

International
Community
Outreach
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Reaching the
world at our
doorstep!

Contributions are tax deductible when made payable to **ICO** and sent to PO Box 50223, Tulsa OK 74150. Comments or questions related to funding may be directed to the *ICO Stewardship Team* or to the *Director*.



ICO ACTIVITIES

- Fall & Spring New Student Reception
- Friendship Partners
- English Corner
- Exploring the Christian Faith
- Holiday House Parties
- Saturday's Strings N Things
- Practical Services
 - CAR Clinics
 - Airport pick ups
 - Moving assistance
 - Help with Furniture
 - Banking assistance
 - Help with legal requirements
- Evangelistic Bible Studies
- Cultural Opportunities
- Christian Leadership Training
- Support & Encouragement

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY NETWORK (ISMN)

ICO coordinates through ISMN with area churches and campus ministries in outreach to the international community.

PRAYER...INTERNATIONALLY

- Praises for Mid Eastern Friendships
- Thanksgiving for added laborers
- Prayer for added laborers!
- Strengthening of monthly support base
- Guidance for ICO vision planning
- Soon-to-arrive Spring Semester Students
- Beachheads on additional campuses
- Support funding

REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD AT OUR DOORSTEP

Jampacked Experience

It does have the makings of a new, yet unconventional, tradition. We'll see. Stay tuned.

ICO's first-ever Fall Student Retreat.

It came complete with a hilly, tree-adorned countryside, quiet blue lake, rustic quarters (even mattresses), great music, good speakers, fabulous food, entertainment, discussions, campfire with s'mores and, actually a little kum-ba-yah. There was volleyball, canoeing, basketball, jungle pong.

Hearing the Broadway "Oklahoma!" sung with Asian accents was - well, you had to have been there.

The picture here dispels any notion of ethno-centricity (view of life centering solely around one's own ethnic "kind"). The enthusiastic gathering of 50 or so was a mix of Indian, Arab, Latino, Iranian, Chinese, Thai...even American. One student labeled the time as a jampacked spiritual and fun experience!



Most were pre-Christian. They were college students, all seekers after something. They're focused, intelligent and conscientious scholars striving to give their future the best shot through a university education. Here they were surrounded by loving welcomers, instructors, servants, friends.

To see the retreat mini video with "What a God!" check out the ISM website at www.tuism.org

We cannot tell you how grateful we are for the contributors who offset the costs, making this 21-hour international "evangelism-in-the-woods" possible. As we continue engaging students hungry for Real Answers to life's questions, your prayers are priceless. *Do Stay tuned!*

"Yes. Arabic Bibles please."

One of our on-campus team members shares dorm space with a large number of international guys, many of whom are from Muslim nations.

A group of believers, including our team guy, regularly meet together to sing praise and worship songs. During one such meeting, a Middle Eastern freshman paused at the doorway of the room during one of these informal praise sessions. Attracted by the peaceful sounds of guitar and vocals, he sat in the doorway and listened attentively for at least ten minutes before continuing on his way. Moments like this have spawned growing connections between the Jesus followers and numerous Muslims in the dorms.

Another similar instance involves the same group of believers. Having decided to play some Dance Dance Revolution (a video game in which one has to dance on a small mat), they met in the main lounge of the men's dorm to use the big screen tv.

More on page 2 →

Inside This Issue:

Director's Desktop	2
Arabic Bibles	2
Joy	3
An Interview	3
Activities	4
Prayer	4

ICO Executive Board

- Jerry Lout
- Jim Garton
- Ann Lout
- Jim Osborn
- Ken Winfrey
- Josh Moseby
- John Thompson
- Simeon Sutton

Advisory Council

- David Leggett
- John McVay
- Dr. Ron Meyers
- James Nichols
- Jim Stovall

ICO exists to glorify God by meeting practical and spiritual needs of international students through acts of service and through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ.

Thank you
To all who have supported ICO during 2007 ...by prayingby givingby serving the international students.

We bless you all

Note: added gifts postmarked by December 31, 2007 will be included in the 2007 receipt.

THE DIRECTOR'S DESKTOP

Assumptions. We all make them.

They range from the harmlessly innocuous, "Hmm, I thought the cleaners stayed open til six" to the painfully incriminating, "Gee, honey, I figured you'd like a new vacuum cleaner for your thirtieth birthday"

Prior to our marriage I bought, at a special reduced price, one oversized poodle as a surprise gift for Ann.

Jacque (whom I, a farm boy, pronounced *Jock*) didn't exactly reflect by appearance the sophisticated and poised French canine his name might suggest. Joque was gangly. And, reflecting back these decades later, Ann and I concur with a good laugh that he was likely the ugliest poodle in history. As Marshall McLuhan said, "[most of our assumptions have outlived their usefulness.](#)"

A good example is a common assumption that goes something like this: *to share a Christian witness with a Muslim student would be the hardest and least productive thing imaginable.*

For me, I'm wanting to be more adventurous - giving *proactive love and faith* a shot over the paralyzing assumptions to which I'm sometimes prone. Let me take on my young American friends' mindset who recently emailed the following about his new East European acquaintance on campus.

