



# Epiphany Ministries of Texas, Inc.

"Reflecting the love of Christ to youthful offenders."

## FROM THE CHAIR...

*As most of you know, Lu Ann and I have been working for three and a half years to start Epiphany in Kansas. We held Kansas #1 two years ago. The team on #1 had people from Kansas, Virginia, California, and Texas. It was a great experience seeing how people who didn't even meet everyone on the team until Friday morning, walked into the unit a unified team. They put on a flawless Epiphany providing a superb experience for the Stars.*

*We held Kansas #2 Feb 3-5. There were team members from Kansas, Virginia, California, Arkansas, Ohio, and Texas. As with the team for #1 this team worked together as if they had known each other and worked together for years. It was a truly amazing experience and a fantastic Epiphany. Both the Stars and the Team were blessed.*

*The Kansas girls received agape posters and prayers from several Texas Epiphany Stars. In turn, they sent agape posters to two upcoming Epiphany weekends in Texas.*

*Both Kansas teams 1 and 2, from various locations, brought with them the true Epiphany spirit and reflected Gods love to these girls. God's love knows no bounds and neither does Epiphany!*

*Grace & Peace,  
Roy*



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[www.texasepiphany.com](http://www.texasepiphany.com)

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### Important Dates

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Weekend</u>	<u>Date</u>
Brownwood	E 33	Feb. 18-20
Clemens	E 43	TBD
Mart	E 26	Mar. 2017
Post	E 20	Mar. 3-5
Giddings	E 29	Mar. 16-19
Krier	E 22	May 2017
State Board Meeting		Feb. 25
State Board Meeting		May 20

Please send your newsworthy events and photos to: [pjc903@gmail.com](mailto:pjc903@gmail.com)

# Gainesville State School Volunteer Appreciation Banquet

The annual Gainesville State School Volunteer Appreciation Banquet was held Saturday, October 22, at Whaley UMC in Gainesville. The luncheon was organized and hosted by GSS Community Coordinator, Mrs. Dotty Luera. Key note speaker was Dr. Mark Luera. Special entertainment featured Gainesville's first youth led Worship Team known as "Twelve". Volunteer training was directed by Ms. Kim Beck. She was assisted by four former Gainesville youth who participated in the discussion of how to best help our youth. Awards were presented by Dotty Luera to volunteers who go above and beyond assisting the Gainesville youth. Among the Epiphany community of Gainesville were the following:

**Bob Voss** - Group Award for the PAPAS class teaching young men how to be better fathers.

**Sheldon and Charlene Ledbetter** - Family Award for their work in Epiphany, mentoring, and teaching music classes.

**Kim Beck** - Individual Volunteer of the Year award for her work in Epiphany and staying in touch with youth after release.

Pictured is our Gainesville Epiphany Family including three of their released youth who returned to be part of the banquet.



Article and photo courtesy of Jane Talcott - UAC Secretary Gainesville

## Outside Board Representatives Still Needed

With approximately 16 Epiphany Weekends happening each year there is a need for extra persons to step up and serve as Board Representatives for upcoming weekends. The one requirement is that you have previously served as a Lay Director for an Epiphany weekend. This is a great opportunity for you to meet other Epiphany members and see how things are done in other facilities. Often we learn that by adhering to the manual our weekends can and will run more smoothly. We would ask you to prayerfully consider serving our ministry in this capacity. Should you have an interest in serving as an Outside Board Rep. Contact your local UAC Representative and let them know when and where you are willing to serve.

# Board Representative Weekend Reports

## Brownwood - Loretta Ehler

I love Epiphany weekends, but I never get to do any girls Epiphany, so I was so looking forward to serving as board rep for the Brownwood Unit from Sept 2-5, 2016. Since it was a long trip I talked my husband into traveling with me. He thought he was going to be bored the weekend with nothing to do, but Chris and Lisa took care of that and put him to work.

We were greeted by a very loving and kind Epiphany team, everyone was so welcoming and I love when you walk in a room full of people you don't know, but you can just see the love of Christ in their faces and feel His spirit, that's how Brownwood was.

