



THE P.A.R.K.

PROGRESS

Donald W. Reynolds Facility

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P.A.R.K. Benefits from Relationship with Bank of the Ozarks Run for Their Lives 5-K

By Melody Sims Stanley, Development Director

Blessings to P.A.R.K. came on July 6, 2005, with a generous contribution from Bank of the Ozarks Run for Their Lives 5-K. George and Linda Gleason hosted a lovely reception for the 6 charities, sponsors, and friends of the event that benefit from the annual race and gala. This was the second year for P.A.R.K. to participate.

Ministry to the Inner City was founded 10 years ago by a group of strong Christians that wanted to impact the inner city kids. The group started with car washes, plays, and a small race. Then along came

George and Linda Gleason and Bank of the Ozarks with a generous heart and willingness to give back to their community.

Last year over \$400,000 was raised to support Fellowship of Christian Athletes, LTCare Ministries, Ministry to the Inner City, P.A.R.K., S.T.E.P. Ministries, and Young Life.

Please accept our sincere appreciation to Bank of the Ozarks, Ministry to the Inner City, Volunteers, Sponsors, and friends.

MISSION STATEMENT

Within a positive atmosphere built on love, nurturing and discipline, P.A.R.K. strives to enrich the lives of Central Arkansas's at-risk youth. Specifically, P.A.R.K. exists to build the confidence, self-esteem and spiritual awareness in its members, to ensure academic achievement, to expand their horizons, and to instill in them the importance of helping others.



Ministry to the Inner City Board Members Kris & Lisa Fischer, George & Linda Gleason, Bobbi Patterson, Frenchie & Melanie Boutiette, Larry & Sonya Mendelsohn, Kathie & Scott Archer. Not pictured: Phyllis Edwards, Gary Heathcott, Keith Jackson, Gregg Patterson

Photo by Melody Sims Stanley



The Measure of a Man

Canton, Ohio, is the birth place of N.F.L. Football and home of the N.F.L. Hall of Fame and has a small town population of 80,806 with very nice people. There is one week where it is overrun with wild, loyal football fans. This influx of people arrive to cheer on their N.F.L. heroes. I use the word heroes, because most of these players in the Hall of Fame were outstanding on the gridiron. On that special day, the N.F.L. tries to figure out the measure of a man.

Those who know my N.F.L. experience know that I had the chance to play for three great quarterbacks: Randall Cunningham, Brett Farve and Dan "The Man" Marino. "The Man" was inducted into the Hall with the class of 2005. Along with Dan were Steve Young, Fritz Pollard & Bernie Freidman. Freidman was a Jewish quarterback in the early 1920's and Fritz Pollard an African-American running back, quarterback and coach in the same era. One has to believe that these two men saw much racism, but it didn't stop them from achieving their goals. When a man is measured, it should not only be by his/her own self-worth, but by what people thought or think of him.

Pollard and Jim Thorpe were the super stars of the young football league. Thorpe went into the Hall the first time upon eligibility in 1963 and Pollard, on the other hand, had to wait until 2005. No doubt, Pollard already believed he was great; it just took others from the 1920's to 2005 to realize it.

The reason I was there was to be a fan and a friend to the greatest pocket passer in the history of the N.F.L., Dan Marino. Don't take my word for it; the numbers speak for themselves: most career pass attempts – 8,358, most career passing yards – 61,361, highest passer rating, rookie – 96.0, most passing yards, season – 5,084, most 400-yard passing games, season – 4, most career completions – 4,967, most career touchdown passes – 420, highest completion percentage, rookie – 58.45, most 400-yard passing games, career – 13.

Marino was asked if there was anything that he wished he had done, and the answer was, "Win a Super Bowl." He stated, "I regret I didn't win the "Big One." To some that doesn't make sense seeing all of the above stats, but to those who have picked up a football at an early age, it was -- make it to the Pros and win a Super Bowl.

How would you measure Dan Marino, who is arguably the greatest quarterback to ever play the game? The bigger question would be how does Dan Marino measure Dan Marino? Marino was my next door neighbor for three years, so I think I know him. Dan is extremely proud of his accomplishments and success with the Miami Dolphins. "The Man" will always have regrets that he didn't win the "Big One" (World Championship).

Unlike Dan Marino who has no chance to win the Super Bowl as a player, we have the opportunity from this point to control our regrets. As a player in the National Football League, I left it all on the field, ending with a Super Bowl Championship with the Green Bay Packers. As a person, I still have goals. My human duty is to save as many lives as I can by:

1. taking a holistic approach to change spirit, soul and body;
2. helping to create the next generation of moral leaders and
3. seeing the incredible vision reproduce to help others.

And like the old coaches would say before a game, "Leave it all on the field." On this playing field of life, we will be judged by what we accomplish, yes, as well as, by what we did for others. Lord, when did I see you hungry, naked, or in prison? "When you saw any of my children like this," answered the Lord.

This questions how will you be measured and will you have any regrets or will the Master say to you, "one thing thou lack."

