

# Captive Free South East 2002-03 Journal

**Date:** 10/5/2002

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

September 30, 2002

It's about two weeks into our ministry now. It just seems kind of crazy, I feel like I have known my teammates my whole life, even though it has barely been over a month. I thank God for my teammates every day, they are such wonderful people. I remember how upset I was when I found out that the team placements got switched around (I was originally on the North East team, which is exactly what I wanted) However, now, I realize that God knew what He was doing. He put us all here for a reason, and I know that me being on this South East team was in His will.

I just graduated from high school in Juneau, Alaska. I was a cheerleader all four years, and my whole life was dedicated to that. I still attended church, but our congregation up there was very small, and I was one of the only youth there. It was extremely hard to get excited about going to church and worshiping, especially since I had cheerleading on my mind. Now, being here on team, I get excited every time I get the opportunity to talk about or listen to His word. It's even more wonderful to be surrounded with people who feel the same way. I am just so excited to be here, and I can't wait to see what else the Lord has in store for me.



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 10/5/2002

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**

October 3, 2002

Life on team has been filled with experiences that are very different than you would normally find in day to day life. A few days ago our team stayed at a retirement center in Jackson, Tennessee. At first I was a little uncomfortable with going to a retirement home and playing "our music," but after we stepped in the door my fears were thrown away. The people at the home were very welcoming and extremely hospitable; they gave each team member a room in the home. It felt as if we were staying at a luxury hotel. When we started playing during our program, everyone was into it and listened attentively. We could tell that God was a major part of these people's lives. They understood where we were coming from with "our music" and they were glad that we could share the gospel with not only them but with everyone. I was very glad that we were able to make a stop in Jackson for this wonderful experience. I'm hoping that we will be able to come back later in the year.



**Phil Knudtson**

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**Date:** 10/9/2002

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

October 8th

"Let go and let God..." This has to be the theme for me even before I sent in my application to Captive Free. This theme is something that my team and I are learning more and more each day from our experiences. When I first held the application in my hands I wasn't real sure if this was something that I wanted to do, but I seemed to be pulled into it by something. By the time I finished the application it all of a sudden just felt right. It was the letting go of what I thought I wanted to do and nothing ever working out to finally letting God show me the way that he wants me to go. Believe me, when you let God show you the way life just seems to make a whole lot more sense and also everything seems to work out real nice. Even with relationships, when you stop shoving and pushing for people to like you and to respect you and end up finding that those certain people will never feel for you the way that you want them to that's when you need to let go of all that and say,



**Katie Strelow**

"okay God I'm giving it to you. Will you take care of it?" And it's a sure thing that he'll say yes. He did for me, God has given me so many wonderful people in my life, my team, my family and friends back home and certainly all the awesome people that we have been meeting on the road. And everyday when I ride in the van with my teammates, talk on the phone with my mom or see a smile on a child's face during a puppet show I am constantly reminded of how great God's love is for us. Also, when we let go of what we think we need for ourselves and turn to grab on the God's will and follow it, his blessings are forever. A cool lady once told us, "Do as much as you can but always have God with you. He is the greatest companion that you'll ever have."

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**Date:** 10/9/2002

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

So today we're cruising through the Smokey Mountains again. We have made this trip a few times in the past week when we were going from Tennessee and North Carolina. I still find the mountains absolutely gorgeous. And lately I have been able to share them with my teammate Trina who has been my acting navigator. Trina being from South Dakota and I coming from Michigan are just in awe of God's work in the mountains. So I guess the two really big things I am finding out on team is how first of all, God does some good work, ya know? From gorgeous mountains and breathtaking stars, to colorful and creative people; it's all done by God. And that is pretty amazing. Second, God can use some really... umm....unique people to do his work. That may sound silly but it's so true. Trina once said "God does not call the equipped but equips the called". How true that is. God has ways of enabling you to do things that you never thought possible. For example going on team itself has been one huge gift from God. There is no way I would be here unless God wanted me to be here. Also my Teammate Tom comes to mind. He came to team expecting to be a guitar player. But God, with his huge sense of humor, had other plans for Tom. Tom is now our drummer, no excuse me, master of the percussion arts. After only 8 weeks of playing the set, Tom can already handle just about anything we throw at him. The man has skills. YEAH TOM!! And so I guess the point is that God will always help you. He will not put you into anything that you can not handle. Everything is possible with God. And even when things get really tough in school, work, home, relationships, and life God will always walk with you and guide you. I guess I'm learning that I am never truly alone no matter how much I feel that way some times. I will always have at least one person that will always ride with me through the thick and thin; My Jesus. What a comfort that is. It's all that keeps me going some days and other days it gives me wings to do things that I have never dreamed of. Either way, it's my peace. And I think we can all use a little more peace. So I pray that this journal is finding you all well. I pray that life is being soft on you. To my family you know I love you. Thanks for everything. And to my friends, hey thanks for being my friend. And I'll catch you later. Remember to tell them all about Jesus. That is all that matters. Good Night and God Bless

