

September-October '07

# AC3 INVESTIGATOR

## GETTIN' YOUR BELL RUNG



### AC3 Sports

- **Volleyball at the Tallmadge's Sundays @2 o'clock**
- **Flag football starting soon, contact Nate Crain 425-328-0004**



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Ever had a moment when an idea sweeps over you with such power that you think it might just change your whole outlook? Ding! Your bell gets rung. You have an epiphany. It seems like those were being handed out like candy amongst our senior staff, key leaders and volunteers this August during the Pause. The Willow Leadership Summit and Vision-cast both teamed up to ring my bell. Much of this is still in the "distillation phase" – that period of time required for an idea or insight to settle into a potent plan of action – but I thot even at this raw stage we all would be served by a review of a few of the "BIG IDEAS" to hit our church in the last 30 days.

**LEADERSHIP EVALUATION.** *David Epperson, Communications Director.* Dave came away from the Summit realizing that leadership must bravely call out the current reality of an organization, and courageously evaluate all aspects of what that organization does to see if it's hitting the mark. Have we defined our goals? What's our unique contribution as a church? What's our strategy for success? How do we create alignment with everyone toward that end? Good data is a key to evaluate our starting point. Key question: Where are we?

**FOCUS ON WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT.** *Twila Crain, KK Director.* Twila's bell got rung when a speaker challenged leaders to stop spending so much time trying to shore up weaknesses and start focusing harder on what they do well. The bang for your buck is much higher investing in the latter. Twila's 'ah ha' moment came when she realized it was less effective trying to shore up weaknesses in creative programming for elementary kids when we already did that well in our Connection services. She started looking at ways to capitalize on that and to stop reinventing the wheel. Another mini- bell that got rung was realizing that if our church all learns ONE BIG IDEA from age 0 on up, the take home value will increase greatly.

**OPTIMISM IS A FORCE MULTIPLIER.** *Johnna Thiessen, Program Director.* Johnna was hit by the idea that optimism takes normal service/energy and enhances it. The big "ah ha" for her was when two concepts melded together: optimism and getting rid of de-motivators. It's easy to focus on the negatives in ministry, but the reality is everyone thrives in an environment where they are pulling along like-minded people who are all excited to be doing what God's called them to do. Johnna

realized that ministry is a drudgery only when we let de-motivators creep in, things like unclear expectations, or not having anyone speak your "motivation language". What do you need to stay energized? Thanks, notes, time off, gifts, encouragement, relationship? When we're motivated, everyone feels anything can be done and that's powerful and electric.

**CHURCH ACTIVITY IS NO INDICATOR OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH.** *Dan Hazen, Pastor of Discipleship.* Dan's bell got rung when he realized that in study of church after church, it was found that increased activity in church had no correlation to how much a person was maturing spiritually. Church busyness did not directly correlate to the increase in our three Loves, Loving God, Loving the Church, Loving the Lost. However, what DID correlate to increased spiritual maturity was closeness of relationship to Jesus Christ. Which meant that a key job as church leaders must be to teach margins which free us from mere activity so we can focus on where our true power for life change comes from: living in Christ.

**Continued on back page**



Upcoming topics for our Connection series are sure to be fun and will put some Christianity myths to rest!



Youth spend a week during the Pause @ Camp Epoch

## Upcoming series

### SEPTEMBER 2007

We'll be using the current rash of "3" movies released this summer as fodder for us to spoof them adding our own themes. For the first 3 weeks, we will take recent blockbusters and redo them with our own AC3 plots. Week 4 we will turn the history & future move of AC3 into its own epic adventure.

#### Sept 8-9 Shrek 3

##### Theme: Popularity

Our Plot: Because Shrek is now so popular in far, far away, Fiona starts to feel insecure and accepts a special beauty enhancer from a stranger promising her it will bring her popularity. Instead the item robs her of her inner beauty and Shrek and donkey head out on a quest to reclaim it from the mysterious stranger.