The weekend got started with much spirit filled prayers over the whole team and unit, you could feel God was ready to storm the gates of Brownwood and breathe His spirit into these young ladies. The weekend was put together with the Holy Spirit and they stayed within the Epiphany guide lines. The talks were spot on, with great family discussion after each talk, the music brought the girls into worship, and the food brought family time together. The weekend flowed as it should and always with in the time line. The smiles on the girl's faces spoke louder than any words.

You hear stories or see hurting youth on Epiphany weekends, the one thing that really got me on the weekend is the forgiveness talk. The lady had an excellent talk and she had gone through a lot in her life time, but one thing she said in her talk was all she ever wanted was someone just to hold her and tell her she was special. That line stuck in my head as I watch the girls put their forgiveness list on the cross. A couple girls really broke down at the cross and how sad that they too could not be held, this really ripped at my heart.

The leadership had everything running smoothly and the Chaplain at the Unit was such a big help. Anything that went wrong (which was very little) Chaplain was there to work it out, and he was a big supporter of the Epiphany which helps so much in putting your weekend

together. I heard during the weekend that he was moving, so I pray Brownwood can get another Chaplain with the same love for God and for Epiphany.

Now no weekend is ever perfect, but this one came pretty, close. The only thing I would ask them to look, into changing is spiritual direction time. I thought the girls could use more time to speak with a spiritual director.

Jeremy and I talked about it and I told him at the Giddings unit we don't give the spiritual leaders stars during weekend guide time. During that time the girls can spend time with a spiritual leader if need be, sometimes more than once during the weekend, some struggle more than others. Jeremy pointed out that some people will have, to take two girls and I told him yes that's what we do. So, this is my only suggestion, more spiritual direction time.

Other than that, Hallelujah, God did move through the whole weekend, and some of the lost came home. It was awesome.

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## Mart - Mike Mellina

Harry Harrington was lay director for Epiphany #25. All meetings were held in timely manner and talks previewed and critiqued. Training was provided by TJJD staff for the team on the final meeting.

Day one had its usual adjustment with star changes. Started the day with 38 boys which is a deviation from the model but is a result of the chaplain's intense desire for as many boys to experience the weekend as possible. There is a balancing act between keeping in line with the model which keeps us on schedule and coordinating in good faith with Chaplain Boggess.

The unit superintendent (Bill Parks) and staff continue to play a positive support role in Mart's weekends which plays an important part both during and after the weekend.

The talks were effective and followed the outlines for the most part. Harry, along with a very capable leadership team did a great job

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at leading the rest of the team. Harry was experiencing some personal distractions during the time leading up to and including the weekend which caused him to rely on the rest of the team but they responded admirably as it is designed to do.

Over the weekend three boys dropped out and requested to return to their dorm. 32 boys accepted their crosses at closing. Three boys missed the cross ceremony due to visitation, one of which accepted his cross during our first reunion.

Fourth day talk at closing was given by a member who served on many Mart teams as S.D. and has since moved to Seattle. He served on the prayer team this weekend and this reunion provided a heartfelt fourth day which was well received by team and stars. Spiritual time was utilized very effectively resulting in several decisions for Christ over the weekend. God's presence through His Holy Spirit were with us throughout the weekend giving us another successful Epiphany weekend at the Mart unit.

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### Giddings - Patty Evans

Thank you for the privilege of serving as Board Rep of Giddings E-28. (Though I am biased, and have served on this team only, I will remain objective.) I will stick to the facts as I know they should be and will do my best not stray from that.

The Holy Spirit's Presence was felt throughout the entire weekend! Beginning Thursday, during setting up at the Unit, until Sunday through closing and beyond!

Friday morning was started with 30 Stars and 9 Superstars. 5 of the Superstars had a Football game to play that evening, having to leave @ 3 pm. It was not an issue, as the rest of the Superstars and Inside Kitchen stepped up their game and did a great job serving Supper and still cleaning up on time!

We also lost 4 Stars. The Chaplain and Asst. Superintendent were quickly on top of their

game calling for alternates to replace those 4. God had a different plan for the 4<sup>th</sup> Star. Asst. Superintendent was able, to get the 4<sup>th</sup> Star back, who was put into security for an unknown reason.