Daryl



**Daryl Howard**

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**Date:** 10/15/2002

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

Infinite blessing! That is what my team has experienced during our first month "on the road." Everywhere we have stopped people have opened their houses, lives, and hearts to us 6 strangers. This year is about service to others, but more often it feels like we are ministered to rather than the other way around. It puts a real tangible meaning behind the phrase "it is in serving which we are truly served." We have shared our message and faith with children of "all ages" from a little two year old in Charlotte, NC to an 85 year old woman in Jackson, TN. Wherever we go, we encounter different people with different physical and spiritual backgrounds. Looking back over the last four weeks I am truly blessed to have met and interacted with each person along the way, and I am equally as humbled by the fact that God is using my team and I for such a great cause.



**Thomas Montgomery**

As we have been on the road I can see why this team has been put together. We are six different people, from six different background, and different stages in our lives. It is in this way that we can connect with the largest group of people. I have definitely seen that as each member interacts with different individuals in each congregation. Each of us has a strength, and God has a way to use each of them whether we realize it or not. With each passing day I am forever thankful for the different congregations we have met and continually look forward to the upcoming experiences.

God's Peace and Blessing to all!  
Tom

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**Date:** 10/18/2002

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

October 18th ~ "Where are we going to sleep tonight? Where are we going to eat? Why isn't our sound working? We're lost again, how do we get to the church?" These are things that are said in our van quite often. For the first time in most of our lives we are totally on our own (with the exception of the YE office that is halfway across the country.) without our parents nearby and without a whole lot of money. So many times we worry what we are going to do when we need things, when we are lost and many other things. Most times it gives me a headache when I start worrying about things and I'm probably the worst one out of the group. So when these headaches start I try to remember the bible verse that we went over many times at training, it's from the book of Matthew 6:31-34 and it reads:

"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do

not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

And when I read that I think to myself, "How silly it is for me to worry so much when God is taking care of me." In everything that we do, whether we are on team or just everyday life (believe me team is NOT everyday life.) God is always taking care of us, so there is no reason to worry at all. This is something that our team is slowly learning to do and we are learning that though our trials, frustrations and worries because every time we come across these things God is always there to help us though everything. I've noticed that when you let him take care of you and you stop worrying, not only do your headaches go away but you start to enjoy life more, you really do. So let it go...let be, and let God take care of your worries.

P.S. Happy Birthday MOM!!!



**Katie Strelow**

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**Date:** 10/22/2002

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

October 22, 2002

Life on team has really been eventful since my last journal entry. Right now I'm in Delray Beach, Florida. I can't complain. Before our journey here, we were in Merritt, Island, right near Orlando, and in honor of our birthdays coming up, Katie and I spent the day at Universal Studios Islands of Adventure. It was amazing. We went on so many roller coasters, walked in the sun, it was everything a day off should be. We even got the opportunity to share with some people the awesome ministry of Youth Encounter. Our prior booking, in Rockledge, Florida is one that totally sticks out in my mind though. I was blessed with this remarkable Host Mom. She was married and had kids, but her husband was on a trip, and her kids were both in college, so it was just me and her in this gorgeous pink house for two nights. Both of the nights I was there, we sat in the living room, and we talked for hours. This



**Becky Brubaker**

woman was truly amazing. Her husband was in the Service, so she had some wonderful stories to tell me of her time living in places like Japan and Hawaii, to name a couple. We got along so well because she loved animals, she even had a snake in her classroom and she let me hold her. (Snakes are my favorite animal, no joke) I could already tell by her stories that this woman had great Faith, and it became even more evident to me on the last morning I got to spend with her. In the car on the way to the church, she asked me if I missed home at all. I told her that I miss my family and friends a bunch, but I am just having so much fun, I tend not to think about it. She agreed with me and said: "There are some things in life that are not in your control. The things that are, I worry about, but the things that aren't, I pray about."

I think this statement is so true, especially on team. (Isn't it funny how almost everything is more true when you're on team?) I know that there are going to be many things that happen while we are on the road. And while we ourselves don't have the power to do anything about it, the power of prayer can. I am learning more and more everyday that when times get tough, don't give up, give it to God.

