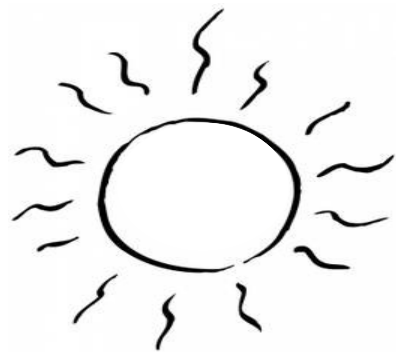


Impact Houston Church of Christ

1704 Weber  
Houston, TX 77007

Phone: 713-864-5667  
Web: www.impacthouston.org  
E-mail: office@impacthouston.org



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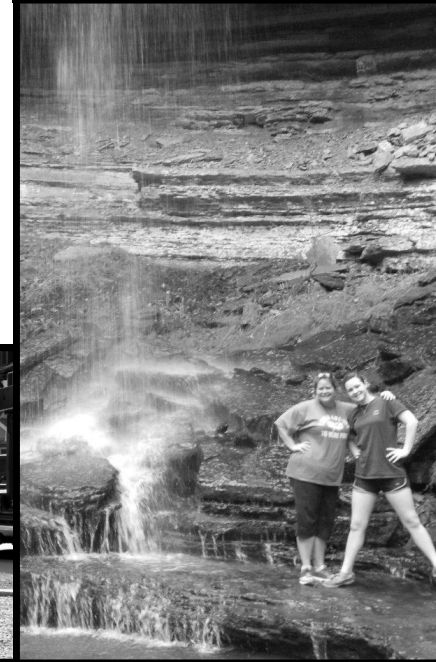
April 2012



IMPACT HOUSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

## Spring Break 2012

This Spring Break Impact was blessed to have 100 college students come to serve with us for their Spring Break. They were a part of our Spring Break VBS with our elementary children which included field trips, songs and reading class. Along with gutting a house, creating a garden, visiting people shut in, cook-outs with apartment communities and helping at the Distribution Center. They learned more about poverty and the causes and effects of homelessness. The middle-school kids went to explore Houston and play sports and games, while some of the high-school kids went camping in Arkansas and found a 65 foot waterfall! It was certainly a great two weeks here, and we were blessed to have so many friends come and join us!



**Due to rising printing and mailing costs, we are seeking to use more low cost methods of distribution like email. If you would like to receive the newsletter only by email, please send an email to: office@impacthouston.org**

**Thank for your support as we attempt to cut costs!**

### YOUR SUPPORT KEEPS US RUNNING! THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to support Impact with the enclosed donation.

Please charge my credit card: # \_\_\_\_\_

expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my donation to go toward:  General Fund

Youth Fund  Scholarship Program  Dist. Center

Spanish Ministry  Recovery House

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You!**



## *Dora the Runner*

Last fall, Dora (seen left) joined our middle school running group, who were training for the SCOPE 5k this March. Sadly, A car hit Dora shattering leg in February. Nevertheless, this team of people to the right saw the importance of her completing this 5k. They wheeled her up and pushed her the entire 5k! What an example of committed Chris-

**Committed to helping hungry... homeless... hurting people every day**

## Children and the Summer at Impact

by Dennis Jaeger

The summer of 2012 is quickly approaching! We have been working diligently on planning the summer, and are looking forward to the opportunity to being with 400 youth and children on a daily basis.

Typically with this letter I copy a fact sheet of some of the amazing ways God will work among our youth and children, how many of them will be involved in different activities and how many people it takes to make it happen. This fact sheet, along with a catalog of needs for the summer, will still be available to look at on the youth portion of our website, but this year I'd like for you to think about the summer a little differently. The summer, for us, is about God working powerfully in the lives of individual children.

Every child has a story, and every child needs and deserves individual attention and love, just like Vicky Hernandez has received. Vicky will graduate from Reagan High School this year and will attend college in the fall. She has attended Impact with her mother since she was

three years old. Over the course of her time at Impact, we have picked her up in a van or bus more than 2,000 times. Last semester, you read a story about Vicky being baptized. Vicky has written her story as part of her college entrance essay and has shared this story with us.

We'd like to share her story with you. **Please take the time to read Vicky's story on the next page!** There are many children who will cross our path this summer just like Vicky. Every single one of them needs to know God, His amazing love for them, His consistent, abiding presence and how to connect their stories with His.

This summer, Impact will engage 400 children on a daily basis, each child has their own story to tell. Our desire is that, like Vicky, each of their stories will include meeting Jesus and how he walked with them all the days of their lives.

The cost for one child to be involved in summer activities (minus what visiting youth groups help with) is \$175. Many friends of Impact (or better said, friends of children) support one or more of them. If you are



## Vicky's Story

My father left my mother and me when I was very young. Growing up with only my mother has been tough. Every morning growing up I would see my mother rushing to get ready for work and to get me ready for school. After her job, she would pick me up from school and all she would want to do was go home and rest because she was so tired. When we would get home I would let her rest and play outside or mind my own business to stay out of her way. Although I did not have my father around most of my life, my mother was strong enough to raise me up the right way. Always hearing her stories about struggling to raise me and keep a roof over our heads has motivated me to stay in school.



When I was in elementary school I started noticing how important it was to have the love and care of both parents. Many of my friends grew up with both parents who would take them to the zoo, the movies and other places where kids could have fun. My mother would always tell me that I did not need both parents to have fun. She would say that one day she would find a way to take me places like the zoo.

My mother is a devout Christian woman and I grew up going to church. Every summer my mother would sign me up for Vacation Bible School at Impact Church of Christ from Pre-Kindergarten until 5th grade. In the summer program I would go to the zoo and all the places my mom had told me she would find a way to take me. My mom always kept her word.

My 6<sup>th</sup> grade summer it was time for me to move up to the middle school youth group at church, but I was scared to do so and stopped going to church. One night during the school year, however, I went to church and one of my closest friends, Letissia, introduced me to the Middle School Minister, Wes Fikes. He asked me to join his small group. The "small group" was a group of a few teenagers that met together with Wes regularly in an environment where we could trust each other and have a safe place to talk. It never crossed my mind that Wes would play such a big role in my life. In the small group I began to get very close to Wes. He would always check on me and how I was doing in school and at home.

One summer during middle school we went to Galveston for one of our fieldtrips and that night we had to call him "Papa Wes." That name stuck to him and will stick to him forever, because he is like a father to me, the father I never had growing up. I was and am proud to call him Papa Wes. Wes has impacted my life in a way I could not have imagined any other person doing. He filled in that spot that I had been missing in my life, the care of a father figure.

At the end of middle school, I failed the Reading TAKS. I told Wes and he asked if he could go to my school and tutor me. He went every other day and tutored me until the day I retook the TAKS. The second time around, I passed the TAKS with Commended Performance. I thanked Wes warmly and sincerely. If I had failed, I would not be graduating high school in May 2012, but instead would have had to wait one more year to graduate.

When I went into high school I had a family at church, one that would always be there for me and encourage me. Even though Wes is not the youth minister anymore, I keep going to church to help others. What he did for me, I hope to do for others. He has helped me be the person I am now. He taught me how to care and help other people as he did me. I want to be that sort of dependable person myself. I hope to bring that dependability, compassion and work ethic to my future studies in college. I know that will make Wes proud and, perhaps, repay him in part for his loving care of me while I was growing up.