Congratulations Dan, you deserved it! SORRY ABOUT NOT WINNING THE SUPERBOWL.

P.S. Dan Marino has a foundation in which he's very much involved. He also created the Dan Marino Hospital for Autistic Children.

P.A.R.K. STUDENTS TAKE BREAK FOR SUMMER FUN

Call of the Wild...

By David Price, Student Life Manager

It was one of the hottest days of the summer. We didn't plan it that way, but none the less it sure turned out to be a scorcher! As I left the store with our camping supplies and food for the weekend, I could feel the 110 degree heat bouncing off the asphalt. I was beginning to think we might be making a mistake by taking 12 teenage boys out into the woods to camp out. Boy was I ever wrong! I've never laughed so hard out in the woods in all my life. While the boys, ages ranging from 13 to 18, thought that they were roughing it out in the wild, reality had it that we were *really* at Lake Dardanelle State Park right outside Russellville.

As we approached the State Park, we could see the excitement in each boy as they prepared to become a little more like Indiana Jones or Jacques Cousteau. Some brought sleeping bags that had never been opened; others brought tents that were much too small for them now that they are teenagers. It was clear to me that none of these boys had any idea what to expect from our evening out with the stars and the water and a campfire (even though it was 90 degrees at 7 p.m). I surprised them with some of the things that many of you have experienced on camping trips.

We grilled hot dogs and hamburgers and sat around and laughed for hours. The fact that there were two hundred other camp sites backed up against each other, and that right next to us were two large RVs (not camping to me) with AC and satellite, didn't cheapen our experience one bit. We tried our luck at fishing, to no avail. I think it is a sign when it is so hot that not even an Arkansas bass will bite! But those boys sure did eat. We reheated some barbeque wings that a loving mother had fixed for our trip, and we continued munching on snacks into the night.

Around ten o'clock, I pulled out some wire rods

and the marshmallows. The boys at first thought we were going to be simply roasting a few of them and then hitting the sack. But I had other plans for them. When I bought the Hershey's chocolate, graham crackers, and marshmallows, I had no clue our s'more adventure would be so fun. I've made no short of 100 s'mores in my lifetime. It was something my father taught me and my friends many years ago. We used to make them on all our adventures out in the woods. But to my amazement, only one boy had ever made and eaten a s'more by campfire! They have all tried the s'more flavored pop-tarts and cookies, but nothing prepared them for having the fun of trying to keep from burning their marshmallow and then balance it while smushing it between chocolate and graham crackers!

I told the story of how the s'more got its name (can I have s'more please?), and we laughed as they all learned the art form of squatting next to the campfire to keep away from the heat while trying not to singe their knuckles! Again, laughter was seeping from our bodies as fast as the sweat was! Even though the chocolate did keep the boys up till all hours of the night, it was well worth it to see the surprise (and fear) in their eyes when a few boys saw some critters scurrying through camp around 2 a.m. My guess is that many of the guys were experiencing life outdoors, away from home, for the first real moment in their lives. I was proud to sit and talk and teach them about some of the little things in life that make a hot July weekend just a little more tolerable.

The only regret I have from the weekend was that noone caught a fish. We had hoped for a great fish feast for lunch, but it turns out we were just as satisfied with Burger King on the way home! They can all now say that when the call of the wild came, they proudly answered!



P.A.R.K. guys take in the days of Summer at Lake Dardanelle State Park

Photo by David Price

Let's Go Back to School

By Kareem Moody, Program Director

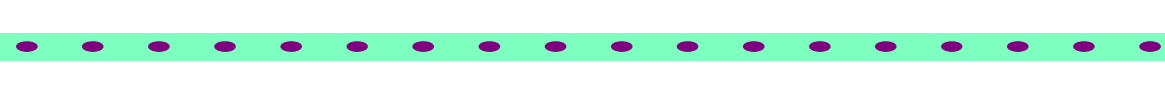
Absence makes the heart grow fonder. At least that seems to be the case when dealing with teachers and students. At the conclusion of each school year students race out of here with an air of good riddance. I don't take it personally, because I remember when I did the same thing! The last place I wanted to be on the first day of summer was school. Now that I am all grown up I also realize those teachers were jetting out the other door just as fast as we were. We all go through the summer counting blessings and being glad school is out. Teachers take vacations and make vows not to think about students all summer. Students exchange stories about how glad they are that they passed, and how then they also vow not to think about school. Forgetting school for many of us has become a national pastime.

Fast forward a couple of months and we see teachers buying school supplies and students going school shopping. Students begin chanting school names and entertaining discussions around what school is best. They even begin to wonder what teachers they will have or classes they will take. They want to know what friends will be returning to the same school or who has moved over the summer. Will there be any cute boys or girls coming to school? And no matter how cool they are, they still get anxious about the first day and what it will mean for them. They are faced with the dilemma of, "Do I wear my new clothes, or wait until the second week."