#### Sept 15-16

#### Pirates of the Caribbean 3

##### Theme: Priorities

Our Plot: The crew is excited to be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> movie for all the treasures it will bring them (royalties, fame, Hollywood clout and other movie opportunities) but Jack, having spent some time at the end of the world not longer feels like these things are important. His priorities have changed and he isn't interested in being in the 3<sup>rd</sup> movie and makes it hard for the others because he won't play along.

#### Sept 22-23

#### Spiderman 3

##### Theme: Power

Plot: When another superhero transfers his powers to Peter for safe keeping, Peter gets enamored with having all the powers and begins collecting them from all the other superheroes (by persuasion, stealing, force, etc). Unfortunately, since the powers require putting on all the costume items, the more he collects, the longer it takes him to get ready and then more incumbered he is as he tries to use them. Eventually he fails to save someone close to him because

he's too weighed down by all that comes with the power.

#### Sept 29-30

#### AC "13"

##### Theme: Purpose

Plot: Done like a mockumentary (think Best in Show) we will look at AC3's move to its next building and reminisce about all the steps we took to get us to this phase. Mock interview with famous AC3 characters as if they were attendees as well as a look back at key moments and elements from the past that have made us who we are today (like people's ever changing hair styles) will help us as we lay out the plot of AC3's purpose and mission.

### OCTOBER 2007

Using Myth Busters as our theme, we'll be on a quest to find out if modern American Christianity is suffering from superstition. Are we entering a dark age of accepting old wives tales and half truths? Our Myth Busters team is sure to help us find

## RYM Youth @ Camp Epoch

At the Beginning of August, I had the privilege to take 5 of our RESTORED youth to a summer camp lead by another local church. I wasn't sure what God was going to do in the hearts of these 5 students but I knew that I was excited to watch them grow

and change. Which they did! God showed them each His love for them in a fresh way. I watched them be stand offish at the beginning of the week with the new people to at the end of the week praying for other kids and really getting to know the other group.

We had a great time playing games and enjoying each other company. To read more about their camping experience and to view upcoming youth events go to [www.ac3.org/KKY\\_News/y\\_current.htm](http://www.ac3.org/KKY_News/y_current.htm).  
Jenn Bartlett

**Born where and when:**

Colorado Springs, Co-5/8/60

**Family stats:**

Married for 30 years, two grown boys (21 & 27) and one great daughter-in-law

**How I became a Christian:**

Since I was raised in a Christian home, I realized at a very young age that I was in big trouble if I had to be 'good' enough to go to heaven. So at age five, I accepted Christ as my Savior. Today I try to make 'good' lifestyle choices, not to go to heaven but because I love and want to serve the God who first loved me.

**Spiritual gifts:**

Leadership, Encouragement, Helps

**Education:**

High School

**How I landed at AC3:**

My sister-in-law was looking for a church to attend and we didn't want her to feel alone. Our church was too far away for her to attend regularly. So on a recommendation of an AC3 friend, we visited AC3 with her while AC3 was meeting at Cedarcrest. Our boys loved AC3...so here we are!

**FAVORITES:**

**Music:**

John Waller, a new Christian Writer/Singer (music & links)

<http://www.reunionrecords.com/johnwaller/>

**Movie:**

I'm not a big movie goer but I'm open to suggestions.

**Restaurant:**

Hunan Palace - The best lunch

**Say Hi to...**



Twila Crain has been married to her husband Tracy for a whopping 30 years. They have two children, Nate and Brandon. Nate is married to Amanda (daughter of Mark and Debbie Holland). Twila loves the fact that she was born in the mid-west and instilled with mid-western values that have served her well here in Washington. She definitely has a "buck the system" streak in her and that trait fits well here at AC3.

Twila has over twenty years of children's and youth ministry experience and is the Director of our 0-18 year old programs at AC3. She is doing a fantastic job of innovating new ways of keeping the Gospel fresh and alive for the youth.

