



## Believe in West Virginia

### Special points of interest:

- In total almost 1,500 attended SRT events in WV during 2007, with 830 purchasing rings and 180 committing themselves to the Lord
- Storehouse WV gives away over \$2 million in product to over 260 different organizations
- BiWV sponsored banquet raises over \$10,000 for Appalachian Teen Challenge
- BiWV receives NIP State Tax Credits to share with donors
- Churches united in fight to stop gambling expansion
- New Board members added

### Inside this issue:

- Teen Challenge Banquet **2**
- Executive Director's Letter **3**
- Youth Encouragers Update **3**
- Storehouse WV Happenings **4**



Home in Hurricane that received new windows from Storehouse WV

## President's Letter

Greetings to all supporters and associates of Believe In West Virginia. I can't believe that it has been about six months since we last communicated with you. This newsletter is the vehicle we have chosen to use to provide updates about the various ministries and initiatives we have undertaken and those we are contemplating for 2008. I will hit the highlights in this letter to you and more detail will be provided in the pages that follow.

I am very pleased and happy to report that we have added three excellent

## NIP Tax Credits

As mentioned in the letter from our President, and as many of you are aware, most non-profit organizations have to work hard to raise the funds they need to help others. This year for the first time Believe in West Virginia has been given State Tax Credits, through the Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP), that we can

share with those who want to support the work of BiWV in a substantial way. NIP credits are issued to supporters who give a one-time minimum gift of \$500. The credit amount is equal to half of the contribution. So a \$1,000 contribution would receive a \$500 credit, as-

new members to our board of directors, Scott Barnette, Greg Thomas and Gen. Joseph Skaff. Scott is a native of South Charleston, holds degrees from WVU and WVU School of Law and currently works with Goldman Associates, Inc. of Charleston. He has recently been serving as chairman of our Storehouse Advisory Board. Greg is President of Targeted Communications Strategies and is very active and interested in the political arena. Gen. Skaff is a Major General Ret. from the US Army and served in state government as Secre-



New Board Members: Thomas (L), Skaff (R) with President Gaunch (c) Not Pictured: Barnette

tary of Military Affairs and Public Safety. He brings a wealth of talent and wisdom to our board.

Our Storehouse continues to be an excellent ministry under the leadership of John deBlecourt, our capable Executive Director. We

suming that we have the credits remaining. Each organization is given a limited amount of credits, so please contact the Executive Director if you have questions. There is a check off box on the included return sheet if you are interested in receiving the credit.

Pictured are those who came forward to show



their commitment to Christ at the November 17 SRT Show held at Maranatha Fellowship in St. Albans. There were 52 in all.

*"We are grateful for what we have and certainly grateful to those of you who faithfully support us financially, but the need is so great and the opportunities continue to present themselves to us."*

### Board of Directors

**C. Edward Gaunch**  
President

**Rev. Jack Henry**  
Vice President and Founder

**Sam Sommerville**  
Secretary / Treasurer

**Joey Holland**

**Rev. Jack Maxwell**

**Rev. Ron Thaxton**

**Gary Midkiff**

**Selina Cosby Midkiff**

**Scott Barnette**

**Gen. Joseph Skaff**

**Greg Thomas**

## President's Letter (continued)

are currently praying for opportunities to open distribution sites in several locations in Southern WV. More details about the Storehouse are included in the body of this newsletter.

Youth Encouragers Network hosted the most recent Silver Ring Thing presentation in St. Albans at Maranatha Fellowship on November 17. We are grateful to the leadership and congregation of Maranatha Fellowship for cooperating with us to make the event successful. We continue to be encouraged as we witness the life changing experiences at these events.

As a new Youth Encouragers Network ministry, we have decided to partner with Appalachian Teen Challenge of

Athens, WV. Teen Challenge is a Christian discipleship training center for males age 18 and older, who are experiencing difficulty functioning effectively in society. It is a residential program for young men with life-controlling issues, such as substance abuse and/or addiction. The program has a success rate that is miraculous. A program and facility for young women is currently being developed and constructed. BIWV hosted the first annual dinner for Teen Challenge at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Charleston in October. We are grateful to Emmanuel Baptist and to those who worked to make the event a success.

It is still our desire to create a statewide organization designed to unite Christians in the marketplace. The long

term vision is to have groups/chapters in every county of the state. Current plans are to begin to make the dream a reality in the first quarter of 2008. Please pray for us as we move forward.

Finally, finances are always an issue with BIWV. Perhaps God wants us to remain humble in this regard. We are grateful for what we have and certainly grateful to those of you who faithfully support us financially, but the need is so great and the opportunities continue to present themselves to us. We have been blessed to receive a couple of grants which we have put to great use. Also, I am pleased to report that we have been granted state tax credits to distribute to contributors. We are enclosing an envelope for those who might feel lead to make a gift.

## Teen Challenge Banquet

On October 20, 2007 BiWV hosted a banquet at Emmanuel Baptist church, on Charleston's West side, to introduce the men from Teen Challenge to about 200 guests. After dinner, attendees heard the ATC men's choir sing and share their personal testimonies. These moving testimonies had several common themes including the repeated expression of reaching the bottom before they came to ATC, having done things

they would have never anticipated doing, all in an effort to stop the hurt within their souls. Many of those sharing indicated that they had been brought up in a Christian home, but that they never completely surrendered to Christ. One more common thread to the testimonies was their joy in now having been delivered and learning how to rebuild their lives.

