

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MEMPHIS, TN
PERMIT NO. 583

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

STREETS MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 42181
Memphis, TN 38174-2181

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

DECEMBER 2011

Year 25: Providing Stability and Hope

A Tale of Two Sites - Downtown

A year ago, as most of you know by now, Cleaborn Homes was leveled. This housing development had stood since the early sixties. Many of the current residents had lived there well over thirty of those years. However, their experience is not a unique one. Because of Hope VI money, many of the "housing projects" have long since been taken down and replaced with much improved buildings that are built to code. However, thousands of people have been displaced as a result and have been in search daily for something constant in their lives.



Two weeks ago, the Streets Center Downtown hosted a design charrette in conjunction with the Memphis Housing Authority and the Consilience Group. The purpose was for the neighborhood to have input on the plans that are being made for Cleaborn and surrounding community. While the planning session was well done, the fear of an uncertain future hung like a dark cloud over those in the room.

Foote Homes, which sits directly across from our Downtown location on Vance, is the last remaining "housing project" in the city. It is now a conglomeration of families that have lived there for years as well as many new families that have been relocated numerous times over the past few years. As a result, the residents of Foote Homes are scared, frustrated, and even angry.

The community angst does not stop there. Schools in the area have lost many of their students and, if things remain the same, it looks as if this will cause Georgia Avenue Elementary to close. If that happens as scheduled, parents will be left wondering what the long range implications are for Vance Middle or even Booker T. Washington High School. Additionally, Foote Homes has become a place that daily violence calls home. The neighborhood is controlled by numerous gangs that have claimed their turf. It makes for a dismal picture to say the least.

In spite of all this, Delvin Lane, our High School Coordinator and resident of the 38126 community, has along with the rest of our staff, been serving as a daily reminder that God still loves this neighborhood very much. How? Well Delvin has been spearheading an effort by local community leaders to speak peace into this volatile situation. It is called "Band of Brothers" and their first meeting took place a couple of weeks ago here at our Downtown site. The meeting included representation from several of the prominent gangs in the neighborhood. The dialogue was so positive that the leaders have another meeting planned at our place, followed by a night of food and basketball. Delvin loved the idea but said it could only take place if the basketball teams were all representative. In other words, there will be Bloods playing on the same team with Vice Lords, Crips, and Gangster Disciples! God is indeed doing great things here at Streets.

Recently I met with some ladies from the neighborhood that were looking for a safe and warm place to walk in the mornings. I told them that we would love to open up the gym to them for just that purpose. Additionally, this month we are doing "Cuts for Cans" along with Tennessee Technology Center's Barbering Program. Although we have been partnering with them all semester to provide free haircuts to youth in the community, this program has cast an even greater net into the neighborhood while encouraging people to donate canned goods that will be given to the Memphis Food Bank.

Ken Bennett
Executive Director

Margot Aleman
High School Coordinator,
Graham Heights

Elizabeth Batchelor
Elementary Coordinator,
Graham Heights

Carmen Coleman
Education Director

John Cowherd
Pathways Coordinator

Reggie Davis
Site Director, Graham Heights

Ross Hurst
Business Office Coordinator

Delvin Lane
High School Coordinator

Jessica Lewis
Education Director,
Graham Heights

Jared Myers
Recreation Coordinator,
Graham Heights

Kelechi Ordu
Middle School Coordinator,
Graham Heights

Sarah Quintal
Elementary Coordinator

Ruth Abigail Smith
Pathways Coordinator,
Graham Heights

Richard Vining
Business Director

Terrance Young
Middle School Coordinator



STREETS MINISTRIES
(901) 525-7380

www.streetsministries.org
twitter - @streetsmemphis
facebook - streetsministries



Merry Christmas
From the Staff at Streets Ministries



This seal is our pledge that your gifts are used as you planned.
Thank you for your support of Streets Ministries.

continued on inside panel ►►

Year 25: Providing Stability and Hope

Still, the Cleaborn and Foote Homes communities are struggling. In that, we believe that God has placed us here for such a time as this. A person working on a community resource survey recently sat down with Richard Vining, our Business Director, and the conversation was more than a little frustrating. When she asked what we did, the answer was simple. Richard let her know that we provide a safe haven for kids to participate in recreation, education, and spiritual formation. When she asked what the end goal of this was, Richard let her know that we existed to proclaim the Good News of the hope, peace, and salvation found only in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. She could not believe her ears. Not only was this something she could not measure for the purposes of her survey, she found it to be shallow, naive, and somewhat offensive. We however know it to be the very foundation of Streets!

A Tale of Two Sites - Graham Heights

To many, the Kingsbury school district is currently known for two things; its diversity and for having recently landed on the failing schools list. This once thriving community of the fifties, sixties, and seventies has fallen prey to poor test scores, a transient population, an aging homeowner base that feels trapped, and increased gang activity. The list could go on and on. Even though there are numerous churches and an under-resourced community center in the neighborhood, the mood of the community as recently as a year ago was flat to say the least. That was when Streets reached out with the "Center of Hope."