Twila loves exercising with her friends and just completed her second triathlon with her group "Sole Sisters" this year during the "Pause". She is an active participant in the marriage group "Fit to be Tied" and a women's Bible study group "TGIF" and would love it if you would join her or stop her and ask about these groups that she is so passionate about.

Either way, next time you see her, stop and say, "Hi".

and dinner special around!

**Food:**

Chocolate and specialty coffee drinks

**Cartoon Character:**

Pluto

**Place:**

Camping on the beach at Lake Roosevelt

**Book of the Bible:**

Philippians

**Book I am currently reading:**

"The Truth War" and "The Last Christian Generation"

**One thing I can't stand:**

Someone asking me what I can't stand!

**How I spend my free time:**

Running or biking with friends

**Most embarrassing moment:**

I can't share that!!!!!!

**Best childhood memory:**

Fishing with my dad

**Best gift ever received:**

A surprise trip to Mexico for our 10 year anniversary

**I would love to meet:**

Billy Graham

**If I could do life over:**

I wouldn't have been such a handful for my parents.

**I would describe my faith as:**

Searching

**I would appreciate prayer for:**

Direction and strength

**What I would say to the people of AC3:**

We only live this life once. So make Kingdom choices and choose to be a blessing for



**Sole Sisters Tri in August**

A group of nine AC3 women and their friends competed in the Danskin triathlon on August 19th.

They trained hard throughout the year to swim 1/2 mile, bike 12.4 and run 3.1 miles. On race day, the skies opened up and poured down rain but it didn't dampen the Sole Sisters spirits too much. They considered it just one more memorable event to put in their memory banks.

If you would like to train with them for different events throughout the year including a few fun runs around the area, contact Becky Epperson @360-652-3139 to get on the Sole Sister email list. Race results @ [www.ac3.org/sports.htm](http://www.ac3.org/sports.htm)





## Mom's Doing Life

Together group has

changed days to

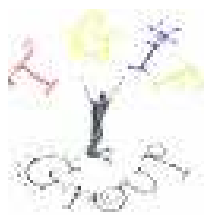
'every other'

Wednesday

beginning September

19th, same time

9:30 to 11:30AM.



TGIF, a women's

group has started a

new DVD driven

curriculum called the

Old Testament Survey.

The series helps us see

Christ all the way

through the Bible.

Fridays @ AC3

9:30 to 11:30AM.

## Geezer's Corner

We ain't a bunch of dummies you know, we have all pushed that button on the remote control that says PAUSE and we know what happens. The show stops. And, it waits until we push it again before it starts again. In the meantime we go fill up our glass or snack bowl or visit the powder room or feign interest in mowing the grass or use the two hand high pressure garbage compaction method to avert any reasonable expectation that it needs to be emptied immediately.

To PAUSE affords the opportunity to catch our breath, relax, re-energize, and re-charge our batteries, to gently re-assess the spiritual rhythm of our life and fine tune how we love God, love the church, and love the lost.

**NOT!** Pile into the car, run to Bellingham three mornings in a row for the leadership conference. The high quality of speakers was actually surpassed

by what they had to say. Scary good!!! It's Ok, I'm on Pause. Phew!

Off to Jubilee to watch and participate in the new "Marysville Church" and help man the AC3 booth. What a privilege to be surrounded by so many beautiful, bright, devoted young AC3ers. It's OK, I'm on Pause. Big Sigh.

Off to prayer team retreat where we are now asking questions like, "How come prayer team is the best kept secret at AC3?" Bold honesty is charting new courses and functions for prayer team. It's OK, I'm on Pause. Huffing and Puffing.

Mow the grass at church, regular weekly trips to Arlington for our distribution center and complete our barbeque dinner for Master's Feast. It's OK, I'm on Pause. Hurried, deep breathing. I can't wait for Vision Cast. I'll catch my breath there.

"Tap, tap, tap." "Yes, Lord." "A Special assignment Larry for you and DeeDee, no Vision Cast for you this year." "Yes, Lord." An exhaustive team effort and major assist by Dan completes the Lord's special assignment right after Vision Cast. It's OK, I am on Pause.

