

believe!

Good news from the believers who *Believe in West Virginia*



President's Letter by C. Edward Gaunch

Special points of interest:

- NIP Credits Available
- Believe in WV website redesigned
- Volunteers provide long term help
- 3 SRT events in WV in 2011
- Bishop Bickerton & Governor Tomblin
- Use GoodSearch to help Believe
- Rev. Henry and Guardian Angel

It has been some time since we have reported to you regarding the activities of Believe In West Virginia. Everyone is busy, but there is no good excuse for not providing you with regular updates for the various ministries. God is blessing us as we continue to do his bidding. The articles contained in this newsletter will give you the latest information. Please read through the entire publication and allow God to speak to you about how you might support our endeavors.

Storehouse WV continues as our most visible ministry. Hundreds of churches and other charitable organiza-

tions representing thousands of individuals are being blessed as we distribute million of dollars of product value. The Storehouse could benefit greatly from more space which would allow us to handle more merchandise and thereby more people. Ten thousand square feet of free or affordable space would be perfect. Perhaps someone reading this will be able to help. John DeBlecourt, our Executive Director, continues to do a marvelous job of managing the Storehouse. More details about Storehouse WV are contained in the article which follows.

Our Youth Encouragers Network ministry (YEN) has become more viable. In 2011, there were three Silver Ring Thing (SRT) events in WV. Many middle and high school students heard the abstinence message. Please read the SRT article that follows to get the details. The YEN ministry has been expanded to support organizations that are having a positive impact on children and teenagers. Last year we were able to provide \$32,000 of direct financial assistance to The Bob Burdette Center, The Fellowship of Christian Athletes,

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Neighborhood Investment Program Credits

As the New Year begins everyone will spend some time thinking about what we owe Uncle Sam and the folks in Charleston. Regardless of whether you own your own business, itemize your personal deductions or take the standard deduction almost all of us owe state taxes. Fortunately, the state of West Virginia has made it possible for Believe in WV to help you reduce what you

owe the State, through their Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) state tax credits.

The West Virginia Legislature has approved these NIP credits to help encourage giving to certain non-profit organizations. Every year the WV Development Office accepts applications from non-profits wishing to receive the credits. Each application is evaluated and credits are awarded based

on their rank and nature of the request. Each year there are more requests than credits available. This program is a huge help to the organizations that receive the credits and to those who donate to them.

Donors receive state tax credits equal to 50% of their donation, with a minimum of a \$500 gift. When combined with their normal federal deduction for charitable con-

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West Virginia Youth Encouragers Network



Mission:

WV YEN is a program to educate and encourage the youth of West Virginia to make wise moral choices, and to support organizations that are changing lives.

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During the Legislative session Believe provides email updates about items of interest to Christians. If you would like to receive these updates, please provide us with your email address.

In the last year the West Virginia Youth Encouragers Network (WV YEN) has taken on a new mission: to support organizations that are changing young lives. Believe in West Virginia board members began raising funds in the fall of 2010 to support five area programs: Arts in Action, the Bob Burdette Center, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the Silver Ring Thing (SRT) in West Virginia (see page 4 for more information on SRT in WV). These organizations are encouraging children to make wise moral choices.

Arts in Action is a non-profit academy of performing and visual arts with studio space in Hurricane and Charleston. The highly skilled artistic educators not

only teach a variety of dance, music, and art, but they also help students to value themselves and others. One of the ongoing success stories involves a family of three girls (ages 8, 11, and 12) who were removed from their parents' custody and were entrusted to their grandmother. Shortly thereafter, the grandmother sought out activities for the girls that would promote self-esteem, while being healthy and fun. Her limited income made it impossible for the sisters to participate in these kinds of activities until they found the Arts in Action dance program. All three girls qualified for a full financial-aid award and began studying ballet, tap and hip-hop dance. After four years of dancing at Arts in Action,

these girls have improved in all seven components of wellness (Social, Spiritual, Physical, Occupational, Intellectual, Emotional, and Environmental). Their grandmother recently said: "Arts in Action saved my granddaughter's lives!" WV YEN helps make scholarships like these possible.