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**Date:** 10/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

So there once was a Captive Free team that was in its last phase of training. You see this team was blessed enough to have a member of the wonderful Youth Encounter staff ride with them for about the first week of actual road life. For that week the staff member gave tons of advice and tips for the road. How to better survive on the road and how to get the most out of your team experience, for example. The staff member was a huge blessing to the team. He worked with the team and he also played with the team. And the team loved this staff member. But, now it was time for that staff member to leave (tear). The team would be on their own now. Everything was now in their hands. You know how you felt the first time your mom left you home alone with no babysitter? Yeah life felt much like that for our dear team. What would happen? Would they make it through the year? The team offered to let the staff member play bass and just not leave. Hey, that would work right?? But the wise, and probably tired, staff member just laughed and said that it was time for him to leave. So the team asked for one more piece of advice. The staff member thought and moment and then said "Tell them about Jesus. That's all that matters." And so that has been the motto and an inspiration to that team. It has kept them focused on their mission and why they are here. Tell them about Jesus. And so that is my thought for everyone. What else does matter? What else besides the love of Jesus is there? So remember that as you go about your day. Just make sure people know that there is someone who will always love them. So to my family I love you. To my friends hey, thanks for being my friend. And to Jim, we miss you Bro. But thanks for everything. You Rock. And remember to tell them about Jesus. God Bless and Good Night.

Daryl



**Daryl Howard**

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**Date:** 11/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

So God, I truly believe, has a big sense of humor. I mean just look at some of his creations. The spork? Anywho, God uses this sense of humor sometimes to teach us humility. He did this once to me a little while ago in the back roads of Tennessee. I was dropping my two teammates, Phil and Trina, at their host family. I would then be taking Becky, Katie, and myself into town to get our beloved van, Cherry, washed. Tom and our contact were following behind in a car. I turned onto a little country road to drop off Phil and Trina with no problem. It had rained very hard the night before and the road was very wet and dirty but nothing my sweet Van couldn't handle.

There was no room to turn around after dropping off my two teamers, so I continued down the road in search of a place that would be big enough to turn around in. After going about another block or



**Daryl Howard**

so down the road I found the "perfect" spot. A drive way at the bottom of a hill that led to a big nice house; plenty of room. No problem. So I pull the van into the driveway, begin to back up. I backed up a little and then realized that I could just pull forward a little and cut through a tiny, little, insignificant corner of a super small unused field. No problem. I began to pull through this little, insignificant field. Not a problem at all. Tom and our contact take off, knowing full well what a talented and skilled driver I am. I will be right behind them in a second. Alright, here is where things get interesting.

Enter God's sense of humor. The Van slides a little so I hit the gas but it's too late. Cherry begins kicking up the soaked grass and mud that I, the "talented" and "skilled" driver, had just driven us through. Alright, a small problem. After about five minutes Tom and our contact came back. Tom just looked at me, got on that famous Tom smile, and shook his head.

My sweet Cherry was stuck. The next thirty minutes of my life involved me trying to push, pull, lift, and rock the van free. I had nothing. Now we have a problem. Tom now at the wheel and myself, the girls, and our contact pushing; we gave it all we had. Nothing. Becky then got the great idea "Hey lets take pictures of what Daryl did". I was then subjected to a photo shoot, which I hope never come out. But then by the grace of God a Chevy 1500 pick up truck came by. And as you would have it he was the owner of the house. He looked at us and asked if we needed some help. Enter the humility.

I had to then tell the man that yes we were very stuck and any help he could would be much appreciated. The man with no problem turned his truck around hooked a rope from our bumper to his trailer hitch, got in his truck and hit the gas. The next part was a Chevy commercial. With Bob Segar singing "Like a Rock" in the back of my head the man pulled out our Ford van with our fully loaded trailer. The man smiled at us as we thanked him. He then just drove off.

So the lessons I learned that day? First, Chevy trucks rule. And I also learned that God lowers the proud but he will never just leave you. He will never abandon you even if you have gotten yourself into another mess. So that is my story. I'm sure some of my teammates will have something else to say about it. But no matter how the story is told, the story will always show the Grace and the Mercy shown by our Father.

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**Date:** 11/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

As Micheal Tait (dctalk) said to us when we saw him live at a Christian book store in Nashville, "we all have struggles in our lives, we all have our own change of seasons. But no matter what happens God will always be there for us."

As a team we saw a perfect example of this when we visited a girls home this past month. At this home there were many girls who experienced many struggles in life, from using drugs, eating disorders to pregnancy. By being in this home they were trying to overcome those struggles with God's help.

Well, as we walked into the home we were a little nervous about giving them a program. See, most of us had never experienced any real struggles like that. Not that our lives are perfect, because they're not, but how were we suppose to help minister to people when we can not fully understand what they have gone through?

But as soon as we started singing the first song we were no longer worried about what the differences were. The girls that we seemed to be a bit intimidated by were now standing up and singing along with us and we started to have so much fun. Every song that we sang we would look at the girls looking at us and we saw the joy of the Lord all over their faces. Sometimes they would join us in the songs that we sang and they would lift their hands up to God. You could truly see that they in love with Him. And at that moment is when I truly understood what Micheal Tait said, that every once in a while we do slip up, we do fall, but when we do God is always there to lift us up again, that's why we call him our Savior. GO GOD!



