

Captive Free East Lakes 2002-03 Journal

Date: 9/24/2002

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

Our team has only been traveling for two days, yet already I have found myself being ministered to in so many ways. It was Chris and Kayla's birthdays two days ago, and our host families got together and planned an impromptu birthday party for them. What an awesome thing to do. I have never had so much fun. These people willingly gave up a weeknight for us so that two of our members would not have to go without a birthday celebration. These wonderful people even organized a potluck and a birthday cake for our team. While our job and privilege this year is to be a relational ministry team, already we have been given the opportunity to be ministered to. It is the little things that let people know you care. Whether it is a warm welcome into a host family or an impromptu celebration, this had got to be one of the best "jobs" on earth.



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 9/26/2002

Submitted by: Kurt Scobie

Journal Entry:

Team life has been fantastic. Before I came to training I was not looking forward to traveling so much, but I am actually enjoying it. Today we are in Matteson, Illinois; a suburb of Chicago. Once again we have been shown God's sense of humor. We arrived on Tuesday with the program scheduled for Thursday night so we had planned on a large chunk of rehearsal time. Everything went wrong (or so it seemed) when rehearsal time came. The two and a half hour practice time turned into about forty-five minutes. Though we were unable to work on all we wanted to, our family night program was our best yet. I dropped my drumstick (again), but it was fun anyway. Since we were at Katie's home church we met her friends and family. Chris, Tysen and I stayed with her aunt and uncle. The girls stayed next door at her grandparents' home. Of course they have to be the nicest people in the world and fed us so much delicious mashed potatoes and scrumptious meat loaf that it was coming out our ears. I won't even mention the cake, brownies, and apple pie we were blessed with. I am having fun and eating well too. Hi mom and dad! Hi to all my family and hi Maria!



Kurt Scobie

Date: 9/27/2002

Submitted by: Chris Rekshan

Journal Entry:

Wow! God is awesome! We just finished up with a program/lock-in at Mason Township Baptist Church. We had a great evening event! Everything went the way the Lord wanted it to. Afterwards we had the lock-in. We played some fun, pointless, run-around-in-a-circle games. Then we had a great bible study led by Lecia. After that we moved on to worship time. We sang some great songs such as Sanctuary, Amazing Grace Alleluia and many others. The Lord's presence was there with full force. It was so refreshing. I haven't felt His presence this much since I've been on Team.

God is awesome like that. Just when you think you can't go any further, just when you think you have no more to give, God gives you a renewing breath of air. One of my new favorite verses for team this year is John 15:16a. It reads "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Isn't that awesome to be chosen by God?! I think so.



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Chris Rekshan

Date: 10/1/2002

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Things on the road have been awesome! The churches and host homes have truly been a blessing to us. We have met so many wonderful people who are on fire for God. The team is doing great and we can't get enough of the programs, people, and the love we feel everywhere we go. We went to a juvenile center for a program and the kids there were so cool! At first it was a little intimidating seeing all the security and the regimented lifestyle the kids live but after we started talking to them we found out how great they are. We'll be in Michigan for about another week. So far it's been great. Talk to y'all later, bye! God Bless!



Tysen Bibb

Date: 10/3/2002

Submitted by: Lecia Beck

Journal Entry:

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" Philippians 4:4

Today for our devotion, we talked about rejoicing in the Lord and how you may remain joyful, even when you are not happy. Traveling from Cadillac, MI to Livonia, MI, our joyfulness was put to the test. While driving, we lost a bolt on one of our brakes and it would not disengage completely. It took a couple hours on the side of the road, many phone calls, and removing the wheel to diagnose the problem and find a temporary solution. Being stopped on our way to a program, we were not too happy about this obstacle in our path, yet we knew we could find joy in the day. We had been blessed with a van that had gotten us that far, with safe travels and none of us were hurt. We were on our way to a church that had quickly found us rides there and would wait until we could show up for worship. Standing on the side of the interstate, huddled with my team to pray as the semis whizzed by, I knew that with God it is possible to be joyful when you are not too happy.