"He is Muslim, but not very dedicated, and seems to think that Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are the three true religions and that any of them will work. He came to church with (my buddy) and I last Sunday, and he said he'd like to come back! We're both pretty excited about it!"

Our student-witness didn't succumb to Assumption Paralysis as reflected in the quote, "assumptions allow the best in life to pass you by!"

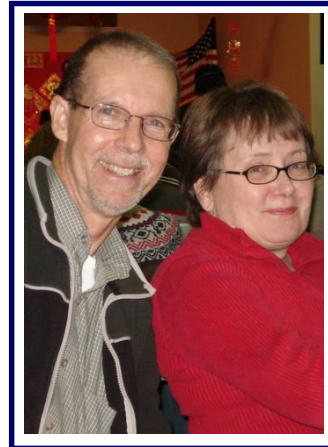
"Yes. Arabic Bibles please."

Continued from Pg. 1

It was Friday night, and surprisingly a large number of Saudi Arabian guys were also in the room playing billiards and hanging out-- some even came forward to participate in the dance competition. Recently, our team guy had picked up a New Testament that was translated into both Arabic and English. Having carried the small book in his back pocket, he now placed it on one of the tables to allow him more mobility for DDR. Soon afterwards one of his Saudi friends noticed the Testament and showed great interest in it. When asked if he wanted one, the student enthusiastically agreed, mentioning that it would be a great way to "improve my English vocabulary" as well as learn more about Christian beliefs. Soon a group of Saudi's had gathered around the dual language Scriptures, eyeing them with interest and discussing between themselves. For the remainder of that evening the Bible was in constant use as different ones of them took turns perusing it for long stretches of time. Who would have thought that God would use a dance video game as a platform to proclaim His Word!

The crazy thing is that these are not isolated experiences. On the contrary, events like this have been happening frequently. It seems that God is continually revealing to us the infinitude of His work and His capacity to perform it.

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GOOD NEWS IS. . .

Simeon and Laura Sutton are the latest to join the ICO Executive Board team and...how thankful we are! This newly wed couple bring further vitality, vision and insights as we advance Christ's kingdom among international students. Laura Sutton shares the following article about her newly acquired friend from across the globe.

1 Peter 1:18-19 "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect."

J, an International student from Southeast Asia, and I have been spending a lot of time together. One day when we were at a coffee shop chatting, I asked her if she had ever heard the story of Jesus and how he died on the cross. She said no, so I used Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 to describe the payment Jesus has made for our sins. I asked her what she believed and she explained a little about Buddhism. She said you have to bring food and gifts to the monk who lives in the temple. I then proceeded to tell her about the sacrificial system in the Old Testament. I told her that Jesus was the sacrifice for our sins, once for all. We don't have to sacrifice anymore! We just need to trust and believe in Jesus who paid for our sin by His blood. "Oh, so that's the good news!," J responded. She said she had heard other Christians say the term good news but she never knew what it meant. J is now in a weekly International women's Bible study, where we are studying the major themes of the Bible from Genesis to Jesus. Please pray this student comes to accept Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for her sins and the Lord of her life.



An Interview With A Volunteer

In addition to befriending students, **Dave Oxenham** serves ICO with his computer and technical skills. This includes constructing our ICO newsletter and managing the websites.

ICO: What attracted you to start reaching out to internationals?

Dave: I had always been somewhat interested in "missions" and had taken Perspectives (an intense Missions course by USCWM) in 2003. That same year my wife died in a tragic accident. I was talking to a long time friend a few months later and he encouraged me to hang out with him at TU. He was working with Jerry and ICO and he was exploring some ways to reach out to international students.

ICO: What activities have you engaged in with students and why those?

Dave: I attended the English Corner at TU for some time and got to know some of the students. I also went to the Friday evening fellowships at Tulsa International Baptist Church. I attended an International House Party (similar to Bear Trap) with TIBC and really got to know some Chinese people. I came to love and respect the Chinese people and their culture. For the past few years we have had a student friendship partner. All of the activities I have done have been to get to know the students better.

ICO: Were there any surprises as you began getting acquainted with other cultures? An example?

Dave: Really no surprises but I have become intrigued with the Chinese culture. We (my present wife Mary Jo & I) visited China this past summer and learned a lot from observing people in restaurants, on public transportation and in crowds at attractions. The people we met were very friendly and some would go out of their way to help you. But most seemed closed off to the outside world, like "don't bother me and I will not bother you".

ICO: Would you recommend international friendships to other Americans? What suggestions or counsel would you give them?

Dave: Absolutely, although international friendships are not what I would call easy, they are very rewarding and can open up your world to so much opportunity to showing love in ways that are all but impossible with other Americans. Just be patient and open because people from other cultures don't always do things the way we would expect.