**Katie Strelow**

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**Date:** 11/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**



The first few months of team have been very interesting and challenging at the same time. God puts you in situations that you would never expect and they can really help you grow. Our team recently was in a school for kids who dropped out of school for one reason or another and it was quite different from what I was used to coming from a very orderly home. It seemed that most of the kids were receptive to what we were sharing. I was surprised that they didn't think we were punk kids who didn't care about them. They had just as good a time as we did. It was fun to spend time with people who had real problems and were getting through them. The school also showed me how blessed I am and how I should never take what I have and who I have for granted. I pray that I will encounter many more adventures that will stretch me in many ways.



**Phil Knudtson**

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**Date:** 11/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

I have always heard about people being alone (without their family) for the holidays, but my teammates and I never realized what it was like until recently. During this holiday season, the teams have been traveling and are not able to go home until close to Christmas. So some of us, this is the first time we have been away from our families for Thanksgiving. While we are together and with some great people, it is still not the same. During these weeks our team has been ministering to each other more than ever. We all miss home in some form or fashion and we all wish we could be there to celebrate with our loved ones. However, since that is not possible I can think of no other people I would want to spend the Holidays with besides my team. It has been during this time that we are reminded that it is important to minister to the people we meet on the road, but it is equally as important to minister to yourselves. Because without a healthy team, we cannot have the successful ministry we all hope to have. God bless our hosts during this time of the year and God bless (and comfort) my teammates as well!



**Thomas Montgomery**

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**Date:** 11/29/2002

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

It's almost time for mid-winter training, and home for the holidays. Things have wound down a lot for Captive Free of the South East. We have done a bunch of little things here and there, but we haven't done a family night program in about two weeks. I almost feel guilty, because I feel like I am being lazy. Even during this break, ESPECIALLY during this break, I have felt God's presence, and have definitely come to appreciate and to be thankful for all of the things he has given me.

It never ceases to amaze me how wonderful the host families are that take us in. I have said this before, but it's hard to miss home when everywhere you go, the people treat us with so much love and respect.

I am so thankful for my team, and all that they do for me. The girls get along just great, and even though I had to live with three brothers for the majority of my childhood years, I am still very thankful for the three boys that God put on my team.

I thank God for the good times that he has blessed me with so far this year. (Getting stuck in the mud, for instance. Ha ha Daryl, I can't wait to see those pictures!) I know in my heart I will never forget these memories that are being built.



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 1/7/2003

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

Its the beginning of January, and the skies are blue, the sun is shining, I was outside in pants and a T-shirt, and I felt no coldness. Ah. I love the south. Yes, my team and I are back in our region, and i will admit, i missed it. I had an awesome break, I loved seeing my family, but I just felt so lazy at home. I was pumped and ready to continue on spreading the word with my team. I love life on the road, what can I say?

My team does this puppet show where the human finds this 'Purple Stuff,' which is the coolest stuff in the whole world. All these puppets come up and want to have some of this awesome stuff too, but the human refuses to share, because they found it and its theirs. And each time they don't share it, their portion of the Purple Stuff gets smaller and smaller. But when they finally do share it, it grows so huge, and there is so much of it, they can't even hold on to it all. The moral of the story is that Purple Stuff is like God's love. It's not fair to keep it to yourself. Each time you share it, it grows, because more people know about it, and it just feels good to pass it on. I noticed that especially coming back from break, and doing our Family Night Programs and worship services again. I feel it more each time I share what God has done for me, and it feels awesome. God just rocks like that, and he always will.

~Becky~



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 1/8/2003

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

First of all I want to say how wonderful it is to be back on the road again. It was so great to be home and see my family and help out and the flower store but it's times like we had today that makes me and the rest of the team love what we are doing this year. This morning we had a chapel for a school with about 180 kids. The all walked in the sanctuary at 8:30am, eyes almost open and shy. The pastor said the verse for the day and turned it over to us as we started with a couple songs which the kids didn't seem too excited about. But then all of a sudden they started jumping up and down like crazy, singing at the top of their lungs with huge smiles across their faces. And for the rest of the forty minutes that we had with them we continued to jump up and down and sing our praisies to God as loud as we could. IT WAS AWESOME. If anyone was to ask me in what way do you see God? I would have to say in that chapel that we had this morning, actually anytime that I see a child's face light up because they get excited about God. When I see their faces I see joy, peace, love and innocence and it's something that I hope they hang on to for a long time. These are the times that make being a member of Captive Free the best. Yea Chapels! Yea Kids! YEA GOD!



**Katie Strelow**

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**Date:** 1/13/2003

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**

One night in Pensacola, Florida, Daryl and I were driving home from a program. We were following our host home to their house because it was quite difficult to find our home. We were relaxed and having a good time cruising in the van when we finally arrived to our host home. When we arrived we noticed that the person in the car we were following was not our host and we had been following the wrong person around town. At first it was a little scary, not only for us but the person who was getting chased. Suddenly our host home drove past us and mocked us for being so absent minded. We arrived safely a few minutes later, minus our dignity. The story is good metaphor for how we must always be on our guard on the road and everywhere because we never know who is watching us or what examples we are setting forth. I am learning that on team it is important to be constantly awake because we don't want to get lost. And it's good to know that God is always there to help us through the times when we actually are lost.



