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Editor's Note: Call this our "Education Issue." Though not officially starting until next month our new missionary Marc Boswell made an early trip to Lake Providence to be part of that time tested religious education tool - mission Vacation Bible School. Our annual Bags of Hope event supports education, a foundational pillar out of poverty and presents to you a great opportunity to get involved. Keith Holmes and Mary van Rheenen, field personnel to the Romany talk about educational challenges on the field and the Master Teacher. Finally, a reminder about the Forum October 29, "brain food for the disciple."

Listening and Caring Deeply

by Marc Boswell



CBF-LA Together for Hope Director Marc Boswell at recent VBS event in Lake Providence

On the evening of Saturday, July 16, I grabbed a seat at The Dock, a local restaurant in Lake Providence, and awaited the arrival of Woodland Baptist Church from Louisville, Kentucky. Fifteen road-weary but smiling faces greeted me not long after, sporting their "Louisville Loves the Lake" t-shirts. Between meals of Cajun fried rice and jambalaya, I had the privilege of listening to several people in the group describe how much they loved coming to Lake Providence. This was their fourth year coming for an entire week in the midst of the summer Louisiana humidity and heat.

It took a while to leave the restaurant due to the majestic sunset and the great opportunity it provided for taking pictures - check out some of them on our Instagram account (together for hope louisiana). I personally joined in the picture taking given that my breath was taken away, too, and continues to be whenever I see the sun setting over the town. After this mini-sabbath, everyone gathered together and headed

to the Mission House to get unpacked and settled for the evening.

In the morning, the group split up and attended several area churches to spread the word about a community cookout and the vacation bible school they would host during the week at Progressive Chapel Missionary Baptist Church. Everyone was warmly received at the First United Methodist Church, Progressive Chapel, and China Grove Missionary Baptist Church. Several pastors and church members gave me a warm greeting as well, sharing their fond memories of previous director of Together for Hope Louisiana, Jenny Hodge. I told them that I was very excited to move down at the end of August and to begin establishing relationships with their congregations and others in the community.



The first community cookout, which was held that Sunday evening, grew from three local children to over twenty five children and a few other local adults. Woodland Baptist provided hamburgers, hotdogs, freeze pops and plenty of fun and games. Some old relationships were rekindled and many new friendships were formed. Every child returned the following morning to Progressive Chapel, along with some additional fifteen neighborhood kids, making for the largest day camp Woodland had in their four years in Lake Providence. VBS finished nicely later in the week on Thursday, and everyone (Woodland and the Lake Providence youth) had a nice time serving, worshiping, and playing together.

As I prepare for the upcoming transition, I trust that this new call will be inspired by the dedication and love that groups like Woodland have for the town of Lake Providence and East Carroll Parish, and also by the joy and perseverance of the youth who brought so much into our lives during VBS. I hope to see where the Spirit has been and continues to be active in this community, to listen deeply and to learn from community members and leaders, and to be a helpful presence alongside of all those who care deeply about this special place.

Bags of Hope Carnival



Saturday August 6

You are invited to participate in a back to school carnival at Southside Elementary in Lake Providence 10AM to 12 NOON. We need help with a jump house, games, face painting, popcorn, snow cones and distributing backpacks with school supplies.

Partnering with Principal Ms. JoAnn Jones and school staff, we will be focusing on grades 1-5 to get a backpack into every child's hands. Thanks to Haynes Ave. Baptist, First Shreveport, Broadmoor-Baton Rouge, University Baptist - Baton Rouge, Church for the Highlands - Shreveport, Emmanuel-Alexandria and St. Charles - New Orleans, we will be meeting our goal of backpacks and supplies for each student!

Additional supplies are still needed for the middle and high school: pencils and pens, notebook paper, and single subject notebooks.

Contact Kyle at cbflouisiana@gmail.com or 318-780-4127 for further details.

Focused on Student Success

Keith Holmes and Mary van Rheenen

CBF Field Personnel to Romany



Dear friends,

Student success--a friend of ours serves as the academic dean of a community college. The entire institution's focus was student success. They do what they can to assist students in succeeding. As I write this, Keith and I are on our way to help with a family camp in Poland. Keith and his brother Ted will be helping with English lessons for advanced adults. Our sister-in-law Bev and I will be leading the beginners. Our motto is also student success.