Lecia Beck

Date: 10/8/2002

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

We have only been on the road for about three weeks now, but I have seen God in so many people and so many ways. There are so many stories I could tell about how everyone we have encountered has been so willing to bend over backwards to help us out with anything we need. There was a miscommunication about some allergies for example at a place we were recently staying. Unfortunately, a member of our team is severely allergic to cats and there was one in the house we were at. Immediately other people in the church volunteered to let us stay in their home. Still more people invited



Katie Bessinger

us over for dinner, a movie, pool, and even ping-pong! Needless to say, we've been abundantly provided for and well taken care of. We have had lots of fun and met tons of great people already. I can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings!
Hi to all my family & friends!!! I miss you!

Date: 10/11/2002

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

A few days ago we got to lead a chapel for a Lutheran elementary school. That was one of the best times I have had in a while. We got to sing really silly songs at the same time we were telling the kids about Jesus. The day before I was privileged enough to eat lunch with some of the kids from the first grade class there. After chapel our team got to go on class visits. I was able to go to the first grade classroom. Can I just say that I love first graders? They are so wonderful. They were so excited to see us. It was the first time I was asked for my autograph. I don't think I will ever get used to it and I honestly hope I don't. I don't ever want to lose sight of why I am doing this in the first place, but it is still fun to see the kids faces when they see the "rock stars for Jesus" in their classroom. I love what I do because not a day goes by that while I am trying to spread the message of Jesus, I am blessed ten fold by someone or multiple someones, in this case the beautiful smiling faces of first graders.



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 10/12/2002

Submitted by: Kurt Scobie

Journal Entry:

Things are going great here on the road. Sometimes we forget where we are, or where we've been, or where we're going, but wherever we are we have fun. This week has been a bit tiring. This week we have had more programs than we've ever had in one week. Though it has been a tad exhausting I have a few highlights. The other night when I was staying at my host home I got to play a baby grand piano. I have played grand pianos before, but never in someone's HOUSE. While we were at the church I was able to play their grand piano as well. I have definitely been spoiled rotten lately. Host homes have been very great for all of us. I am shown every day the way God works to take care of me. I am also spoiled to be in my home state. Michigan air is very refreshing. Overall life on team is good. Our team is getting along well and we are having fun despite the long drives and the lack of sleep. Eph. 2:8



Kurt Scobie

Date: 10/16/2002

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! God is truly awesome! We're almost out of Michigan and into Ohio and the temperatures are dropping. All the leaves turning and nature around us on our drives are amazing. We are all in good spirits and continue to love what we do. It won't be too much longer and we'll have a team outing. (hehe we're gonna try and find a zoo) Some of the cool places we've been too are: Portage(Kalamazoo), Saginaw, Livonia(Detroit), Macomb(Detroit), Battle Creek, Manistee, Cadillac, Cassopolis, Marshall, and Haslett(Lansing). If I forgot any of the congregations, sorry, but we're in a new place everyday. We love you all though! Team has been one of the greatest experiences of my life and it just keeps getting better. God Bless. Bye y'all!



Tysen Bibb

Date: 10/17/2002

Submitted by: Lecia Beck
Journal Entry:

"There is plenty of room for you in my Father's house. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm on my way to get a room ready for you?" -John 14:2-3, The Message

Just like how God is preparing a place for all of us in heaven, he has definitely prepared the way for my team here on earth. I am consistently amazed by how much we are welcomed everywhere we go. Sometimes I think about how this was planned and people were excited about me coming before I even knew I would be on Captive Free. It astounds me how God always takes care of us and prepares a place for us...and not just any place, a place that is where we need to be. At one host home, I had a family waiting, with a little brother and sister for me, as well as a Powderpuff Girls coloring book and crayons. Another wonderful host had my favorite candy waiting for me, even though she didn't know it was my favorite. I had another host who loved the outdoors and engineering as much as I do. The churches at which we are blessed to perform are waiting to receive us, to welcome us into their families and minister to us as much as we are ready to minister to them. As we continue on our way, to church after church, as we forget where we are, I am strengthened by the thought that God is preparing all this for us, and I do not have to worry about any of it.



Lecia Beck

Date: 10/24/2002
Submitted by: Katie Bessinger
Journal Entry:

We are finally getting into our routine for the year. It seems like we are all getting used to our jobs. Unfortunately, it is easy to let our ministry become routine as well. The words start to lose their meaning and you simply sing songs. I have discovered that God will send you exactly what you need when you need it. Just as I was starting to fall into a rut and let my ministry become less genuine, the Lord sent me to the perfect host home. All of the girls got to stay together at a host home that was very spiritually refreshing for me. I got a clear picture of what a servant should really be. Our host family had the true attitude of servants. We also had great faith discussions. That family inspired me again to live every moment with God and truly focus on Him. They rejuvenated my ministry. In our experience as a team in general, I have found that God provides and will give us what we need every day!