**Phil Knudtson**

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**Date:** 1/16/2003

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

Tonight I was able to meet someone in the early stages of their discernment process. We are here at Newberry College, and we did a mid-week worship service. We, since the group was college age, I was picked to give my personal testimony. Those of you that don't know, my sharing is basically about my discernment process and how God has a plan for your life. After to service this guy told me that everything I talk about related to him. So, we spent the next 15-20 minutes talking about his thoughts and I shared mine. It was then that I had yet another example of why God called me to be in Team in 2002-2003. It was to share my experience with this guy and let him know that everything he is thinking, praying, and worrying about is normal. Who knows if he will ever go to Seminary, but atleast I've helped him feel a little more normal and less stress about the process. God does wonderous things for us! Most of the time we don't even know it. It is ever more remarkable when we do. God bless and take care!!



**Thomas Montgomery**

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**Date:** 1/19/2003

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

I had the pleasure to stay with my cousin last week. I was a little worried at first. See I haven't seen them in two years. I didn't know if they would remember or not. But after the first few minutes of introduction I felt like I had known them for years. It was so awesome. The one thing that tied us together was our love of God. That just removed all of our boundaries and awkwardness. It was truly amazing. Our love of God connected us despite the time and distance. So I would like to say a special thanks to my Uncle Mike and Aunt Natasha and the family. You were such a blessing to me in so many ways. You will always be in my prayers. God again is so awesome in so many ways. He makes us all truly family all the time.



**Daryl Howard**

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**Date:** 1/24/2003

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

Taking things for granted is something that everybody does once they get use to things being a certin way. For our team we have been taking each other for granted with all the little things that we do for each other and also with all the talents that each of us contribute to the team. Just recently Becky got a bit of the flu, luckily the day that she got it we didn't have a program or anything but the next day we did. So in between checking on her and making sure she had everything that she needed I sat and thought about what would happen if she didn't get better by tomorrow, since she is our lead vocal. And then I started to think about what would happen if Tom got sick or Phil or Daryl, that would not be good either. Then for that moment I didn't take their talents for granted because I actually realized that without one person on the team we just wouldn't be able to do the best we could.

Then I started to think about all the wonderful people in my life; like my family, Sam, my friends back home, the staff at the office and the awesome people that we have met on the road. Sometimes I don't realize how lucky I am to have them to love and to rely on. And most importantly, GOD. He has given us so many things, it's unreal! And most times we don't take the time to look around or to even think about it and we tend to miss out on thanking him or all the wonderful things that he has done for us and we end up asking him for more things. Therefore we start taking him for granted too.

So my gold nugget for those that are reading this journal entry to to stop for at least a couple minutes and day and look and think about all the wonderful blessing that God has given you, embrace the things that you have, tell the people in your life that you love them and most importantly tell God thank you.



**Katie Strelow**



Hope you have a wonderful day!!!!  
Katie

P.S.~ just so you know Becky only had the 24 hour bug and she was fine for the program. Thank you God!

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**Date:** 1/28/2003

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**

It's fun to be in the South Eastern part of the United States coming from Canada. Recently we were in Simpsonville, South Carolina doing a program for a local church. The big news of the town was that they were about to get 3 inches of snow in the evening. Coming from Canada I didn't think that snow was such a big deal. When the snow arrived the next morning it was scary seeing some of the people on the road, they weren't prepared to drive on ice. I guess you just need to experience snow to know how to drive on it. Even though it was cold and snowy I felt a new excitement experiencing the snow with some of the Southerners. Weather somehow is a common ground for people to talk about. It is a great conversational starter and everybody has stories to tell.



**Phil Knudtson**

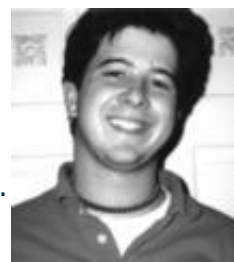
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**Date:** 1/31/2003

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

So the adventures of Captive Free South East continues. Yesterday we went out on our team outing. We are in the mountains of North Carolina, the Appalachians to be specific. So we decided to go ice skating. We heard one of the ski resorts had a ice rink so we set out on that fateful Thursday night. So Tom was driving and was doing a fine job navigating thru the misty back roads. We had to stop 2 or 3 times to make sure we were still going the right way. Well we finally began to climb a mountain that would take us to this ski resort. Beech Mountain here we come. So its pitch dark, a fog had set in that gave you no visibility, and the road had more bends and twists in it Snake Alley back in Missouri. Was pretty insane. So we still don't know how we made it up the mountain but we did. And we got to go ice skating. And it turned out to be an awesome night. I will definitely never forget that mountain top experience.



