

## Volunteers Needed: by Mary-Wilkes Harris

As summer quickly approaches, we are on the lookout for volunteers to come to Streets in order to help us lead our "Sieve the Summer" Vacation Bible School. Designed for K-5th grade students, "Sieve the Summer" will run Monday through Friday from 9:00 until noon for two weeks during the month of June. We are currently looking for high school aged-students or older to help with leading crafts and activity time, as well as assisting with Bible lessons and story time.

Please join us in this energetic and exciting time of sharing the gospel with elementary students in the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community. If you or your group are interested in participating or would like to learn more, please contact Mary-Wilkes Harris at (901) 525-7380 x208 or at [MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org](mailto:MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org).



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Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Psalms 82:3-4

## STREETS - BETWEEN THE LINES

APRIL 2007

### The Sheep Who Didn't Go Far from the Fold

By Delvin Lane

Growing up in the inner-city usually means you are poor, academically challenged, socially deprived, a public nuisance, and a list of other negative connotations. Depending on the circumstance, some of these stereotypes are suitable, but not in the case of a young man named Steve.

Steve is a kid who, through some miraculous way, stands apart from the ordinary "Joe" that usually gets in trouble. His mother had thirteen children with him being the fourth youngest. He came from a family that was involved with prostitution, drug-dealing, gang-banging and many other unlawful activities. On one occasion in the Cleaborn Homes housing project, one of his older brothers was murdered over a piece of jewelry. Steve was a young boy when this awful event took place, and it caused him to become confused. Living with his grandparents at the time, all Steve had ever experienced up to that point were feelings of love. Yet while he was living this decent and innocent life, other members of his family continued to struggle. Another brother of his was shot and paralyzed in front of a neighborhood corner store and is now serving a stiff prison sentence for the murder of a man in a neighborhood nightclub. Still another brother struggles with dealing with life in the streets and is constantly getting involved in gang activity and drug dealing. He too is now serving prison time. Steve's older sister is the mother of six and is a high school dropout like most of his siblings. Furthermore, his mother recently died from living a rough life in the streets. So with all of this in mind, how could a kid like Steve be All-Metro for two consecutive years in football, All-Metro three consecutive years in track and field, State of Tennessee Track and Field Athlete of the Year runner-up in 2006, Division 2A Football Outstanding Player of the Year, Outstanding 2A Athlete of the Year in track for 2006, one of Tennessee's top recruits in both track and football, and a scholar athlete at Booker T. Washington High School? The explanation is pretty simple, Jesus Christ.

Steve began his spiritual quest early in life when he was forced to go to church as a young boy. The mandatory church attendance became a little less mandatory feeling when Steve found himself falling in love with hearing God's word. Although his siblings grew up in the Foote Homes community, one of Memphis roughest inner-city housing projects, Steve had the pleasure of living with his grandparents who stressed to him the value of knowing and loving the Lord along with understanding the importance of getting an education. Most kids in the inner-city try to dodge violence and crime by getting involved in extracurricular activities. This is how Steve became so physically fit. He started running and playing sports early; thus, giving himself a physical advantage over most other kids his age. Steve was not satisfied with just being physically fit however, as he pursued being spiritually fit as well.

One of Steve's favorite verses is Philippians 4:13 - "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Steve uses this verse to perform in every aspect in life. He started coming to Streets Ministries as a six grader, and was always at "Club" and bible study. His grandparents, Earnestine Clemons and Willie Brooks, were the earthly vessels who God used to keep him on the right track. They even became Steve's legal guardians when he was just two days old. As a result of this Christian influence, attending church at First Baptist became a part of Steve's regular routine. They also encouraged him to come to Streets Ministries and followed up with the Streets staff members to make sure he was with us.

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## Sheep from the Fold: continued

Steve gave his life to Christ at thirteen, and he did not allow himself to get caught up in the fast way of life that his siblings and many of his friends did. To date, he has remained consistent in his studies and is headed toward high school graduation, college, and a successful career as a Christian leader.

Years ago, I had the privilege of coaching Steve while at Vance Middle School. From the beginning, it was apparent he was much more developed than the other kids and that he really had a good work ethic. This mentality carried over to high school where I continued to be involved as a coach. As a middle school kid, Steve participated in our various activities here at Streets. John Cowherd, our Middle School Coordinator, played a vital role in Steve's life during that time. John lived three doors down from Steve at the time and he always opened his home up to Steve. They shared time playing video games, having bible studies, and simply hanging out together.

Steve matured over the years, and now as a senior headed towards great things in life. He is devoted to serving Jesus and serving others. Having had Steve in my discipleship group means a lot to me personally because I grew up with his family and have had the chance to see him develop into a productive Christ loving young man. Dealing daily with things that should have destroyed him only gave him the desire to commit his life to God and lean on Him for



Steve, second from left, with John and some of his Vance Middle School basketball teammates.

divine intervention. God's purpose for Steve has been made clear, and that purpose is to serve the Lord and make a difference in the lives of kids in the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community. The ministries here at Streets have served in this capacity for over twenty years now because of God's faithfulness. Please continue to pray for Steve and the ministries here at Streets. Lives are being changed and, as you see in Steve's life, not all sheep go far from the fold!

*Delvin Lane is the Ministry Director at Streets Ministries.*



Steve and Anttoninesha at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Atlanta during "College Tours" in 2006.



Steve attends to some of his duties as "Mr. BTW" during his senior year.