Katie Bessinger

Date: 10/29/2002
Submitted by: Kurt Scobie
Journal Entry:

It has been an interesting couple of days here on the road. God is constantly testing us and working in us and through us. The other day our team leader went to the Emergency Room. She is now going home for a while to recuperate. We now must adjust for a while and pray that God will heal Jen and get her back with us as soon as she feels well. It will be interesting to see how things turn out for us. It has been hard already and it is hard to see what God's plan is through all of this but He is continuing to take care of us. So our day off turned into something we weren't expecting. Katie spent the whole day with Jen in the hospital while the rest of us joined her at different points during the day. Overall it was a rough day. The three of us guys went to Mars music and found out that it along with ALL of the other stores is going out of business. This is saddening for us Mars junkies. The weather was also gloomy and when we finally found out the whole situation with Jen, we were even more disappointed. We are keeping our heads, however, waiting to see how this all ties in with our ministry and our lives. We know that God has reasons for this whole deal, but we are not yet sure what. I guess if you don't want an interesting and challenging life, you shouldn't join ministry. I am still glad that I am serving God in this way this year.



Kurt Scobie

Date: 10/30/2002
Submitted by: Chris Rekshan
Journal Entry:

Well, to start things off, we had an awesome program tonight! You could just the Lord presence there. It was wonderful to see people getting up and dancing! After the program the children of the church had walk through the bible/ trick or treating in the church. It was put on by the youth group of the church for the little kids. The teens took the children to different rooms where they depicted different scenes from the bible such as David and Goliath, the death of Jesus, and Lazarus. It was pretty cool; the kids really seemed to enjoy it. Then from there we went to our host homes and had a peaceful night full of rest and relaxation.



Chris Rekshan

Date: 11/1/2002
Submitted by: Tysen Bibb
Journal Entry:

Greetings in Christ!

Welcome to another episode of "Team Time by the Campfire" with your teamer host, Ty. In today's program, I'll be giving an update on the fabulous Captive Free East Lakes team. Today is November 1, 2002 and our destination is West Alexandria, Ohio. For Halloween the team spent the night in Northwood, (a.k.a. Toledo) Ohio. The activities included trick-or-treating, pumpkin carving, singing, and of course...eating! The teams spirits are high (no pun intended) and we are doing OK despite the absence of Jen. The latest news we have about Jen is that the surgery is over and went well and she'll be back with us by the time we roll into Niagara Falls for our first Junior High Quake; please keep her in your prayers. Ohio has been great to us and it won't be long before we are in Pennsylvania and then New York State. God has truly blessed us! Thanks for tuning into another episode of "Team Time by the Campfire" with Ty. Peace be with you all. God Bless.



Tysen Bibb

Date: 11/5/2002
Submitted by: Lecia Beck
Journal Entry:

Just when what we are doing becomes routine, God gives us a wake-up call. On Sunday night, we were in Springfield, at Wittenberg University, where we also stayed for our day off and then led a chapel service on Tuesday morning. We were all feeling drained, after two lock-ins back to back, but being somewhere with college students, who we could easily relate to, was great. We had a great time...yet like the weekend, a lot of fun and just a little sleep. ☐ On Tuesday morning, with half of our team not feeling well, we led the students in chapel. God was totally present there, speaking through us. Though we were tired and run-down, worshipping our Father was amazing. It was a real confirmation that this is what we should be doing, and that God will continue to strengthen us, giving us words, energy and hope when all we want to do is sleep and retreat. As we continue of the road, we need your prayers for health as many of us are battling colds.



Lecia Beck

Date: 11/7/2002
Submitted by: Katie Bessinger
Journal Entry:

We spent the night at Bethesda Children's Home tonight and did a program for a few young women there. They all seemed hesitant to participate in our sing-a-longs at first.

I was therefore not the most energetic at that program and I began to doubt if we were doing any good. It didn't even seem like the girls were really enjoying themselves. Shortly after these thoughts entered my brain, God showed me that we did have a purpose there. All my doubts were quickly shattered when we started singing "Shout to the Lord." There were two girls that I noticed were singing along with us! They knew the words and were praising God with us. At that point I knew that God was still using me despite my doubts.