**Daryl Howard**

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**Date:** 1/31/2003

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

As Daryl has just mentioned, we all went to Beech Mountain, NC for a team outing of ice skating. As one would expect, we were not the only ones skating that night. There was a family of four from Warner Robins, GA (where we were two weeks ago), and a 12 year old girl and mother from Melbourne, FL (by Cocoa Beach). The girl was skating by herself with her mother sitting in the bleachers watching. Now, being from Southern Mississippi I don't get much opportunity to ice skate. So, this was like my third time EVER skating in my 26yrs of life. It was this girl's second time. So, she and I skated around the rink together holding hands and using each other for balance. This was all going on while my fellow teammates were whizzing by and doing spins and turns and stuff. She and I were more than happy to continue skating slowly around the rink until we got use to it. It was nice to have someone to skate and learn with. After it was over I was able to talk to her and her family about the ministry that CFSE and Youth Encounter are doing and mentioned that we'd be down in Florida later in the year. It would be really nice to meet up with my ice skating partner and her family someday. And, if you are reading this, thank you for taking the time to skate



**Thomas Montgomery**

with me. God's blessing to all.

Thomas

PS. To my family, friends, and loved ones thank you for your prayers and support. This wonderful ministry opportunity wouldn't be possible without the loving support of so many people!!

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**Date:** 2/4/2003

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**

Our team spent a day in Boone, NC last week. After we had eaten our team went to Big Lots to look at the merchandise. We spent a few minutes looking around at the toys. Eventually we ran into some Nerf guns (Rapid Fire 20, sweet!). The boys decided that we couldn't let these guns stay in the store, so we each bought a gun for the road. We took the guns home and we found out quickly that these Nerf guns were like no other Nerf guns we had ever used before. These guns have brought the boys closer together by making us act like kids again. When we open up like children it just brings us so much closer. We are having so much fun on the road.



**Phil Knudtson**

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**Date:** 2/11/2003

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

We just had our first event last weekend! The Memphis Quake totally rocked. It was small, but I loved it because we got more time to get to know everybody and to hang out with them all. I've been to Youth Quakes before when I was in middle school, so I knew that they were gonna be tiring, but I was also sick, and losing my voice, and as one of the main vocalists, I'll tell you, it was not pretty. But, God totally got me through it, squeaky voice and all, and I had the time of my life.

So, after a long, but wicked fun weekend, I was so pumped for our day off on Monday. Sleep would not quite be the word for what I got to do on my day off however. We agreed to go on a local TV show here in Memphis, and we met up at 6:30 in the am. We set up all of our equipment, and sound checks were at 8:00. Yes, I was tired, but as soon as I saw all of the cameras, and the crew started telling us where to be, and how it was gonna work, I got so excited. We sang one song, and then we had a short interview. It was so fun, and at the same time, we were ministering to anybody who was watching it. The whole thing was totally live, so I was praying that I wouldn't say or do anything stupid. The song we sang was our theme song, and I have been known to forget the words on that song quite a bit, but I know that God was watching over us then, as he always does, because everything went very smoothly. So, in short, we were blessed with an awesome time here in Memphis.



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 2/13/2003

**Submitted by:** Katie Strelow

**Journal Entry:**

"No man is an island," is the beginning quote from one of my favorite movies, About a Boy. However, it goes on to say that in our society today it can be that a person could make his/her own island with all of today's technology. When I was in school I could spend the whole weekend by myself, entertaining myself with movies, my computer and treating myself to whatever I wanted to from my own refrigerator. Never once would I have to leave my room or talk to anyone for a whole two days. But then, of course, I didn't have to really interact with anyone except for my teachers and occasionally some of my fellow students if I didn't want to. Of course I did, (almost a little too much) but the option was always there that I didn't have to.



**Katie Strelow**

This year is a little different though. This year I don't really have a choice because there is no way that anyone could actually be an island being on team even if they wanted to. Mainly because you are constantly around people ALL THE TIME! But also because there is nobody that could possibly do all the things that need to be done while being on team. We all have our own jobs this year; we actually all have two to three jobs each. Even as I am writing this everyone is off on their own doing their jobs. Daryl is out by the van calling contacts, Becky is on the floor across the room counting necklaces and Tom is sitting at the next table taking care of the team's financial duties. And even this last weekend when we were at our first Quake I learned that without everyone's hard work, such as Jen who was hosting it and doing all the necessary behind the scenes duties, Cathy and the Shrimp Shack Shooters performing their awesome music, Tim telling everyone his awesome stories and us doing all that we did. And even Shane and Rich teaching me everything that there is to know (or it seemed that way) about the sound board. (Thanks guys!) If any of the people on staff this weekend even tried to do it all themselves it would be far more then impossible, the Quake would have never went as wonderful as it did. And if anyone on our team would try to do everything themselves it just wouldn't work. No one who works in a team setting, whether it be in a job, being in a band or just helping out at church, no man can be an island. And that why God gives us our own special gifts, services and jobs, so that when we all come together with all God has given us we can work in community and get our tasks done nicely and successfully.

