

"The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" comes to mind when I think back over our first year of Awana. There were so many kinks to work out this first year. We had so much to learn about the program, the books, the games, and the paperwork and yet God was so faithful! Our workers were the best! The kids were great and the parents were patient!! What more could we want. I could tell you all about the verses learned and the books that were finished, and there were many, but I want you to know some of the behind the scene things that happened this year.

**One night at game time there were 4 girls running around the Awana circle, and a leader noticed three of the girls eye each other with a knowing nod between them they all slowed down. Why would they slow down in a race? So that the girl who never has a chance to win could experience the joy of being the first one to grab the pin and have her team erupt with elation at their victory!! Can the Spirit of God touch kids during game time? Absolutely!

**We have 2 brothers from our church that come to Awana; they brought a friend, who brought a friend, who brought a friend! Can you believe it? What an amazing opportunity for outreach we have with Awana. I wish I could say that I brought just one friend who brought a friend.

**One week a 2nd grade Sparky girl forgot to bring her book. I encouraged her to try to help someone else in her class that night. Boy did she ever! There was a new girl who she was able to explain the gospel to. That little girl was led to the Lord that night. Can you imagine the Angels in heaven rejoicing over that forgotten book? I sure was!

**One dad came to the church for the very first time on Dad's Night at Awana. I know he heard the gospel that night and I pray that the Lord will continue to draw him to Himself.

** There were 5 kids who were baptized one night in Awana. It was so exciting! Not only to see the kids following in what they felt led by the Lord to do, but also because there were other unchurched kids there to witness a baptism. Their families don't attend church and that maybe the first time they have seen a baptism. What a thrill to be a part of that.

**Awana is a tool that our church uses to help and encourage parents in their spiritual training of their children. I have been very pleased this year as I have talked with our kids and found out just how much of what they are learning is a compliment to what their parents are doing.

If you found yourself getting excited while reading this, could God be stirring you to help with Awana next year? We need leaders, but we also need a lot of support staff. We need people to keep track of inventory, make orders, organize awards, listen to verses, track awards, collect dues and sell books, make flyers on the computer....I guess you get the idea. Awana is expanding if you want to be part of the fun, and it really is *so much fun*. Give me a call and we can plug you in!