The **Bob Burdette Center** (BBC) is a free after-school and summer program for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Operating at four locations on Charleston's west side, the center is working "to provide a healthy environment that fosters holistic growth in students." One young man, who started at the BBC in the third grade and is now in college, explained

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President's Letter (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Arts In Action and Child Evangelism Fellowship. Thank you to the donors who made these very vital gifts possible.

It seems that I always end these letters with some sort of plea for financial help. This letter is no different. I am very pleased to report that we have once again been granted state of West Virginia Tax Credits through the Neighborhood

Investment Program (NIP) for contributions specifically dedicated to support Storehouse WV. One half of your contribution to BIWV can be deducted as a credit to the amount of state taxes you owe subject to the rules of the program. This is a wonderful opportunity to help and be helped at the same time. Read more about the program. While contributions to our YEN initiative do not qualify for the NIP credit, we are looking for more individuals/

businesses who will invest \$5,000 so that we can reinvest those funds into the lives of children and teenagers. The eternal return of your investment will be amazing. Let us know if you would like to hear more.

We will do our best to communicate more often in the future. In the meantime, continue to remember us in your prayers and feel free to contact me personally if you have questions or comments.

Executive Director's Letter

I recently heard a story that reminded me of why I and other Christians are involved in reaching out to those in need. I know that scripture instructs the church to reach out to "the afflicted and destitute... the weak and needy" Ps. 82:3-4, but hearing about those who are being helped is encouraging. At the 2012 Louderback Leadership Prayer Breakfast the



Bishop Bickerton was named a Distinguished

featured speaker was Bishop Thomas Bickerton of the United Methodist Church. Bishop Bickerton, who is a West Virginian but now lives in the Pittsburgh area, has been involved with a program to end malaria in Africa. The program has been successful. The death rate among children has been cut in half, from 1.2 million children a year to about 600,000. This is still too many, but they continue to make inroads. Bishop Bickerton told about a visit received by a UMC Bishop in the West African nation of Sierra Lion. The bishop in Sierra Lion was in his office when he was visited by fifteen tribal chiefs (they are similar to mayors, but when they speak the people

in their tribes do what they say). When asked why they had come, one of the chiefs said we want you to build fifteen churches in our communities. The bishop asked why, another chief-

tain replied, "We have trusted you with our bodies (in receiving Malaria nets), and now we want to trust you with our souls." I believe that all of us who are involved in humanitarian outreach for the sake of Christ hope that those we help will want to learn about the Lord we serve.

As many of you know, Believe in West Virginia began as an economic development organization. We looked for ways to change the culture of our state (such as working to change the Workers Compensation legislation) encouraging existing businesses to stay and expand, and developing and environment that would be conducive to the formation of new compa-

nies. During the last year we have been involved in both of these areas. In December, the Believe board issued a Press Release in favor of the development of an ethane "cracker" in West Virginia. Our hope in supporting this is that it "would bring a strategic boost to the economy of West Virginia and allow its citizens to receive the full benefit of the God given natural resources that have been bestowed on our state". The entire release can be seen on our website. Several years ago, our organization's founder, Rev. Jack Henry, formed a company called Trinity Resources to produce mine rescue chambers. The company recently made the first public introduction of their "Guardian Angel" chamber at the West Virginia Mining Symposium. This chamber is unique in that it can be moved using tractor tracks, which will protect the delicate equipment inside. The chamber was reviewed by many company and government officials, including Senator Joe Manchin, and was featured in a Daily Mail article on February 3, 2012. The chamber was designed at their Putnam County facility and as orders are received they will be built there as well.

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**Executive Director
John deBlecourt**

Believe in WV 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."



Support Believe in West Virginia whenever you search the internet. Just go to www.goodsearch.com, enter Believe in West Virginia as the charity you are supporting, and then proceed to search the web! That's all there is to it. Each time you use the GoodSearch search engine Believe in West Virginia will benefit, and in turn be able to help other charities in need.

Showing off rings at SRT in Sissonville High School



WV YEN would like to invite the SRT team back to West Virginia in 2012.

If you or your church would be interested in working with us to make this happen please contact us.

NIP donations or pledges must be received by March 15.