While I was standing out in front of the construction site by myself late one afternoon, three young Latino kids walked by the front gate. I went over to them and began a conversation. I asked them if they knew what was being built. When they said no, I told them about the game room and the gym. They said they liked soccer and I let them know that we would have Futsal, a popular indoor form of soccer, available in the gym. Then I asked them the big question – "Do you know who we are building this facility for?" Once again, they said no, to which I said, "Streets is building this for you!" Their smiles were indescribable as they ran down the street high-fiving each other.



Cuts for Cans: This December Streets is offering "Cuts for Cans" courtesy of the Barbering Program at the Tennessee Technology Center.

Reggie Davis, our Site Director at Graham Heights, has assembled an incredible staff that has spent a year showing up at community events, ball games, tutoring on and off campus, and holding weekly Bible Studies. As a result, a significant number of volunteers have joined our efforts and we have become well known on campus as well. Teachers come through periodically and we have had numerous meetings making sure that this new facility reaches every corner of the community with the love and hope found only in Jesus Christ.

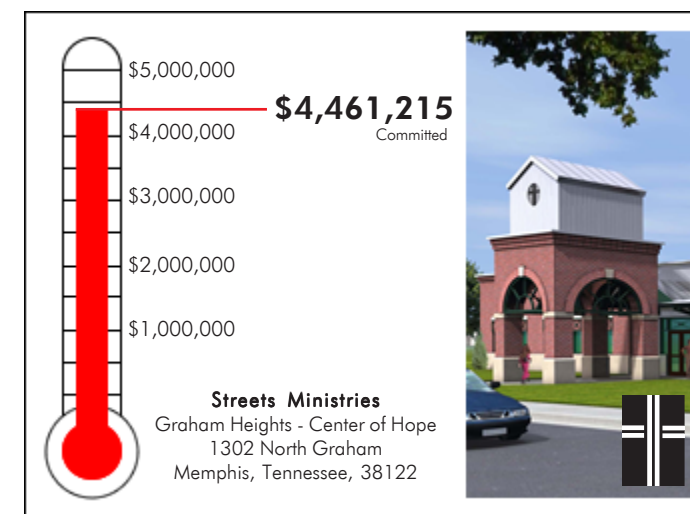
The community is still a bit confused by the fact that the body of Christ would rise up and build a \$4 million dollar facility in the heart of a neighborhood that most of the city views as a growing liability. Know that I do not say that flippantly. The road before us is a difficult one. As you read earlier, the Downtown site on Vance is facing new and difficult challenges every day. However, as God has always been faithful to our efforts, we continue to be faithful in what we do as well.

As this Christmas season comes upon us and you spend time with those that you hold dear, please pray that the power of the Holy Spirit would remain evident in all that we do and say in the areas that God has called us to serve! Thank you, and Merry Christmas!

Construction Update: 1302 N. Graham "Center of Hope"

With only about a month to go before we open our doors to the Graham Heights community with the new "Center of Hope" Center, now is the time to make a pledge if you have not done so already. While Streets currently has \$4,461,215 committed to the campaign, we are still in need of your support in an effort to provide a fully outfitted and staffed facility to students in the neighborhood.

A grand opening celebration is in the works, so to stay in touch, please visit us online at www.streetsministries.org, follow us on twitter at @streetsmemphis, like us on facebook at www.facebook.com/streetsministries, or just give us a call at (901) 525-7380. We would love to have you come and see what God has enabled us to do in the neighborhood.



Coat Drive: Holiday Deli & Ham

From now until Christmas Eve, if you bring in a new or gently used coat, new hat, or new pair of gloves you will receive \$5.00 off on any spiral sliced honey glazed ham order at any of the four Memphis area Holiday Deli & Ham locations. Donation boxes are located just inside each store and items collected will be distributed to families in need in the communities Streets serves.

For more information please contact the Business Office at info@streetsministries.org or (901) 525-7380.



Coat Drive: Ms. Valentine, a former Streets kid and current Holiday Deli & Ham employee at the Union store, shows her support of the coat drive.

\$50,000: Matching Grant

Year end is always an important time for a ministry like Streets. Not only does the Christmas season afford us an opportunity to reach out with our mission to the communities we have been called to serve, year end also is an important fund-raising time. How important? Well over the past four years, an average of 21.93% of our total annual operating budget has come in the last 31 days of the year!

This year end Streets has been presented with a \$50,000 fund-raising challenge that is in need of your help. From now until January 6th, any monetary gifts made towards our general operating budget will be matched up to a total of \$50,000.

Therefore, if you donate \$250, Streets will receive a total of \$500 from your gift as a result of this match. And while the match does not apply to existing pledges, it does make for an excellent opportunity to share with someone new to the ministry the importance and need for their support. Knowing that your donation not only counts, but counts double, is a great way to help us make this important year end giving season a success.