All Talks were great and on time! One concern was that some of the speakers did not turn in their visual aids in a timely manner to the AV person. They were wanting to turn it in the morning of their talk on the weekend. They were asked at each team meeting and several emails reminding them to turn these in. Another concern was of a speaker who changed his talk without anyone knowing it, the new talk was not critiqued. It also went over about 7 minutes. Both, of these concerns will be addressed with the team at the next Giddings UAC meeting, as well as, reiterated at the meetings of E-29. Guidelines state that all talks are to previewed and critiqued before the talks are given, it cannot be changed unless it is critiqued again.

The Stars were attentive to the talks and most took notes and engaged in the conversations & posters with their table families.

Music speaks for itself, I am sure at every Epiphany! Stars were into the music by mid-day! Superstars certainly helped get them going!

Skits & Rec were great! One glitch was that a couple of team members felt that the Recreation was a little rough for the boys and the team. Red Rover was played (arms were linked, not hand in hand, the way it should have been). Also, a relay race was assigned to Stars only, parents to cheer them on. Stars became tired and hot. (You be the judge if this was, too rough) ... This will be addressed at the Giddings UAC meeting.

One Star did leave before the day ended, from my understanding, it was too much for him to process. Friday ended with 29 smiling faces, eager and anxious to come back!

Saturday and Sunday was a repeat of Friday, only better, the Holy Spirit was felt stronger as

## Board Representative Weekend Reports continued from page 6:

both days progressed. Everyone accepted their cross.... By Closing time, every one of the Stars were swaying, singing loudly and laughing. Several Stars shared their thoughts and appreciations.

4<sup>th</sup> day speaker was very Dynamic! With his gift of a booming voice and the Holy Spirit's Awesome Presence, he captured the Star's attention right away! He gave a brief description of his past, then quoted many passages from scripture that he applied to his life and turned it to the Stars asking them insightful questions about where they want their future to be and that they can turn to Jesus Christ for their wisdom, guidance and knowledge for their future!

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### Post E19, Oct 7-9 - Roy Bradshaw

Lay Director - Darrell Browning.  
There were 15 Stars and 6 Super Stars.

The Epiphany got off to a slow start when someone at the facility misplaced a key needed for access so the team could set up. The team was well organized and recovered quickly once access was gained.

The Garza County Facility has five count breaks per day that average about 20 minutes each. The team knows approximately when they will be but the breaks never seem to occur exactly as scheduled. The challenge for the team is they lose an hour and twenty minutes each day on a somewhat irregular schedule. Post has an organized team and could handle the interruptions and time loss in stride. I noticed the team adapted quickly and in good spirits.

This was an experienced cohesive team. I did notice some problems with a rookie during the Star/Star Guide time. This led to a Star sitting alone during this time while the star guide seemed to wander around not knowing what to do. I was getting up to sit with the Star when one of the experienced team members saw what was happening and slipped right in front of me and handled everything. An opportunity for improvement, would be to make sure any rookie who is to be assigned a Star knows exactly what they are supposed to do during Star time.

Overall a good Epiphany, very good team. The skits are excellent and very entertaining. And as always the music was excellent.



## Board Representative Weekend Reports continued from page 7:

### CYNDI TAYLOR KRIER #21

November 4-6, 2016

Lay Director: Debbie Mattke  
 Team members: 2 outside kitchen  
 29 inside team

We began with 24 stars. Through the course of the weekend we lost 6 stars. One went to security; one came only for the food and convinced another star to leave with him. 3 others dropped for reasons unknown.

The team had to double up on assignments. 4 team members dropped out Thursday. Two for medical reasons, one had an emergency and no explanation on the 4<sup>th</sup>. We had one in the inside chapel and one full time in agape. Some members served when they could. One team member served as assistant table leader, rec and skits.

Eighteen stars accepted their crosses. There was ample spiritual director and star guide time. The boys were engaged in the skits and music. One of the talks went too long and we lost the boys. The talks did stick to the outline.

There was more tension than usual on the team this weekend. Having only 2 people in the outside kitchen was very stressful. One of the inside team members left to work on the outside. There was tension on the inside as well. We have a team member and our chaplain who have very strong opinions and tend to snap at people.

We experimented with "processing trays" by having staff bring trays to the stars instead of having the stars go to the cafeteria. Some team members felt we need the down time while the stars are in the cafeteria.

