Man is serving time for involuntary manslaughter after a ten year old was caught in his crossfire four years ago. Both men are in prison until at least 2008. They no longer sound like kids but men who have experienced the harshest realities of life, but still cling to the hope of the Cross. We spent the early part of the conversation speaking to fears, and the latter part addressing their relationship to Jesus Christ. I hung up the phone and was mildly depressed as I entered the living room to continue our family time. As I watched my family laugh and play, emotion overcame me. How could Torey and J-Man ever make it? Home life for them was never stable, and when the time comes for them to reenter the mainstream, how will they survive? In order not to ruin my family's time, I took a deep breath and said, *"For nothing is impossible with God."* As I said those words, my eyes fell to the back of my son Matthew's shirt. It was the 2001 BTW State Championship t-shirt with J-Man's name on the back alongside the other players on that storied team. For some reason, that gave me comfort as I thought back to happier days for J-Man and Torey.

For most of us, this Christmas season will not be radically different from those before it. It will be a time for celebration with friends and family and will be just as fun and exciting as the last. But for many, the holiday season is a reminder of lost loved ones, financial ills, fractured relationships and a desire for this year to pass in hopes of 2006 being better while not really believing that hope is a part of their future!

My prayer for J-Man, Torey, Ken Bennett and countless others is that we will learn to believe in miracles! As we enter this season, let us embrace the words of the angel as he spoke to a scared but faithful Mary, *"For nothing is impossible with God."*

I pray you have a life-changing holiday season as you celebrate the coming of the Christ child.

Your Brother in Christ,
Ken



Ken Bennett
Executive Director

Carmen Coleman
Education Coordinator

John Cowherd
Middle School Coordinator

Jenny Fratesi
Education Specialist

Grace Halliday
Education Specialist

Delvin Lane
High School Coordinator

Rob Thompson
Director of Development

Richard Vining
Communications and
Operations Manager

Joyce Wilfong
Administrative Assistant



STREETS MINISTRIES
(901) 525-7380
www.streetsministries.org



Club Food 101: The 3 W's, 2 D's and an H

One of Streets more popular volunteer opportunities involves bringing snacks on middle and high school "Club" nights. In many aspects, it is the best way to become acquainted with the way Streets ministers to the kids in the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community. However, volunteering to bring snacks for what can amount to being over 100 kids can be intimidating. So, the purpose of this article is to better explain the whole Club Food volunteer experience in hopes of alleviating some of the concerns you may have about it.

What: The most common question people have about bringing food on "Club" nights involves what types of food to bring. Since it is typically safe to assume that around 100 kids will show up, items such as brownies, nachos, pizza, chicken and cookies are always a hit. However, anyone who wishes to go for that all-out chili dinner is more than welcome to give it a try. It really is up to you. However, if whatever you bring requires more than fingers to eat, we ask that you provide the necessary utensils.

For a quick and easy solution, the Chik-fil-A at Poplar and Mendenhall offers a 20% discount off their chicken nugget trays if you tell them it is for Streets. Just ask for Scott Malone or one of the other managers for details.

To wash it all down, we ask that you bring single serve drinks that do not require the use of any cups or ice to be enjoyed. Some of our kids favorites are the fruit flavored

Kroger brand drinks like grape and orange. The endless number of Mountain Dew and Sprite variations currently available are also a hit, so feel free to mix and match if you like.

Where: Club is hosted in the Streets Rec Room located at 769 Vance Avenue in an area of South Memphis best described as being between Midtown and Downtown. Located on the South side of the street, we are West of MIFA (just past the R&R tracks) and East of Danny Thomas. If for some reason you are more confused now than before you asked, please Richard at richard@streetsministries.org and he can email you a map.

When: With a few exceptions here and there, High School Club meets on Mondays from 7:00-8:30 and Middle School Club meets on Thursdays from 5:00-6:30 during the school year. When you come, please try to arrive approximately 15 minutes early if at all possible. And if you have the time, we invite you and your family to stay for "Club" and experience firsthand what it is that God is doing for the children living here in the third poorest urban zip code in the United States.

Do's and Don'ts: After 19 years of "Club", we've discovered some trade secrets that we would like to pass along to you as you plan your menu.

- With the exception of a small microwave, we do not have a warming stove or any cooking equipment, so if at all possible, leave the crepes at home.
- Our kids, like most teenagers, will eat just about anything, so it is ok to try and be creative with your snacks. However, whether it is the taste buds or just a mess to clean up, we have found that some foods work better than others. So, please EXCLUDE the following items from your list: pretzels, trail mix, gold fish (the crackers, obviously), cheez-its, popcorn, fig newtons, twizzlers, diet drinks, M&M's, Skittles and any other bite size hard candy that can potentially kill a vacuum.

How: If all that didn't scare you off and you would like to become a part of rewarding volunteer opportunity next semester, please contact Rob at rob@streetsministries.org so that he may have the privilege of scheduling a "Club" date for you.



Middle School girls enjoying a box of pizza at "Club".

College Fair: Carmen Coleman

On November 10th, Streets, along with Girls Incorporated, hosted a college fair for approximately 500 tenth through twelfth grade students from all over the Mid-South at Booker T. Washington High School. There, recruiters from over twenty different colleges and universities presented students with information about their various institutions and painted a picture of what life on a college campus can be like. In turn, students were able to ask the recruiters questions about academic requirements, scholarship offers and, of course, Greek life. In fact, some seniors, like Streets kids and BTW seniors Camilla and Cleo, found what they feel is going to be their home for the next four years. Camilla applied to Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas and Cleo applied to Crichton College here in Memphis, TN. In all, it was an extremely valuable experience for everyone in attendance.



Streets kids Jasmine and Timothy fill out some paperwork at The University of Tennessee at Martin booth.

Year End: Giving Idea

Making a year end contribution to the United Way? If so, please consider designating your gift to Streets. In years past, we have given out a code for you to use, but this year all you have to do is write "Streets Ministries on Vance" on the card. Be sure to include the part about Vance as there are other organizations that include the words "street" and "ministry" in their name. If you have any further questions, please contact Rob at rob@streetsministries.org.



Jan and Roderickus at the Read To Succeed party last year.

Volunteer Spotlight: Jan Vining

A large portion of what Streets has to offer the kids who walk through our doors is carried on the backs of its volunteers. So this month we would like to turn what is usually the "staff spotlight" portion of the newsletter onto one of our super volunteers - Jan Vining.

Jan is an extremely dedicated volunteer who is helping us to organize and run our newest elementary program, Ready Readers. With a Bachelors degree from Samford in Early Childhood Development and Elementary Education, and a Masters in Special Education from Vanderbilt, Jan brings to Streets an immense amount of wisdom to our educational programs. Currently a teaching specialist at St. George's School, Jan has designed and help implement the new curriculum for the Ready Readers program. Scheduled for launch this January, Ready Readers has already received high praises from the teachers and administrators at Georgia Avenue Elementary school.

Having come to Streets last year by way of the Read to Succeed program, Jan became an instant role model for Roderickus, her student. She has a big heart for the children here, and a gift for helping them learn new skills. Streets is pleased to have such a gifted volunteer helping us to better the lives of the children in this community.