After our program we had the opportunity to spend some time with the girls in their units. We were with some who had not been at our program, so they asked us to sing a song for them. We agreed but told them they had to sing for us when we were done. Once it was their turn, they were really nervous. When they finally sang and opened up we were amazed at their beautiful voices and the songs they sang to praise the Lord.

Later the pastor told me that it was really great for him to hear them sing like that and get them to open up to us. He also said that they had a wonderful time with us. Sometimes it doesn't seem like we do much, but the Lord finds a way to use the littlest things!



Katie Bessinger

Date: 11/14/2002

Submitted by: Kurt Scobie

Journal Entry:

Hello. Kurt here, and I'm having fun. I am getting sick but God seems to clear my throat for each program. The drums are fun as usual and I am picking up guitar a little too. I am looking forward to the quake this weekend. It is my first event that I am not going to as a "youth". It will be fun getting the Jr. High kids pumped up about God. I hope we can all "Head to the Heart" this weekend. As program coordinator I have large responsibilities this weekend. I am not too nervous about it but I do have some unanswered questions. I am glad that Jo will be there this weekend to help us out, she's great! It should be an overall fun weekend. I am really enjoying this part of our tour in Pennsylvania and New York, it is very pretty. So I am going to leave you all with that thought and sign off. In Christ! -kurt



Kurt Scobie

Date: 11/19/2002

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

Well it has certainly an interesting few weeks. As many people know I have been off team for 2 and ½ weeks having and recuperating from surgery. I have missed my team tremendously and was a little worried about what would happen when I rejoined them. They have had to compensate for the loss of one team member and then to do my jobs as well. I was a little concerned about not being needed as much as I was before. That fear was quickly dispelled as I arrived to meet them at our first Quake. I was basically attacked by six teamers waiting to hug me! If I have ever doubted my place on team I don't now! I was ready to see them and they were ready to have me back! It was like I never left. I really was wondering what God had in store for all of us in my absence, but I know that we have all grown and learned from this. I know I have learned to love and appreciate my teammates while I was gone. I missed them so much and am glad to be back. When they say the Lord works in mysterious ways, they weren't kidding!



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 1/3/2003

Submitted by: Lecia Beck

Journal Entry:

It's funny how people apologize for things which we think are wonderful...like a low fat dinner we had, or celebrating New Year's by throwing confetti all over. It constantly amazes me that people will bring us into their homes and let us be part of the family for



a day. While I had never been very into celebrating the New Year, it was really weird to not be with my family this year. Instead, I got to join a great family in their tradition of the kids throwing tons of confetti on the adults and then cleaning up the foot-deep confetti. On New Year's Day, when I had to go rehearse with my team, my host mom had dinner waiting for me to come home with tons of fruits and veggies, like I love. So, I've found that thought I haven't been able to be with my family this year, I've had a new one ready and waiting for me each night.

Lecia Beck

Date: 1/7/2003

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

It was somewhat difficult for me to get back into the flow of things after our break for Christmas. I got so used to being at home, choosing clothes from my cabinet instead of finding whatever is clean in my bag and wearing that and just other little comforts of home. One thing that truly got me back into the heart and soul of our ministry was a host home that all of us girls stayed at. Aside from being some of the nicest people I have been with, their attitude of servanthood reminded me of how I should act. They cooked us exactly what we asked for, got us everything that was on our needs list, and even got me a new battery for my watch simply because I mentioned it wasn't working!

They were also so much fun to be around and talk with. This couple had housed several exchange students from other countries and had marvelous stories to tell. I was amazed by their Christ-centered lifestyle. It made me refocus on others, and not myself.

This past weekend was also our first Quake after Christmas break. It was a huge spiritual boost for the team. Some came back from break feeling spiritually drained because they led worship at home and didn't get much of a chance to worship. Seeing so many youth completely energized about God, having a chance to worship, and hearing speakers got us fired up again as well. The bible says that whenever two or three gather in Christ's name, He will be there, but there is also an awesome power in the midst of about 650 people worshiping Him at once in the same place. God's presence was so real that I felt like I could reach out and touch Him.