If ever there was a misnomer it is the "Pause for the Cause" I am uncertain if the Pause is a "Sprint thru August" or the "August Marathon" I am reminded of the famous response of Jim Mora, professional football coach when asked about his teams stumbling chance of getting into the post season playoffs, "Playoffs! Playoffs? Don't talk to me about Playoffs!" Your football savvy partner can provide all the correct intonations just substitute the word Pause for the word playoffs.

Love, Geezer (Larry) Fish



### Time OUT for Parents

AC3's parenting classes are set to start this fall Oct. 5th, running four Fridays 6-9 PM. If you would like to attend or help 'behind the scenes' as a way to serve families in our community, contact Jenny Arlt @ 425-397-6653 or [parenting@ac3.org](mailto:parenting@ac3.org).

## Quest

If you've been around AC3 for any length of time, you've probably heard someone talk about QUEST. Maybe you've even wandered past the QUEST Center in the Lobby and thought, what IS this QUEST thing all about?

Well read on!

Simply put, QUEST is the name we have placed on a comprehensive series of group experiences designed to help the participants move from where ever they may be in their spiritual journey - onward, into deeper understanding, life change and finally, full devotion to Jesus Christ.

More simply, QUEST is the process we have created to help everyone at AC3 make the next step in their spiritual lives.

Most simply, it's the QUEST for life.

QUEST is for those who are:

- investigating Christianity
- are new to the faith or have a lot of questions
- want to deepen their faith walk with Christ

QUEST as a program, looks like this: three separate groups which are independent from one another, but are designed to interconnect like the stages of a rocket. The three groups are:

INVESTIGATIONS This 7 week group is designed around YOUR questions about faith. "Why should I trust the Bible?" "What about evolution?" "How come God let's bad things happen to good peo-

ple?" These are all great questions and they deserve great answers. The environment is open, friendly and geared for discussion, not lecture. There are no dumb questions.

Whether you're skeptical about Christianity or you feel like there are just a few "road blocks" in the way, INVESTIGATIONS will launch again in **October 2007**.

The second stage of QUEST EXPLORATION is FOUNDATIONS This group meets every week to fill in all the gaps in what Christianity is all about. Over 12 weeks, you'll learn everything you ever wanted to know about the Christian faith. "How can Jesus and God the Father be the same, but still different?" "How are Christians supposed to behave...for REAL?" "What does God expect me to do with my money?" "How does forgiveness work?" The basic tenants of the Christian faith are explored in a comfortable and fun setting with a group of folks who are on the same journey you are!

And finally, stage three coming in 2008: APPLICATIONS Aptly named because this is the place where all your newfound knowledge gets APPLIED. Learn how to read and study the Bible for yourself, learn about rich and life changing prayer, and begin to live out the promises of God with a group of friends.

APPLICATIONS is the longest group, lasting 22 weeks, but it is within Applications that

AC3's four, premier electives take place. Anyone can attend our QUEST electives, but APPLICATIONS members benefit from having their group curriculum blend in with four, one day classes, specifically created to give the participant comprehensive training in HOW TO live like a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Classes include:

### CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN COMING 2008!

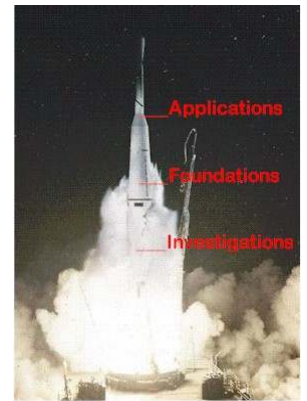
Learn how to make a lasting difference in the lives of those around you by sharing your faith. Most people are uncomfortable with the word EVANGELISM. It reminds us of street corner shouting, door to door sales and really bad hair pieces! None of that has to be part of sharing your faith. Learn about your own personal style, and how you can make a difference in the lives of those around you without compromising who you are.