Silver Ring Thing in West Virginia



Now as much as ever, it is important that we educate our teens about the challenges related to being sexually active before marriage. We know there are physical, emotional, and spiritual reasons to remain abstinent.

The physical reasons to remain abstinent include:

- Nearly half of the 19 million new sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) contracted each year are among people aged 15–24 years.
- 1 in 10 new mothers is a teen, and half of teen mothers do not graduate from high school.

Pre-marital sex also has emotional consequences. Studies show that sexually active teens are significantly more likely to be unhappy,

feel depressed, and attempt suicide.

In addition to the physical and emotional concerns, the Bible says that believers should marry in order to avoid sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 7:1).

At the end of October, the Sissonville community and the Silver Ring Thing (SRT) team came together to educate area teenagers about abstinence at two events. On a Friday afternoon, the SRT team addressed the entire student body (approximately 604 students) of Sissonville High School with skits and videos about abstinence, and invited students to the SRT show on Saturday. Many of the SRT team attended the high school's football game on Friday night, in the rain and cold, in an effort to get to know some of the students and encourage them

to attend. - (Now that is dedication.)

On Saturday, October 29, 2011, a total of 270 students attended the SRT show. Although many students had attended a SRT presentation before, half of the attendees purchased rings and committed to abstinence. Students were also invited to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ, and 53 students accepted the invitation. The investment made by area churches, a local State Farm Insurance agent, Burdette Electric, and the SRT team will pay eternal dividends. West Virginia Youth Encouragers Network (WV YEN) is thankful to be able to work with this group to promote and present this event.

The SRT team also put on SRT shows in Weirton and Wheeling, West Virginia. Visit our website to view statistics and photos for these and previous events.

NIP Tax Credit (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

tributions, donors will receive between 75 – 85% of their donation back in tax reductions. Believe in West Virginia can take the funds that we receive and can multiply them; by bringing in truckloads of items that can be given to those West Virginians who are in need.

The Development Office determined that our Storehouse West Virginia™ project would receive NIP credits again this year. We were especially blessed to receive a larger number of credits than in years past, which means that we have the chance to significantly enhance the program, if we can find enough generous donors who are willing to help. You can read more about the Storehouse in this

newsletter and on our website, www.believeinwv.org. Like most good things this is a limited time offer. **We must receive most of the NIP donations, or a pledge to give, by March 15, 2012.** If you would like to donate, or if you have questions, please contact our Executive Director; or you can submit your gift now by using the attached form.

Storehouse West Virginia

2011 was a busy year at Storehouse West Virginia™. We provided building materials to more organizations and people this year than in any previous year, and 2011 was the second busiest year for our other products.

We received some new items in 2011, including several sets of kitchen cabinets. One of these sets went to the Jericho House, a transitional home that provides temporary shelter for those who are homeless or are about to be homeless. As part of the Jericho House celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, the facility was renovated, including replacing the old metal kitchen cupboards with new wooden cabinets. The living and other common areas were also upgraded. Although the Jericho House was empty during the renovations it is now back operating at full capacity, helping families and individuals by providing a nice, warm place to live. We are glad that the Storehouse could be part of the process.

Last year, we received 65,000 spiral bound notebooks, which we have been donating to groups all over the state. One such group in Webster County shared the following in a thank you note: “Historically, over ninety percent [90%] of the

school children in our county receive free or reduced lunches. Given the state of our area, many families cannot afford to supply their children with the materials to allow them to succeed in school.” The group is planning to pass out these notebooks to area students during their annual “Back to School Splash”. Because the Storehouse was able to supply these notebooks, the Webster County group will be able to use their funds to cover the cost of other needed items, thus stretching their ability to help those in need.

There are many more stories of how the Storehouse is making a difference. We shipped an entire truckload of ceramic tile to Oak Hill, WV to help a local non-



The Historic Oak Hill School,

profit renovate a school building. The facility which will be known as The Historic Oak Hill School, will be a learning, conference, and cultural center with low-income senior apartments. Those involved with the school renovation have also used paint and other items from the Storehouse.

Several churches and camps have used our tile, com-modes, faucets and other items to renovate their buildings, which allow them to better serve their communities and free up budget dollars for other necessities. Our GiK products are given to various organizations, including food pantries, child care programs, mental health service providers, medical service programs, senior citizen centers, and churches.