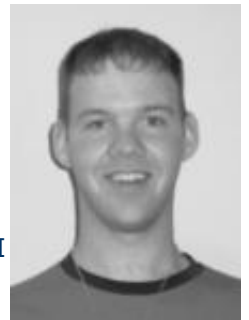
Katie Bessinger

Date: 1/13/2003

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! This is the tallest member of the East Lakes team again. This time around I'll tell ya about spiritually shaking experience that was the Lansing, Michigan Junior High Quake. This was the teams biggest event of the year. We kinda wondered if we were up to it seeing how we'd only been back together as a team for a week. When I said this was big...I meant it! Over 650 youth and adult leaders in a Holiday Inn for a weekend of worship and praise; it was amazing! The speaker was Rich Melheim of FINK and the music artist was Peder Eide. The youth were always on their feet and overjoyed to share with each other God's love, fellowship, and fun. Seeing this many junior high students so on fire for their God was not only refreshing but comforting. It reminded me that though the world is going crazy...there is still hope. That's it for me this time everyone. God Bless!



Tysen Bibb

Date: 1/13/2003

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! This is the tallest member of the East Lakes team again (Tysen). This time around I'll tell ya about spiritually shaking experience that was the Lansing, Michigan Junior High Quake. This was the teams biggest event of the year. We kinda wondered if we were up to it seeing how we'd only been back together as a team for a week. When I said this was big...I meant it! Over 650 youth and adult leaders in a Holiday Inn for a weekend of worship and praise; it was amazing! The speaker was Rich



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Tysen Bibb

Date: 1/15/2003

Submitted by: Chris Rekshan

Journal Entry:

We just had a day off after our Cincinnati Quake. It was a relief. Now don't get me wrong, the Quake was totally awesome, but man, do they tire you out. It was a good relaxing day off. We lounged around, did some laundry and watched a couple of movies. We also had a chance to talk to our host family. They are totally awesome people! Our host mom was a professional seamstress. She made some beautiful quilts and other things. Most everything in their house was home-made. It was cool. Any way, God always seems to bless us with wonderful host homes.



Chris Rekshan

Date: 1/17/2003

Submitted by: Lecia Beck

Journal Entry:

I love getting to return to churches. Last night, we came back to Calvary Lutheran Church in Northwood, OH. This time, we visited a nursing facility where we shared a few songs. Afterwards, we girls returned to our host home from the first time. Though my five year old host sister was sick and my host mom was pregnant (yay!), they still could not do enough for us. We sat around and had a nice, relaxing "girl night", eating Christmas cookies, watching the Food Network and watching School House Rock. We just had a great night being reunited with friends and relaxing together.



Lecia Beck

Date: 1/20/2003

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Buenos dias and stuff! This is Tall Ty coming at ya from Howard City, MI. This past week has been a busy one for the East Lakes team. We had a retreat at a bible camp on Friday and Saturday and three worship services to attend and contribute to on Sunday morning. Then to finish off the weekend we had a program here in Howard City on Sunday night and that was just the weekend; whew! This ministry stuff is demanding but at the same time is more fulfilling than anything else I could be doing. I've been blessed with good host homes all year but one that really sticks out to me is one I had in Saginaw, MI. This was just after the retreat I spoke of earlier. They were very generous and genuine. I stayed up for a long time just talking about ministry and faith with one of my host parents. It was a good spiritual recharge after such an exhausting yet fun couple of days. It reminded me that God hears prayers, all of them, and that each one of us is called to do something in preparation for his kingdom. May we all find out what that is and dedicate our lives to God's plan, amen. Talk to y'all later! God Bless!



Tysen Bibb

Date: 1/21/2003

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

I was simply amazed by our host home for this past weekend. Lecia and I got to stay

together with a family of five. There were three little kids that were so much fun to play with. I had such a wonderful time watching Veggie Tales with them and even letting them play with my flute a bit. We got to play cards, Kings in the Corners, with their parents for quite a long time as we talked. Somehow we were talking about cookies and we all agreed that they were best right out of the oven. So there we were baking cookies at eleven o'clock at night! Then they proceeded to gather up everything they had that had been on our needs list. Even though times are rough for them financially at the moment, they wanted to help out in any way they could. They were just so real and genuine. I really felt like I could just be myself around them. We all joked and laughed and even lovingly poked fun at each other. I had a wonderful time with them and learned that we really don't have to try so hard to minister to each other. They ministered to me so much just by being themselves. We are the greatest tools God can use, so just be you!