One of the purposes of the BiWV banquet was to raise funds to help meet the



needs of Appalachian Teen Challenge. Those who attended were very generous, and pledged and donated over \$10,000. Director Nickels and the BiWV Board were excited about the amount raised and look forward to working together in the future. Thanks to all who attended, and may God Bless those who so generously gave.

## Executive Director's Letter

During the past year we have seen God's hand guiding and directing us as we have continued some existing programs and jumped into some new areas. During this year we have met with many organizations looking for ways that we can help meet needs and spur growth. Some of these discussions have produced concrete action, like our involvement in the anti-gambling expansion efforts and the banquet we hosted for Appalachian Teen Challenge. Other discussions are just getting started, like our effort to start a training program to train at-risk youth with construction skills. Still other efforts are laying the spiritual groundwork for change, like our meetings with Dr. John Perkins and the City Impact Roundtable.

We started the year by hosting two SRT shows in Fayette County, where we saw 700 attend. As you

will see in another article we ended the year with another SRT event in St. Albans. We also attended, promoted, and supported another non-BiWV sponsored SRT event in Parkersburg.

Although our efforts to defeat the Kanawha County expansion of gambling referendum were not successful we did see some positive results. As a result of the advertisements that we ran, our organization was introduced to many new people and groups. The desire to see this effort defeated caused many churches to take a political stand, where they had previously been silent, and it brought together a divergent group of faith communities. Our hope is that this will lay the ground work for future collaboration.

In another article you will read about our work

with Storehouse WV.

All of the efforts that we undertake depend on volunteers and others who are interested in improving life for all of those who live in West Virginia. As you read through this newsletter please consider how you might be able to get involved. Could you volunteer at the Storehouse? Could you help to promote bringing the Silver Ring Thing team to your area? If you do not have the time maybe you could help by providing finances to allow us to move forward. You might want to take advantage of the NIP State Tax Credits. Hopefully you will also lift up our work in prayer. If you can help us please see the included Response Sheet. I am looking forward to seeing what God has in mind for BiWV in 2008. We will keep you informed.



**Executive Director  
John deBlecourt**

### *BiWV Mission Statement*

*"Believe in West Virginia Leadership Foundation is a Christ centered catalyst helping to transform the economic, political, social and spiritual environment of West Virginia, thereby communicating hope and a brighter future for all."*

## Youth Encouragers Update

The Silver Ring Thing team returned to WV on November 17 and we had a great time. The event was attended by over 430 people and was hosted by Maranatha Fellowship (in St. Albans), in their new Family Life Center. The team is made up of young people from around the country who commit themselves for the tour year, to go and share their stories about why

they have chosen to remain abstinent until marriage. This year's team includes one engaged couple who are looking forward to exchanging their silver rings on their wedding day as a symbol of the gift they have kept for one another.

Of those who attended, 265 chose to purchase a Silver Ring, showing their commitment to absti-

nence. The show isn't just about purity it's also about souls, and on November 17, 52 young people committed their hearts to serving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. These kinds of results make the effort more than worthwhile. BiWV is grateful to all our sponsors and volunteers who made the event possible.



Students showing off the Silver Rings in St. Albans

Stage Ready to receive SRT crowd



## Storehouse West Virginia™ Happenings

**Storehouse WV** continues to share items with organizations that are helping the needy in their communities. Since we opened the Storehouse we have given away over \$2 million in Gifts in Kind (GiK) donations and Building Materials through 263 different organizations. During the last few months we have been fortunate to have been able to add some new Building Materials.

One example of how the Building Materials are being used comes from a group who came in recently to pick up items on behalf of a young lady and her children. This twenty-something

woman, was part of a GED preparation program and she is working to better things for her and her children. As her GED instructors learned more about her situation they wanted to help. She had been looking for a place to live in by her grandmother, but this home had been abandoned for some time and needed lots of work to make it habitable.

The GED instructors were part of an organization that visits Storehouse WV regularly. They wanted to help this young lady and knew that we had Simon-ton windows available. They measured the current window openings and arranged to visit the

Storehouse. When they came into the Storehouse we took their measurements and found five windows that would work in this home. While they were there they were shown the GELD-WEN door skins that we had just received. They believed they could use the panels in place of sheetrock on the interior walls. The ladies picked up 80 panels to finish off the house. There is plenty more work to be done, but they are making great progress.

We are always looking for new non-profit organizations that would like to pick up items and new companies that would like to donate product, so please spread the word about the good work Storehouse WV is doing.



Home in Jackson County that received windows and door panels from Storehouse WV



These ladies are an example of the Storehouse WV motto of "Sharing Tangible Hope".

Founded in 2002, **Believe in West Virginia** is a faith based non-profit group that was formed to help create jobs and change the business culture in West Virginia. These are long term goals, which we are actively pursuing, but we also wanted to address the needs of those who are living in the state. One of the ways that we are working to help our residents is through **Storehouse WV**. Another way we are working to help West Virginia is through bringing together church Youth Workers, in what we call the WV **Youth Encouragers Network** (WV YEN). Through WV YEN we are promoting the *Silver Ring Thing*, a sexual abstinence program for teens, and we are helping support *Appalachian Teen Challenge*, a substance abuse program.



## Believe In West Virginia

Phone: (304) 552-7601  
E-mail: john@believeinwv.org

***The Future of Mountain State  
Prosperity***

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.BELIEVEINWV.ORG

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

PRSRT STD

US POSTAGE PAID

CHARLESTON, WV

PERMIT NO. 104