## College Tours: by Andreaana Brown

Each stage in life sets us on a new journey or path. For those who are planners, and are preparing for a trip, we buy a map, chart our course and make sure there is enough air in the tires as so to get optimum gas mileage. Then there are those who are free spirits and just go wherever the path leads. They pack the night before and often times forget to bring a toothbrush along for the journey. There are positives and negatives to both approaches.

While most of our students have a very tangible journey after high school; "I want to go to college," many of them do not have a road map on how to get there.

The education staff here at Streets works hard to fill in the details on the map from high school to college. This is why Streets' "College Tours" program each Spring Break is so important. During this time, our students not only see the road, but all the road signs along the way. And when they see students, much like themselves, who have made the journey successfully on each campus, the path becomes much more clear.

So on March 12th, Streets piled twenty-six bright Booker T. Washington High School sophomores and juniors onto a bus to make a trek through Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. Initially, several students saw the journey as a four day vacation, with each evening being filled with activities such as laser tag, shopping, movies and eating



The "College Tours 2007" class in front of the W.E.B. DuBois memorial at Fisk University in Nashville, TN.

out. After the first stop, however, the students were shocked into the true purpose of any college campus visit. Armed with a folder full of questions and an open mind, they toured Union University, Lane College, Tennessee State University, Fisk University, Middle Tennessee State University, Morehouse College, Spelman College, Clark Atlanta University, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Before the end of our journey, students were speaking with assurance on the college they wanted to attend. They were using discernment in their choices and asking critical questions of campus guides. The realization that after a mere four days our students had marked the coordinates for their next destination after high school; they were no longer just going along for the ride but were actively seeking a route to success. What a change from when they first stepped on the bus to their final exit. As a result, many of these young adults will be first generation college graduates - a huge accomplishment.

My hope is that God will continue to use Streets as one avenue in our kids' journeys. Ultimately, I pray they all turn into free spirits, close their eyes, and let God lead the way. Thank you to all who helped make this 2007 edition of College Tours possible!



Candice, Chandy and Jasmine at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Atlanta.

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## What We've Been Up To

- January 27th, **Second Presbyterian Church** Crossroad's Class hosted an "Elementary Explosion". Over 100 students from the community participated in songs, crafts, and games before eating lunch and hearing a gospel message.
- Both middle and high school "Club" hosted a banquet style Valentine's dance. Students dressed up in their finest and enjoyed a full buffet, decorations, and a festive background for photos in the Rec Room.
- On February 24th, over 20 students from Booker T. Washington met with **Crichton College** students, teachers, and an admissions counselor as part of High School Appreciation Day.



Starkiesha poses for a photo during the Valentine's dance.

- February 28th, the **IPC Women of the Church** sponsored a "National Dental Awareness Month" event on the campus of Georgia Avenue Elementary. Skits by the Tooth Fairy and the Cavity Bug brought attention to the importance of good dental hygiene to the attentive group of 3rd-5th grade students.
- Also on February 28th, several Vance Middle School students made a field trip to the Memphis Central Library where they participated in a scavenger hunt that taught them how to locate books. And while the trip was educational and a great deal of fun, it is important to note that the students behaved so well librarians on duty complemented them!
- On March 6th, a group of Street Smart students went on a field trip to Borders book store. Thanks to the **First Books Grant Program**, each child was given \$25 to spend on a new book from the children's section.
- Carmen, Jenny, and Miriam took a dozen students to a production of Disney's "High School Musical" at the Desoto County Civic Center as a part of a special girl's night out.



The "Cavity Bug" shares some wisdom with a few Georgia Avenue Elementary students.

- This past semester, Pathways students have been able to enjoy a healthy after school snack thanks to **SouthernSun Asset Management's** donation of a mini-fridge and weekly snacks.
- On March 6th, the **Crichton Comets** won the TranSouth Conference tournament with a thrilling victory over Union University here at Streets.
- March 20th, a group from **Cornell University** in Ithaca, New York made the trek to Streets for a Spring Break service project. The group of twenty students listened to Delvin share his testimony and took a tour of the neighborhood before giving the Streets Center a deep cleaning.



## What's Coming Up

- Delvin will be speaking to members of the **East Memphis Rotary Club** on April 4th.
- April 4th, a group of 3rd grade students from **ECS Ridgeland** will be taking a tour and providing some tasty snacks for the Rec Room.
- On April 7th, Streets will be hosting another Elementary Honors Day for Georgia Avenue 1st-5th graders. During this time, students will sing songs, play games, and eat a picnic style lunch. It is a great way to reward these students for all their hard work.
- The youth group from **Christ Presbyterian Church** in Oxford, MS will be participating in a "38126 Day" short-term missions trip on April 21st. As a part of the experience,



Valerie, from Samford University's RUF, gives Alexandria a piggyback ride during the March Elementary Explosion



Members of the ECS junior class clean a few windows as a part of a school wide service day.

the group will run an "Elementary Explosion" VBS for students in the neighborhood. If you or your group would like to find out more about how to have your own "38126" mission project, please contact [MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org](mailto:MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org).

- Members of **Second Presbyterian Church** will be moving into the Streets Center from May 4th-6th as part of an "Urban Emphasis" weekend.
- Applications have been distributed and student interviews are set to begin this May for the 2007 edition of Streets Summer Institute.
- Beginning June 4th, Andreana and Carmen will be hosting a Jane Ross ACT workshop for rising sophomore and junior Booker T. Washington students.
- Booker T. Washington High School graduation services will be held at **Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church** on May 21st.
- Last semester was a record one for Streets in terms of attendance as even more kids than we originally anticipated participated in our educational, mentoring and athletic programming. Plenty of key volunteer opportunities still remain, so if you are interested please contact [MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org](mailto:MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org).