### AC3 MISSION COMING

**Oct. 3rd!** Learn about the vision, mission and purpose of AC3. This class is also required in order to become a member of Allen Creek. Learn why AC3 does what it does, what things are important to us, and what we believe. A fun, interactive event that provides a "peek under the hood" of what goes on around Allen Creek.

Watch the next edition of CSI for information about the other QUEST Electives: NETWORK and LIFE on PURPOSE.

Continued on back page....



*"QUEST is the process we have created to help everyone at AC3 make the next step in their spiritual lives."*



## Gettin' Your bell Rung continued...

**ONLY DO WHAT ONLY YOU SHOULD DO.** Julie LaMascus, Administrative Assistant. This was an eye opener for Julie. A leader wants excellence in everything and often the quickest way to that is to do everything yourself. High capacity leaders would rather carry it all themselves than let the ball drop. But this leads to long term frustration and others wind up underutilized. Julie had her bell rung on the issue of taking too much responsibility and was reminded how freeing and right it is to trust the players who play with you to handle their job. It's tough to let go, there's a risk and people may fail, but that's how they learn and how everyone stays sane over the long haul.

**MATURE BELIEVERS ARE LEAST SATISFIED WITH CHURCH.** This was my big "ah ha" moment – an extension of Dan's insight. I started to put it together with an observation we've had for a while: the tendency for our people as they move from seeker to fully devoted follower, to become less and less happy with AC3. The common accusation is that this is because AC3 is obsessed with reaching seekers and doesn't have time for believers. We always resisted that attack knowing how untrue it was, but suddenly I felt not alone when Willow rolled out a study called "REVEAL". It showed churches in Amer-

ica, across the spectrum, all suffer with the same problem of believers not feeling "fed". The problem was primarily one of expectation: believers expecting the church to do all the work of growing them up.

So three initial takeaways taken straight from the "Reveal" survey:

1. Our message has to change, from: we can do all the work for you, to: what the church has to offer will never be sufficient spiritual nutrition for your survival, let alone growth. Our people need to learn to feed themselves through personal spiritual practices.
2. We need to allow for individual growth plans. For example, while spiritual community is a need for all believers, the new believer is served best by a small groups, but maturing believers need more intimate spiritual partnerships, mentoring relationships and one on one accountability.

We need to extend the impact of our weekend services. While the study shows they meet the need of seekers and new believers really well, others need a chance to take teaching beyond service times. Ideas for how to do that: providing study questions, follow-up materials for small group, Biblical study aids, pages with outlines for taking notes on messages etc.

## Ask the AC3 Answer Man

*Q. What is all this new and exciting stuff I hear about going on in Kreek Kids?*

*A. After doing some investigating, there isn't near enough room to answer your question fully here. So I will share a few highlights and then you can go to [http://www.ac3.org/kk\\_inside\\_track/spotlight.htm](http://www.ac3.org/kk_inside_track/spotlight.htm) for the rest of the buzz!*

- *Welcome NEW Preschool Director & Teaching Team - Janet & Fain Randall to Kreek Kids*
- *Kreek Kids Wall Mural Created by Lana Dowell*
- *LIVE video feed for K-5*

These and other insights will affect real change in the coming weeks and months.

Question... when was the last time you had your bell rung? I suggest that it is YOUR responsibility to put yourself in position to have that happen – like at a retreat, seminar, special class, or activity. The Bible says, "never be lacking in zeal." Rom 12:11. So how are you at "zeal management"? It's time perhaps to lead yourself into places where you can get your bell rung and get some fresh winds of inspiration in your life!

Love, Rick



**New Preschool Wall Mural Created by Lana Dowell**



**Thank you Lana!**

## Quest continued

Can't imagine fitting a 22 week APPLICATIONS session into your schedule? Watch for the new and improved APPLICATIONS coming next Spring. Now you and a friend or two can host your own APPLICATIONS class anytime you want, and move at your own pace!

For up-dated and detailed information on the QUEST- see the QUEST CENTER in the Lobby, visit [www.ac3.org](http://www.ac3.org) or call the church office at (360) 659-SEEK