I hope that this time away has given both students and teachers a chance to reflect on the opportunity at hand. For students P.A.R.K. is a chance to grow and to learn. It is a perfect place to stretch one's imagination and allow the molding process to take effect. This is a time for students to show up eager and ready to learn. This approach will inspire a teacher to go above and beyond and introduce something special into students' lives. A student with a good attitude and a willingness to learn will somehow always end up with the best teachers.

I hope all teachers return to work well rested and eager to inspire. At some point during the summer I would hope a teacher found enough reasons to put up with kids who do not know how much they need you. I hope teachers realize that the kid that shows up today with an attitude is not upset with you; they have a lot going on. I encourage teachers to think past their apparent disregard for education and find a new way to reach them. I hope it matters to each teacher when a child is hurting or is suffering from a lack of caring relationships. Hopefully time away has rekindled teachers' passion to make lives better. A teacher with a good attitude and willingness to educate, motivate, and teach will somehow always end up with the best students.

Make back to school a year long feeling!



ARE YOU READY FOR A MIRACLE?

By Tamra Patterson, Student Life Manager

I recently had the pleasure of attending a workshop where a gentleman by the name of Dr. Robert Brooks presented a very novel idea when it comes to working with children and adolescents: "You get what you expect." Truth be told it sounded a lot better when he presented it, maybe because he called it "self-efficacy" (which means how effective you feel will determine how effective you will be.)

So then the question becomes what can you do to make kids feel more effective? Call me crazy but I believe that if someone was given a vision by God to create a refuge from that challenging time called adolescence, it just might make a change. If others were to hear of this vision and, knowing its power, begin investing in the mission with their money and time, it could make a difference. If people were to talk and share with others about this unprecedented place where kids could go and have positive interactions while getting help on their

homework, it would make for a miracle. Not just one miracle, the possibilities are endless.

There was a girl who was so angry she never thought about being able to go to college. Now Ms. Rachel Williams is our first college graduate from Ouachita Baptist University. There was a boy who wasn't sure how to survive other than the pull of the streets. Now Mr. Marquese McFerguson will graduate from Ouachita in December. One girl didn't know how to communicate her feelings of confusion and misdirection other than to push you away. Now Ms. Kelley Neasley will be a 2006 graduate of Hall High School. Mr. Christopher King used comedy to compensate for his feelings that no one really cared about him. Now his sense of humor is used to enjoy the friendships he has built. Do you see a miracle yet? Do you see four? I see so many more.

Everyday!

P.A.R.K. Scores All A's

By Blenda Downs, Curriculum Coordinator

*The students showed up and worked very hard,
The staff was there too and helped with the charge.
We all succeeded with increasing the knowledge,
I can't wait to see if it leads P.A.R.K. students to college.*

Hats Off to P.A.R.K. staff and students for a great summer! One of our summer goals was to “fill in potholes” and equip the students with the necessary tools needed to succeed this school year. Thanks to a very enthusiastic staff, the students increased their pre and post-test scores in all academic areas.

The students rotated on an A-day, B-day schedule for the third time this summer. They had three classes on Monday and Wednesday and three different classes on Tuesday and Thursday. The students attended: Math, English, Spanish, Skills Tutor, Science, Study Skills and READ 180. Each class was held for 50 minutes, with the exception of READ 180, which is an intensive reading intervention program designed to meet the needs of students whose reading achievement is below the proficient level. This year was our first year utilizing this awesome program! This class was held for 3 hours a day. The students in the program were very committed to improving their literacy levels and should be applauded. READ 180 directly addresses individual needs through adaptive and instructional software, high-interest literature and direct instruction in reading skills. We are pleased to report that the average pre and post-test scores increased from 56% to 61%!

Our report card indicates that all potholes have been filled with a substance that will never create a void - EDUCATION! The entire staff and the students feel confident that all of the participating students are better prepared for the 2005-2006 school year!

P.A.R.K. 's report card

Eagles Math (ACT Prep) – Average pre and post-test scores increased from 13.4 to 16 – 2.6 point increase in scaled score!

English – Average pre and post-test scores increased from 55.4% to 70.7%

Fundamentals of Secondary Math – Average pre and post test scores increased from 48% to 53%

Fundamentals of Algebra – Average pre and post test scores increased from 27% to 44%

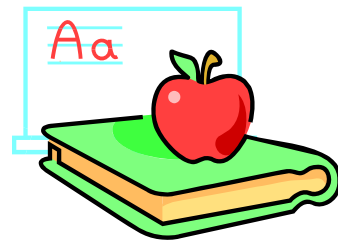
Fundamentals of Geometry – Average pre and post test scores increased from 57.7% to 59.3%

READ 180 – Average pre and post test scores increased from 56% to 61%

Science – Average pre and post test scores increased from 64.3% to 66.5%

Study Skills – Average pre and post test scores increased from 78.5% to 87.1%

Spanish – Average pre and post test scores increased from 21.3% to 67.3%



**Hard
Work
Pays Off!!**

**P.A.R.K.
Students
at
Six Flags
Over
Texas**

Photo by David Price

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Habakkuk 2:2

“...Write the vision, and make it plain
upon tables, that he may run that
readeth it.”

*Thanks for making
God's vision a reality*

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