Here are a few comments we have received:

“We are very thankful for Storehouse WV and their willingness to help so many non-profits such as us. We were very happy to get the medical kits. Each item in the kit is needed to provide the best care for our patients...Because of organizations like Storehouse WV we can continue to do our mission.” West Virginia Health Right

“Our church is a small friendly church with limited resources. We have a burden to help all that we can, and reach all we can with the good news of the Gospel. Due to our limited resources we struggle to find ways that we can help

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Sharing Tangible Hope

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Mission Statement:

“The Joseph Project is marketplace ministry conceived to refocus on Jesus—by organizing, and providing the catalyst for a community of Christians to stand strong for Christ in the marketplace.”



Volunteers unloading notebooks for West Virginian children.



Volunteer Terry Stone
For the last year he has donated several hours a week to enter Storehouse WV data.

Volunteers

God has brought some amazing people along our path to help with the work of Believe in West Virginia, and we have been especially blessed at Storehouse West Virginia™. In 2011 we received help from 97 different individuals, representing 19 different organizations, who donated over 1,055 hours of their time. There is not space to profile each of our volunteers, but we want to tell you about several who have had a big impact on our efforts.

In August of 2010, we came into contact with a new transplant to West Virginia. Ed Schwartz heard the story about the work of Storehouse West Virginia™ and said “I would be willing to give you a day a week to help”. Thus began a relationship that has made a dramatic impact upon the Storehouse. After working with us from August until November, Ed said that he could handle running things, if our Storehouse Manager (John) ever needed a day off. God’s timing was once again incredible. Two days later (Saturday), John suffered a dissection of his aorta, which meant immediate hospitalization and surgery. Ed was immediately asked to step up, because a truck was scheduled to arrive on the following Tuesday. With the help of volunteers, Ed oversaw the unloading of the truck. Ed continued to distribute product during the next four months, while John recovered. After John returned, Ed



returned to working one day a week. Ed has made a big impact on the groups he has gotten to know. Many recipients will check on how Ed is doing, if they come in on a day when he is not working. We are very grateful for God’s introduction and Ed’s willingness to help.



Ed Schwartz

Running an operation like the Storehouse requires lots of paperwork, which takes a great deal of time and effort to keep current. Almost from the beginning, a volunteer named Judy Simon stepped up and took care of much of the data entry work that is required. Judy moved to Lewisburg, WV in 2010, but she continued to handle the data entry throughout the year. We wondered where we might find someone else who could handle this task. Once again God was faithful and introduced us to Terry Stone. Terry, who has many skills and interests, participates with the United Way RSVP program, which helps to connect seniors looking for volunteer opportunities with organizations

who need assistance. After hearing of our need for someone to do data entry, Terry agreed to help. Beginning in January 2011 he has taken about two hours per week to enter all our recipient information into our software. He recently past his first year anniversary and we are very grateful for his attention to detail and assistance.

Whether you can commit a day a week, a couple of hours a week, or just an hour or two occasionally, we would love to have you contact us to explore the options. Here are some of the other ways that volunteers have helped us meet the needs of the less fortunate of West Virginia. For the last several summers we have had a youth group come in and spend some time working on larger projects. Every time a truck full of product arrives we have to call on volunteers to help us unload the items. Occasionally, we have product that must be sorted so that it can be distributed, which does not require much heavy lifting. Maybe none of these ideas seem to fit your areas of interest; but you would still like to help in some way. If so, feel free to contact us so we can discuss how you might help out. Thanks to all our past volunteers. We hope to see you again in 2012!

WV YEN

his experience. *"The Bob Burdette Center gave me the necessary skills to succeed in school and in life that I otherwise would be lacking. I can honestly say without the BBC I don't know where I would be and I certainly wouldn't be the person I am today."* Funds donated by the WV YEN helped to support the BBC's six-week summer program, which provides summer activities for 70 students from Charleston's West Side.

Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) works primarily with grade school children through an after school program called the Good News Club®. CEF staff provides training to community members from local churches and helps coordinate activities at local

schools. The Cross Lanes Elementary Good News Club began with two children. Although the first week's attendance was discouraging, the team had already overcome so much and was determined to continue. The next week, the 11 children who attended were animated and enjoyed themselves, and the after-school program "Third Base" also let the CEF team invite their 40-50 children to Good News Club®. The next week 21 children attended! In just a few weeks the Lord increased attendance and brought five of those children to faith in Jesus Christ! God honored the team's perseverance by allowing them to be partners in the Gospel! Although reaching young people can be challenging, the long-term rewards are great. Funds from the WV YEN help cover the cost of training and encouraging local leaders, in addition to

working with area children.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes

(FCA) works with more than 2,500 students through 38 huddles in Kanawha and Putnam counties. Some groups are averaging as many as 150+ students while others are seeing steadily growing. A Fields of Faith event in October at St. Albans High School, was open to all students from any area school and featured a live band, a speaker from the West Virginia University (WVU) FCA staff and WVU student athletes. Through this event, more than 150 students heard the Gospel. At another event, the FCA Marshall Game Day, more than 300 students attended and heard the gospel. In the fall of 2011, several students made first-time commitments to Jesus Christ, including one college student from the University of Charleston. The



Students at Sissonville SRT event.

field is ripe, and FCA is a great tool for the harvest. WVVYEN is thankful to have been able to support the FCA, which makes a lasting impact on the lives of young students.

We are beginning our second year of funding through the WV YEN and we are looking forward to enabling these organizations to bring about change more students' lives. If you would be interested in helping please contact the Executive Director.

Storehouse (Continued)

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our community. Since finding out about Storehouse WV, we have been able to help more people than we ever imagined... You make it possible for a small congregation to make a difference..."

Victory Chapel

We will be posting more stories about

how the Storehouse is affecting those in need in West Virginia. We encourage you to visit our website and spread the word about the work of the Storehouse to local non-profit organizations and churches.

As with any program, there are many costs associated with operating Storehouse West Virginia™. Besides rent, one of the program's

biggest costs is shipping products to Charleston, WV. Financial assistance helps us to help others. A \$500 donation can supply at least \$40,000 worth of product that can be used to help those in need. A donation of \$500, or more, will provide you with a state tax credit (see the article on page 1). Whatever the amount, all donations are greatly appreciated and will make a difference.



Jericho House Kitchen



Executive Director's Letter (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

I am excited as we move into 2012. Storehouse West Virginia™ and the WV Youth Encouragers Network had a productive 2011, and as you read through the pages of this letter you will see some of the activities with which we have been involved. Additionally, I want to invite you to visit our website at www.believeinwv.org, which we recently redesigned. We have planned more changes to make the site even more useful and informative, so please continue to check back

for updates. I would also invite you to consider supporting our efforts through prayer and financial support. You can now give online at our website, you can make a one-time contribution or can contribute monthly, and if you can contribute a minimum of \$500 toward the work of the Storehouse you can receive an NIP tax credit, while they last. Your gifts will allow you to participate in reaching out to the less fortunate and the youth of our area. Through these programs lives will be changed for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Believe in West Virginia Founder & CEO of Trinity Resources

Pastor Jack Henry



Pictured with the Guardian Angel
Rescue Shelter, produced by Trinity Resources

Formed in 2002 as a faith-based non-profit group **Believe in West Virginia's** focus is to create economic opportunities by transforming the business culture of WV. This is our long-range objective which we are always pursuing while at the same time addressing the immediate needs of the people of our state. We currently have four programs through which we reach out to West Virginians. The first is through **Storehouse West Virginia**, a Gifts-in-Kind warehouse. The second is called the **West Virginia Youth Encouragers Network** working to network those who have a special concern for our younger generations. Through this network we have been promoting the Silver Ring Thing - a sexual abstinence program directed toward teens. Thirdly, we are updating interested citizens about what is being discussed during the WV Legislative session, with our **Legislative Updates**. Our newest program is known as **The Joseph Project**, a group designed to bring Christian Business people together.



Believe In West Virginia

P.O. Box 8622, South Charleston, WV 25303
Phone: (304) 552-7601
E-mail: john@believeinwv.org

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