Katie Bessinger

Date: 1/31/2003

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

It seems that all journals are about host homes, but when so much of our lives are spent there and so many of the people we meet are so amazing it is no wonder that we choose to write about them over and over again. I had such an amazing experience at my last host home. This young family ministered to me in ways even I may never fully understand. The mom had just been re-diagnosed with breast cancer and was told she would probably not live to see her little girl's fifth birthday. Instead of crying out to God in anger, all around her house were passages from the Bible about strength, healing and comfort posted on mirrors, doors and walls. These were there to remind her and her husband about God's plan, His unfailing love and to give them strength and comfort in just being together while they still could. I have never felt so amazed at the dedication and simple understanding of God's plan than I have at that house. It gave a whole new meaning to my favorite passage from the Bible, Romans 5:3-5; "For we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character produces hope; and hope does not disappoint us." This is so true because as Christians we know that God will strengthen us from our pain and sorrow and we know that in our death, new life, a better life, an eternal life will arise in us through Christ. This one family taught me to rejoice in our pain, because if we didn't know pain we wouldn't know what joy was; without suffering what would we have to hope for? How would we know the true meaning of the gift God has given us if we didn't experience a little of the "bad" in life as well as the joy?



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 2/4/2003

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

I have had the wonderful privilege of staying with some amazing families lately. They have spoiled us so much by taking us out to dinner, movies, and just giving us every comfort we could imagine. These amazing families made sure that we have been provided for and well taken care of in every way imaginable. The little comforts are things we have learned to appreciate so much. Had this been all they had done it would still be worthy of writing about, but they have also done so much more. I have been sincerely welcomed not only into homes lately, but actually received into a family for a night or two. These peoples' hospitality has been truly amazing, but the way they have accepted us has left a much deeper impression on me. By the families I have stayed with I have felt valued not only as a band member, but I have also felt respected and genuinely loved simply because of who I am in Jesus Christ. They were interested in finding out about who I am and how God is working in my life. They have inspired me to be more Christ-like, as they were to me.



Katie Bessinger

Date: 2/5/2003

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

"How our microphone stand became known as Hannibal." WE were doing a program at a family homeless shelter in Michigan. We had been at this shelter before. Now this shelter held a little ominous cloud over our teams head for two reasons...when we were there before Chris fell in a hole and massively scraped up his leg and when we were unloading our equipment it was raining so hard we almost started to build another ark. We went in a little leerily. Everything went great for our program. The residents were amazing. Well as we were tearing down, I was engrossed in playing with a little boy of 5. I was also trying to collapse a microphone stand at the same time. Stupid me accidentally let the stand collapse too quickly. It collapsed on the fleshy part of my finger. When I jerked back in pain I realized that the fleshy part of my finger was still smashed in the mic stand and I was left with a bloody, disgusting finger. I quickly ran to the office to ask for a first aid kit. I started to doctor my finger, when Katie runs in to ask if I am okay. She takes one look at my finger and makes me sit down while she helps clean it up. Well until then I was doing fine, but once someone else took over and I got a good look at my finger I realized that I was going to pass out. Sweat beaded on my forehead and the room got really fuzzy. I didn't actually pass out, but it was way too close. I ended up in the hospital so that a trained professional could look at my finger. Luckily it was such a clean cut that no stiches could be put in. THEY cleaned it up and sent me on my way. However from that day on I have hated this one particular microphone stand and thus "Hannibal" was born!



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 2/15/2003

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

Taco Bell, my teammate Chris, and his infamous Taco song make for a great combination. We got done with our program at a nursing home one night and went out to eat. Our whole team was staying at the nursing home and decided to go do something fun while we were out. Chris wrote a song he affectionately calls "The Taco Song" when he was in 9th grade that is hysterical. So what did he decide to do...yep, we followed Chris into Taco Bell while Chris serenaded the workers with his "Taco Song." I have never laughed so hard in my entire life. The workers thought it was pretty funny too. They took a poloroid of CHRIS and made him sign his picture. Now you may be wondering why in the world is she writing a journal on this? Well this whole journal is about a great witnessing tool...humor. We explained to the people afterwards all about Youth Encounter and the Captive Free bands. Music in worship is a ministering tool, yet today we also discovered that humor too can be such a great way to show the love of Christ. I started to think about how maybe someone in that restaurant had maybe seen only stuffy, pompous stereotypical "Christians" and how we might have shown them differently. You never know how and when the Lord will work. It says in the Bible that "the Lord works in mysterious ways," and what better way than through the "Taco Song."



