

ASLAN YOUTH MINISTRIES

A Presidential Point of Light

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Dear Friends,

Rather than the *On The Move* newsletters we've been sending for a while, I wanted to share a special letter with you this month. Before going further, however, I want to thank you for supporting the work of Aslan. As I think about how much our work has meant to so many children over the past 31 years, I realize that none of this could have happened without your help. Some of you have literally stood with us the entire time through your prayers and generous giving. However long you've helped, words cannot express how much we appreciate your support!

As the envelope exclaims, I am writing to you this month about **"One Amazing Woman!"** Any of you who know me very well at all will ~ before even opening the envelope ~ have easily guessed that I am talking about Lynn Ann. I've wanted to write this letter for a long time, but after an incident a few days ago I couldn't wait any longer. Each summer during July and August, Aslan has a day camp for each of our programs in Asbury Park, Long Branch and Red Bank. Of all the kids we work with, our Asbury Park kids are by far the most undisciplined and the neediest. We never know from week to week throughout the year when there will be an argument that will quickly lead to pushing, shouting and fighting. And last Friday, we had a "doozy!"

Most of the kids were having a great time swimming at the county park we'd gone to, but Andrea and Shamika (*names changed) had been at each other's throats all morning long. And they weren't about to stop! Lynn Ann and our other wonderful volunteers were keeping a close eye on the girls, but suddenly they started kicking, screaming and punching each other with a vengeance. To keep them from really hurting themselves, Lynn Ann immediately stepped between them. That's when the battle really got serious! As the girls continued to try to hit each other, Lynn Ann was pounded and pummeled in the process. But she was finally able to separate Andrea and Shamika and stop the fight.

After delivering all the kids back to the projects, Lynn Ann found herself with pulled hair and a number of bruises on her arms. However, the next morning was

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Lynn Ann and Kids
Asbury Day Camp



when she really began to feel the brunt of the “battle.” Trying to get out of bed, she quickly realized that her back was severely strained and her wrist was possibly fractured. After x-rays of her wrist, she found it was severely bruised but apparently not fractured. And after multiple visits to the doctor, her back is improving slowly.

I’m sure you can easily see now why this amazing woman is so amazing! It isn’t just that she was so willing to step between two kids (one of whom outweighed her by almost 100 pounds) that were trying to beat each other to a pulp. Many years ago on the Aslan bus, a teenager took a full swing at another girl (who ducked) and Lynn Ann caught a full fist on her jaw. She’s done things like that so many times since we started Aslan 31 years ago that I can’t count them all. **What is so very amazing about this woman is her heart for these children.** When I heard that Lynn Ann was beaten and bruised and her hair pulled in the process of the girls trying to pummel each other, I was the one who was angry with Shamika and Andrea! Getting mad at the girls for their terrible behavior didn’t even cross Lynn Ann’s mind.



In our Asbury Park program the children call Lynn Ann “Miss Lynn Ann.” And you can reach out and touch the love they feel for her. By the way, I’m known as “Mr. Lynn Ann” with our Asbury kids; and that’s just fine with me! **For 31 years, the heart and soul of the programs we provide for disadvantaged children has been “Miss Lynn Ann.”** I doubt she’ll ever receive the *Woman of the Year* award that she so richly deserves, but without this one amazing lady there could and would be no Aslan.



Lynn Ann (second from left) with some of wonderful Asbury Park volunteers!

Please continue to pray for each and every one of Aslan’s kids. Most people and most organizations would say “adios” to children like Shamika and Andrea in a heartbeat. But that’s just not the way Aslan Youth Ministries works. The lives of the children we reach are beaten, battered and broken. They are sheep without a shepherd, and without Aslan they would have little or no hope. Jesus said the good shepherd leaves the 99 for the one. As long as He gives us breath, we’re going to keep doing just

that. Thank you so much for helping us serve these children in need.

Most sincerely,

Craig

Craig Bogard

Tell the kids I love them.

- God