Too many Romany students still do not study in institutions or with teachers who are even passively interested in their success. Take the Romany children in a village on the edge of the Hungarian-speaking portion of Romania, for instance. (Parts of Europe are even more linguistically complicated.) There is a Hungarian-language and a Romanian language primary school in the village. The Romany children are shunted into the Hungarian one. Is this because they speak Hungarian? No, it's because the Hungarian school needs more students to stay open. The Romany children speak neither Hungarian nor Romanian at home but their own Romani language. No provision is made for their first language, nor to the fact that they may not know the language of instruction when they start school, nor with the fact that any advanced education will be in Romanian. Learning Hungarian first, in this situation, is definitely not an asset for them.

Situations like this touched the heart of Marleen, a talented educator from our Dutch church. Marleen designed a Parent-Child Club where parents could begin teaching their children school-related skills in the language of their choice. This program was also written partly at the request of Hanneke, a Dutch woman who works with Romany

churches in Romania. Hanneke wanted to do Bible study with Romany women, but the women always brought their small children to the meetings. The Parent-Child Club works with, instead of against, this Romany cultural situation. This is a complicated linguistic situation as well. I've assisted in getting the materials from Dutch to English so that they can be translated into other languages like Romanian. Hanneke and her helpers can organize the activities in Romanian; the Romani-speaking mothers can do the activities with their children in whatever language the children know best. This leads to student success. Romany children learn concepts and behaviors (like listening and taking turns) which will transfer to any formal school setting, no matter what language that school uses. The children learn them more easily because they already know the language and the "teachers." They can succeed. Success often leads to more success.

This approach reminds me of another Teacher who is focused on student success. He knows what we're made of and takes that into account (He knows our frame . . . Ps. 103:14). He purposefully uses language he knows we will understand--whether that be idioms common to housewives (Matthew 13:33), day laborers (Matthew 20:1), or merchants (Matthew 13:45) . What language is He using with you?

Praying for student success,

Mary van Rheenen & Keith Holmes

Join us in thanking God for:

- creation and translation of Mother-Child Club materials (Dutch to English; English to Romanian; Romanian to . . . ?)
- dedicated co-workers like Marleen, who volunteers her time; Hanneke, who works as a nurse in the Netherlands to pay for her time in Romania; Petru & Olesea Ciochina, who are searching for viable employment so that they can continue to serve Romany in Moldova
- safe travel so far this summer.

Join us in praying for:

- family camp/English camp in Poland, July 9-14;
- better education for Romany children, particularly in the Republic of Moldova;
- final distribution and use of the audio version of the New Testament in Latvian (see Bible.Is for languages currently available);
- stable income for the many Romany who have returned to Moldova from Germany & Russia.

Contributions to the Offering for Global Missions (or Keith Holmes Ministry), Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, P.O. Box 102972, Atlanta, GA 30368-2972, make this work possible.

Contributions to projects #80827 Romany Education, Moldova and #84822, Romany Outreach, Moldova, can be sent to the same address or made through CBF's gift catalog at <http://www.cbf.net/giftcatalog/>.



[Give here to support global missions](#)

[See Holmes / van Rheenen video, posts and ways to support their work.](#)

Stagg-Tolbert Forum for Biblical Studies October 29, University - Baton Rouge



Joe Phelps

This year's Stagg Tolbert Lecture Series features Dr. Joseph Phelps, Pastor of the Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. Dr. Phelps will be speaking on "More Light, Less Heat: How a Community of Faith Deals Redemptively with Conflict," a topic with which he is most familiar, as evidenced by his book on the subject. The event will take place on Saturday, October 29th, at the University Baptist Church in Baton Rouge. Start making plans to join us for a most meaningful experience.



Forming Together is more than our new tag line. It's a new way to share the CBF story. It's a deliberate decision to live in to the six attributes that we have discovered about ourselves.

[See video of our branding story.](#)

[See Fellowship article here for more of our visioning story.](#)

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