For information on this and other giving opportunities, please contact Richard Vining in the Business Office at info@streetsministries.org or (901) 525-7380.

What's Going On: Downtown at 430 Vance

- Since our last newsletter, our friends at **Regions Bank** presented Streets with a check from the Regions Foundation and have offered to teach a Financial Literacy class to interested Pathways students. Thank you!
- Also since our last newsletter, Streets became the recipient of a "Benefit for Children Grant" as part of the **Valero Texas Open Golf Classic**. As a part of the announcement, Ken received a big foam check which is currently on display in the Business Office.
- October 2, Carmen and Lawrence participated in **Grace Evan's** annual "Taste of Grace" event as a part of their Missions Weekend.
- October 5, the sophomore class from **MUS** came to the Streets Center as a part of their study on the impact of the non-profit sector in the city of Memphis.
- Also during the month of October, two groups of students from **Briarcrest Christian School** and a group from **St. George's Independent School** came to the Streets Center and gave the facility a deep cleaning. Thank you!
- October 26, Richard spoke to a youth group at **Independent Presbyterian Church** about the importance of their participation in the Shoebox Ministry. In all, close to 30 shoeboxes filled with valuable toiletry items were donated!
- November 12, Carmen and Lawrence attended "The Mentoring Project" hosted by **Heartsong Church**. Coordinated with other Memphis area agencies, it was an excellent opportunity for Streets to present its approach to mentorship through the Pathways Program to prospective volunteers.
- December 11, Delvin will be hosting the "Band of Brothers" community meeting at the Streets Center. Mentioned in Ken's article at the start of this newsletter, please be in prayer for this meeting and for all those involved.



More than a Mentor: Officer Patterson from the Union Avenue Precinct presents Taeshun, his Pathways student, with a new winter coat.



Health Fair: Nursing students from the University of Memphis came to the Streets Center for a Health Fair just prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

- December 16, **Girls, Inc.** will be hosting their annual Christmas Party at the Street Center. In all, over 400 participants and volunteers are expected to attend!
- December 17, Streets will be coordinating the distribution 600 of "Christmas Baskets" across both sites to needy families in the neighborhood. Assembled and delivered by members of **Independent Presbyterian Church**, the much anticipated baskets are filled with valuable food and cooking supplies - everything you need to prepare a Christmas meal!
- December 21, **Advance Memphis** will be hosting its Jobs for Life program graduation ceremonies in the William "Max" Rose Community Outreach Room.

What's Going On: Graham Heights

- October 1, **Second Presbyterian Church** came to Graham Heights as part of their "CityServe" weekend. While they were there, the service group did some painting at Kingsbury, met the staff, took a tour of the new facility, and hosted a cookout for students and their families.
- Later that day, much of the staff participated in the **Greenline's** Anniversary Block Party to help increase awareness of the new ministry at Graham Heights and offer up ways for people to get involved.
- October 2, Reggie participated in one of **Grace Evan's** "Sunday Morning Class Interview" sessions as a part of the church's annual missions conference. During the interview, Reggie was asked by members of a Ministry Initiative Team about Streets' approach to ministry in a neighborhood as diverse as Graham Heights.
- October 18, Reggie spoke to the sophomore class at **Hutchison School** about embracing and loving the City of Memphis as a whole and offered opportunities to serve through Streets.
- November 13, Reggie spoke to a group from the **Church of the Holy Communion** about Streets' mission and long-term plans in the Graham Heights community.
- October 21, Jess, herself a former teacher at **Grace St. Luke's Episcopal School**, returned to campus to speak about Streets to students during the school's weekly Celebration Chapel service.
- October 29, a work group from **Independent Presbyterian Church** came to Graham Heights as a part of the 53 church, 1,000 volunteer, city-wide "**Jesus Loves Memphis**" missions event.
- November 21, the "Terrific Tiger" JK class from **Miss Lee's School** in midtown prepared and delivered a full meal for a needy neighborhood family for Thanksgiving.



Nobel Mural: Kingsbury High School students put the finishing touches on a mural of Nobel Peace Prize recipients in the cafeteria.



S2G Movie Night: Also known as the "Streets Girl Gathering" group, S2G high school girls enjoy themselves prior to a movie night.

- November 29, the **Kemmons Wilson Family Foundation** invited Streets to the **Association of Fundraising Professionals** luncheon.
- December 10, a group from **Independent Presbyterian Church** will be taking ten Kingsbury High School students to a performance of Handel's Messiah at the **Cannon Center**.
- Finally, Streets would like to send out an extra special thank you to our friends at **SouthernSun Asset Management** for an enormous donation of office furniture. Thanks in large part to this donation, the "Center of Hope" will have a well outfitted Office, Pathways, and Bible Study areas. Thank you!