

May 2006

*By Heidi Vincent, one of the tutors for the middle school program.*

There was a wonderful poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who wrote: "Give what you have. To someone, it may be better than you think." It was with this attitude I approached joining the tutoring program. Now, before I sound overly confident, I will say: I thought Longfellow was just plain mistaken when, on my first day, I failed to explain how to successfully divide unequal denominator fractions. Thankfully, however, I learned how to tap the resources of the math-loving tutors in the nearby cubicles (big smile to Carrie Jones). Tequila, my tutee, and I have learned quite a bit about each other through such experiences. She has learned that, although I'm no math wizard, I am committed to her, which means I'll do my best to learn along side her.



Lately, we have delighted in exploring Tequila's creative side though reading her writing assignments together and offering each other fresh perspectives on the devotional passages. For example, last week we were discussing how Jesus might have seemed to the disciples after quieting the stormy sea. After a long silence, I suggested that Jesus must have seemed, amazing, powerful, and praiseworthy. While I was floating on joyful images of a majestic, smiling Jesus holding steady hands over ceasing waves, Tequila had been mulling things over to a different conclusion. She deflated me with her famous "Oh Mrs. Heidi look" saying, "Nuh uh, he would have seemed weird and scary!" I thought about it, and agreed; Jesus' exercising that type of power probably would have been frightening--perhaps more frightening than the storm itself. As always, it was refreshing to get gain a new perspective.

In all honesty, there have been weeks when looking over middle school geography was the last thing I wanted to do, but then I remember it's not really about the geography. When we begin the tutoring program, we tutors join with the expectation that by walking (or stumbling) through math drills, geography worksheets, and writing assignments we will help kids brush up on their math and reading skills. Later, we realize the assignments are simply doors through which we are ushered deep into the lives of fun, creative kids as eager to learn and grow as we are.

Our school year ended with a party. The Hodiament group met in Jen's backyard and the South City group at Benton Park. Everyone who came had a great time enjoying each other's company, playing, and of course, eating! Thank you, God for nice weather.



### **NEWS FLASH!**

Our elementary summer enrichment program is expanding to full day. We will run Monday-Thursday from 9:30-3:00 for five weeks beginning June 19. We decided to do this in response to many requests from parents and students.

Every morning will be spent first in worship and then in academic classes. The classes will be led by college students who will be here as part of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship's City Lights Urban Project. After lunch, the children will participate in crafts and sports classes. We will continue to offer the very popular woodworking class for the older children.

Once again this year we will have a special class for new immigrant or refugee children to give them concentrated help with learning to read and write English.

### **PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW**

It's a sad time for children when tutoring ends for the semester. They have developed friendships with their tutors and look forward to being with them every week. One girl, Nina, from our South City program came to tutoring the last day in a very angry mood. Sara Taylor, our South City coordinator, asked her what was wrong. With a scowl on her face and her hands on her hips, she said, "It's the last day of tutoring. I'm mad!" Don't worry, Nina, summer tutoring will be starting soon.

### **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

- ✓ Pray for the summer program – for the kids, college students and others who will be helping
- ✓ Share a special gift or talent you have with the children in the afternoons this summer
- ✓ Volunteer to assist those leading the afternoon classes
- ✓ Provide lunch and/or snack for the children this summer
- ✓ **Support a family of 5 to attend the summer program for \$500, 2 children for \$200 or 1 child for \$100.**

If you do not wish to receive letters from Firm Foundation Tutoring Program, please e-mail us at

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