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 2/19/2003

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

The "Winter Blahs" are upon many teams and my team has been trying to find a way to combat them. We made up our own stupid, random question game that we play every now and then, but soon that got old. With all the snow that seems to follow us like the cloud over Charlie Brown's head, we were definately in full fledged "blahdum." WE couldn't take anymore so one yucky disgusting day we got in our van, drove to Barnes and Noble's bookstore and spent 3 hours as a team just reading each other stupid questions from question books. We pondered whether we would rather eat a bucket of squirmy roaches or lick a frozen metal pole. These were important and



Jennifer Cummings

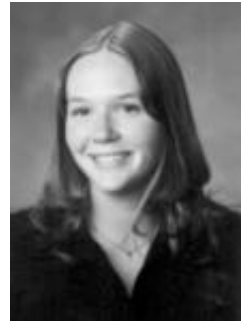
serious questions that needed our immediate attention...not really, we justify it that way though. In all honesty this was one of the best times I have ever had with my team. It was free, it was fun, it was mindless and for a while we weren't aware that it was cold and snowy outside. We quickly discovered that all work and no play makes East Lakes a very cranky team. Play and spend time with each other, this makes all the difference in the world.

Date: 3/2/2003

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

We were at a retreat this past weekend that just blew me away. It was a freezing cold weekend with just a little snow on the ground, but the hearts of all there were still on fire. The youth there did a wonderful job of leading different parts of the retreat. I was impressed by the high school youth who gave their personal testimonies to help encourage the junior high students. They were all very focused on Christ in all they did. The one event that impacted me most was during our final worship when one of the adults gave her testimony. It spoke directly to my heart and I was inspired by what she revealed. She was so intent on influencing the youth and bringing the word of God to as many people as possible.



Katie Bessinger

Date: 3/5/2003

Submitted by: Lecia Beck

Journal Entry:

This past weekend, we had the opportunity to do Thirty Hour Famine with a youth group in Wyandotte, MI. After some debate, the whole team decided to fast for the thirty hours. Surprisingly, it wasn't too hard to do...especially because we started off with a large meal and ended with a large meal. :) I loved the Bible studies that we did during the famine, becoming more aware of the world and how starvation, disease and poverty affect people. Not only did I gain a new appreciation for everything I have (I might not know where I'm sleeping each night or what I'm eating, but I know I'll have what I need!), it was great to see the youth examine their lives also. During the famine, we all did some community service, and my group helped at a Crisis Pregnancy Center, organizing a lot of their donations. Everyone worked really hard, even though we were feeling the effects of being 25 hours without food. You know you're hungry when baby food starts looking appetizing. :) The whole weekend was a great opportunity to learn and be challenged. Sunday morning, the youth lead the worship service and Sunday school hour. As they got up to tell what they learned through the weekend, Katie joined them, challenging everyone to not let the weekend end, but take our new awareness and make it part of our lives. I pray that everyone can do that and we can all remember what we learned and the passion we had to help others.



Lecia Beck

Date: 3/29/2003

Submitted by: Kurt Scobie

Journal Entry:

Continuing on our exciting journey we have all learned a lot. I've learned that this should be more like my 10th journal and less like my 2nd. I do apologize to those of you who DO read the journals--I never was good at deadlines. Anyway, I have had some great experiences this past week at the homeless shelter in Detroit. I speak for the whole team when I say that we have been changed. We lead the people in songs before meals and got to know them and serve them. For me it was more like they were serving me because I learned so much from them. I made friends with a guy named Kenneth early on in the week. Kenneth offered me so much encouragement that I had never had before. Kenneth had a broken wrist but he was a drummer and was just dying to play the conga or SOMETHING! He showed me his high spirit even though his life was rough. Going to this shelter this



Kurt Scobie

past week was truly a blessing--when we lead songs there was so much genuine, real praise happening--I could just feel it. The hope I saw in so many eyes that week, I'll never forget. A shout out to my family, friends, and Maria!!! God's PEACE!

Date: 4/22/2003

Submitted by: Chris Rekshan

Journal Entry:

I LOVE FOUR WHEELERS!!! During our last day off, I stayed at an awesome host home! They just happened to have a four wheeler. It was awesome. They didn't have marked trails, so they said I could go anywhere in the woods. So I did! I went over the bridges, through the river, through mud puddles. It was great. Although I did get stuck once. I tried to go through a deep part of the river. I almost made it, but the back tire just sank into the muddy bank. So I used the winch on the front of the Quad to get it unstuck. Man was I muddy after this excursion. But it was great fun!