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men." 1 Corinthians 12: 4-6

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**Date:** 2/14/2003

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

God has blessed me with so many wonderful things in my life. He has blessed me with a great family and awesome friends. He has given me many gifts and also the desire to use those gifts for ministry. God has definitely blessed me with a wonderful year of ministry. Over these last 6 months on team I have been to so many places and met so many people who have touched my life. It wasn't until recently, when the team returned to a city we had previously visited and I saw my **Thomas Montgomery** old host family, that I realized how blessed I have been this year. These people opened their home and lives to me for two days and already they feel like family. We talked about their plans for the future, my plans for the future, and each others friends. It was like seeing people I had known for years. During this year of constant travel, it is nice to see face with which you have a history. I love meeting new people, but it is really fun to see friends. You are truly able to relax more and enjoy your time together.

There are more things God has blessed me with this year. First of all, I have a more clear sense of "Call." I still know that I am called to Pastoral Ministry, but I feel I am led to more a Youth and Music focus. In the next few years I hope to hone my musical skills and obtain training in Youth Ministry as well as my Master of Divinity. The last thing God has blessed me with is a new love in my life. This person is absolutely wonderful and truly a gift from God. She and I not only have great conversations, but she understands what I am going through this year. She is a wonderful sounding board and a strong woman of God who constantly challenges me whether she knows it or not! I thank God every night for all the gifts God has blessed me with, and am forever thankful for this ministry opportunity and the people he has put in my life!

I would like to say "hello" to all the people that where at the Memphis Quake. It was an awesome weekend (my first event ever), and you all made it such a great time. I have never been surrounded by so many youth who love the Lord as strongly as these youth. Also, thank you to all my host families this year. You have all been constant blessings in my life and have continued to give me the energy needed to carry on in this ministry.

Yours in Christ!

Thomas Montgomery

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**Date:** 2/25/2003

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

Well, life on the road has been pretty eventful since our Memphis Quake. (Did I ever mention how much that rocked?) Not too long after that we made our way back down to the sunny state of Florida. I really cannot express how much I love Florida, or the whole South East region for that matter. Everything is so different here. Good different though. Like, each state is like it's own country, with it's different way of speaking, and the foods, and the weather. My team always jokes, like Phil is from Canada, and I'm from Alaska, and they always refer to us as me being from the country Alaska, and Phil being from the great state of Canada. But no matter where any of us are from, no matter where you go, things are different. Life is different. People are different. During our programs, I always refer to a verse from Hebrews 13:8 that says: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." We cannot control the changes around us or the fact that not everything is the same, not all people are the same. But we can count on the fact that He will always be there, to love us and to take care of us.



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 4/1/2003

**Submitted by:** Daryl Howard

**Journal Entry:**

Hello all!! How are you? Good. So let's play a game called catch up with Captive Free South East - March Edition. Ready? Pull up a chair and get ready. Here we go!!!! So we will start with Virginia Beach Congress. That was insane. Lost and Found rocked, Bill Yonkers is the MAN, and if you have not seen the North East Team yet you are missing out. Was so much fun working with all these great people. Plus, to add to the fun, Becky's and my parents showed up. Now the party can start. Then after that awesome time we went to Tom's sister-in-law's church. And the fun just kept coming. God is good. But we all know this. Later this month when we were in Franklinton the lovely and talented Miss Becky fell and hit her finger, hard. Poor girl had a big swollen finger, but did that stop her from being the master of sing along teaching? Oh no. She still rocked. Which was good because up comes Raleigh Quake. Now Raleigh was our first semi-huge event all buy ourselves. Thank God we had the wonderful Lori there to help out. Raleigh went great. The people there were amazing and it was a riot getting to know all of them. And today I am going west on Highway 16 eventually ending up on the north part of Atlanta. We just left Savannah and had another amazing time with Justin and all the awesome people there. The people I have met this month have been such a God send. Sometimes you hope that they are getting as much from you as you are getting from them. Know what I mean? Its fun when the right people always seem to come around just when you need them. It's God's sense of humor at work. Well that's all from me. To sum up, we are all well and very busy. Life is good. And Mama I will see you in 2 weeks. God bless ya'll and God bless America.



**Daryl Howard**

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**Date:** 4/2/2003

**Submitted by:** Phil Knudtson

**Journal Entry:**

A few days ago our team went to Trinity Lutheran Church in Savannah, Georgia. We had a great time with their church and felt very much at home. The cool thing about Savannah is that Justin Johnson, a past teamer, works for the church. Justin and I spent our team's day off hanging out downtown Savannah. I think God was so obvious in Justin's life and it gave me such a joy. He infused a passion for many things that had become dormant in my life. Talking about God with the backdrop being Savannah was a rejuvenating experience. I was so blessed to spend my day off with such a fun person. When you meet people like that it really jumps starts you and you feel like a new person. Savannah was awesome!