Chris Rekshan

Date: 4/24/2003

Submitted by: Tysen Bibb

Journal Entry:

Yo! Yo! Yo! This is the East Lakes with the highest elevation. Praise be to God! Our region has finally thawed out. We're in northern Michigan and it's 73 degrees! Lately programs and host homes have been awesome! They really have been homes away from home. Combine all that with good meals lately and you just have one totally tubular time. We've started going back to churches we've been to before and churches that were at our events. We've been reunited with youth we hung out with before and shared stories. I've said it once and I'll say it again...this is so fun it doesn't seem like work. God's blessings to all a good...um...day. Peace Out!



Tysen Bibb

Date: 4/25/2003

Submitted by: Lecia Beck

Journal Entry:

One of my favorite things about being a sound tech is that every night, I get to watch our audiences, while they don't realize I'm watching. It's great to see so many different people enjoying our programs. Tonight I'm watching some middle school boys dance and many people playing egg shakers and tambourines and fun stuff. In the past week I've seen older men in suits "breaking it down," a middle aged man slow dance, countless toddlers bouncing, mothers wanting to dance but not wanting to embarrass their kids, and tons of youth praising God by singing, clapping and dancing. I love how our team can bring an experience of a new fun way to worship to so many people. So to everyone out there, keep dancing for the Lord--He appreciates it and it doesn't matter if people laugh as long as you can too.



Lecia Beck

Date: 4/29/2003

Submitted by: Katie Bessinger

Journal Entry:

Hey all! We have had an awesome first week back on the road after our Easter Break. It started off with a program at my parents' church. It was excellent and fun. Thank you Mommy and Daddy! We had a really busy week, so by Monday I was ready for a great day off. It was perfect. I slept in until noon and then got to go shopping with my teammates. After a very yummy dinner I went to a park with Jen. There we played for two hours. I felt like a little kid and it was so fun, yet relaxing. As if I wasn't having



enough of a perfect say already, my host family was so incredible! My host sister had the bubbliest personality and is now considering going on Captive Free. So we talked about that a lot and she also told me about a friend of hers she had brought to our program. She told us that we really reached her through our music and now she plans on going to church with my host sister. It's so great sometimes to hear that we are still doing God's work and that He really does use us. It never ceases to amaze me how God always knows exactly what we need. As we came back from break and struggled to get back into the swing of team life, God sent us a wonderful week!

Katie Bessinger

Date: 5/1/2003

Submitted by: Jennifer Cummings

Journal Entry:

The other day Katie and I went to a huge park on our day off. We goofed off and were totally acting our shoe sizes! We swang and ran around and hung upside down and slid down the slides. It was amazing. It got me thinking how we sometimes forget to stop and play. How the responsibilities that we each have sometimes weigh us down. How are joys and privileges are turned into chores and work. Jesus said "Let the little children come to me." It never specified that you couldn't be a little child in thought and action. After that day at the park I started to watch the pleasure on a child's face from a simple hug from a parent, or getting to come up and sing a song with us during our programs, or simply by getting to stand up and dance. Children have such energy and innocence in everything they do and it is such a difficult thing for adults to recapture that emotion and freedom. I have decided to live as a child; not forsaking my responsibilities, but with the joy, freedom and emotions of a child. It is what Jesus would want. To be free to love and praise His name with no boundries, with no worries. It is difficult and I may never acheive it the way I want, but it is those little times in the park that I can truly capture that freedom again...that I too can be a little child.



Jennifer Cummings

Date: 5/2/2003

Submitted by: Kurt Scobie

Journal Entry:

We went to Taylor, MI. We had been here once before around Christmas time. Now it was springtime and this church was having their annual carnival. We were to play Friday at 7pm and come back on Sunday to play at 4 and 7pm. We arrived around 4 on Friday to set up. We got free food so that's always good. I was excited to play outside because then I can really wail on the skins (drums). We played in pretty dully weather, but I think the message came off warm and I hope that for those people there that didn't know Christ that a seed was planted with us being there. It was good to be back in a familiar place with familiar faces. Prayers for my host family there. --Kurt--



Kurt Scobie