**Phil Knudtson**

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**Date:** 4/3/2003

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

I just have to say that I love event season. The one and only congress that the South East has is the famous Virginia Beach Congress, and I was looking forward to that very much, especially because one of my Uncles lives in VA Beach, and I was looking forward to seeing him as well. Before things were getting started at the Congress, people were registering, and I was in the lobby of the hotel mingling and stuff. Well, my Uncle comes in and kind of surprises me, because I didn't expect to see him until later that weekend. But he asks me if I was going to be in the lobby for a while, because he had to go move his car. So, as I'm chillin' at the Sales Table with Andie, in walks my parents! They flew all the way from Anaheim, CA to come to this event to see me! It was so wicked cool! I was mad surprised. I had no idea, and they knew ever since Christmas that they were coming! God has definitely blessed me with such a wonderful family. I love my parents so much, and it meant so much to me that they flew all the way across the country to see me and my team. I even got to spend part of my day off with them. I'm telling ya, Virginia Beach is such a beautiful place. So, God has given me many gifts in life, but thing that I struggle with everyday, and my team will tell you this is true, is my clumsiness. One fine day in Franklinton, NC me and my team are unloading, and I grab the cymbol case, and the electric guitar case, and I walk in. But you see, in order to get to the sanctuary, there are stairs, and I don't do well with stairs normally, so add in those things that I was carrying, and you end up with me tripping up the stairs, dropping everything, and my index finger on my right hand became the size of Kentucky. I jammed it hard core against the concrete stairs when I fell. It hurt so bad. It's just a good thing that I don't get embarrassed very easily, because that was one wicked fall. And I know it was just my finger, and it could have been worse, but every time I clapped during a song it would hurt, and its been about two weeks, and I still can't bend it very well. But, I am doing much better. It's almost time to go home for Easter. Sunny weather and my wacky family awaits me in the sunny state of California. The South East team is keeping pretty busy, so I know it will come up quick. Happy Easter Everyone!



**Becky Brubaker**

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**Date:** 4/4/2003

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

One thing that has constantly amazed me is how much people give of themselves for our team. A lot of the time I'm thinking, "hey, I'm the one doing the ministry here." For example, in the last three weeks I have had three youth give up their beds and sleep on the couch so that I could have a good night sleep. Sometimes it has been for more than one night. If that is not a sacrifice, I don't know what is. When I was in school, I had a hard time giving up my bed for a relative, but never would I dream of giving it up for a stranger. That is just one of the many ways I have felt ministered to while on the road!!



**Thomas Montgomery**

Yours in Christ,  
Thomas

PS. I would appreciate it if people would send up a prayer for my brother James who is on the Mediterranean right now! Thanks and God bless!

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**Date:** 5/26/2003

**Submitted by:** Thomas Montgomery

**Journal Entry:**

As I am ending my Memorial Day break I am entering VBS training with a little hesitation. For the last 8 months, my team has been traveling around the great South Eastern part of the USA (with a sojourn or two outside our region) traveling



to about 4-5 cities a week. During this time I have seen parts of my native Southeast that I had not seen before team and certainly met wonderful people. Our ministry is about to change somewhat. Our traveling is decline in large because we will stay in a city for an entire week. So, we will not meet as many people or see as many cities, but we will know both the cities and the people much better than before. I'm a little hesitant because I have thoroughly enjoyed the last 8 months of team and I'm not sure how I'm going to enjoy being in a town for a such a long time.



I know I'll love Vacation Bible school, but when you've had such an awesome time, **Thomas Montgomery** how could it possibly get better?!?!?!?

Yours in Christ,  
Thomas Montgomery

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**Date:** 6/4/2003

**Submitted by:** Becky Brubaker

**Journal Entry:**

I cannot believe that it is June already! Two more months, and this will be all over! Is that excitement or sadness you ask? Well, I can't even tell you that. I will miss being on Captive Free more than anything. I have gotten to see so much, and have met the most wonderful people during my travels, it will be very hard to end it. Team really teaches you not to take things for granted. For instance, I never fully appreciated the awesomeness that is my closet. You get extremely used to finding wrinkly clothes in your suitcase. Also, the convenience of a compact car is something I will appreciate much more when I get home. God has taught me so much this year, and I know I will be a much better and smarter person once I reach home. (Yea California!) But this year on Captive Free South East has been the best of my life. I'm young, I know, but seriously, I am thinking about applying for an International Team in the future.

Right now we have ventured out of our region into Maryland, and had one of our last Family Night Programs before VBS starts. I am really looking forward to experiencing what God has in store for me and my team during these last couple months.



**Becky Brubaker**

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