Overall, the weekend was a success, but some "unchristian" action was observed. A long-term team member made the same observation and commented on her review of the weekend. It will be addressed at the UAC meeting Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> after reunion.

**Marsha Reindl,**  
 South Texas Board Rep

### *Upcoming Epiphany Weekends*

Facility	Weekend	Date	LD	Board Representative
Brownwood	E 33	February 18-20	Rick Phelps	Anne Wilkinson
Clemens	E 43	TBD		
Evins	E 6	July 2017		
Gainesville	E 35	July 2017		
Giddings	E 29	March 2017	Julie Elliott	Lisa Seaton
Krier	E 22	May 2017	Carolyn Bradley	
Mart	E 26	March 2017	Jimmy Fife	Sarah Holden
Post	E 20	March 3-5	Marc Wright	Mike Mellina

## Board Meeting Dates

Board members voted to make the following changes to our stated quarterly meeting dates. These new dates are now in effect.

- **February:** 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday
- **May:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday  
(to miss Memorial Day Weekend)
- **August:** 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday
- **November:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday  
(to miss Thanksgiving Weekend)

## Gainesville E-34



## The hands of God.

### Farewell to Epiphany Volunteer "C.J." Clyde James Vandergriff, Jr.

Clyde James Vandergriff, Jr. "C.J.", born October 14, 1970 to parents; Clyde James Vandergriff and Lorene "Rene" Crawford-Vandergriff. He passed into the loving arms of his heavenly father Saturday, February 11, 2017. C.J. Vandergriff was a man who loved people, loved the military, and loved the Lord. He spent seventeen years in the military including the Kuwait Liberation, Desert Storm, and the Gulf War. C.J. also served as a Navy Corpsman with the 3rd Marine Division while in Desert Storm. He continued his service to the military after retiring through serving in honor guards and by training young people for color guard / honor guard. After retirement, from the military, C.J. participated in short term missions overseas and in Christian leadership outreach through Walk to Emmaus and Tres Dias. Stemming from these ministries, C.J. was also involved in ministry to incarcerated youth through Epiphany Ministries. Feeling the call of God upon his life C.J. attended Rhema Bible College in Broken Arrow, OK., graduating from the pastors' program in 2012. While at Rhema, C.J. served as a Rhema Student Usher and as a member of the Rhema Nursing Home Ministry. After graduating from Rhema, C.J. came to Crockett, Texas, where he joined Torchlight Community Church as the outreach minister. In his position, C.J. had a strong nursing home ministry and worked with young Christians at the church. C.J. also assisted in the church's Christian school and instructed the school's color guard in 2014 - 2015. C.J. was also active in the music worship program playing bass. C.J. felt the Lord leading him to continue in ministry and requested ordination by his pastor. On July 20, 2014, a board of nine pastors convened and after questioning him concerning the Word and about his call, they laid hands on him committing him to the work of the Lord. C.J. served as an assistant to Pastor Wayne Irwin, helping him with various duties in the services and administration of the church. He was preceded in death by his father; Clyde James Vandergriff, Sr., grandparents; Sular and Kate Vandergriff and Eddie and Ethal Crawford, sister; Dorothy Vandergriff-Todd, and several Aunts, Uncles, and other relatives. He is survived by his wife; Tami Vandergriff, mother; Lorene Vandergriff, stepmother; Ginny Vandergriff, brothers; Ernie Vandergriff and wife, Nancy, Michael Vandergriff and wife Georganna, and James Buchanan, sisters; Beverly Raehorn and husband Sam, Julie Brashears and husband Jeff; and children; Sada Rene Vandergriff, Kyle Howder, Brent Howder, and Kaprice Matcham, along with many nieces, nephews, and other relatives. Services for C.J. were held Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. in the Callaway-Allee Memorial Chapel with Pastor Wayne Irwin of the Torchlight Community Church, of Crockett and Pastor Luis Febus of Standing In The Sun of San Antonio officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Torch Light Church, 304 S. Seventh St., Crockett. Texas 75385.





## Treasures In Prison Cells

By Bill Yount

*It was late at night and I was tired. . .but about midnight, God spoke to me in my spirit and asked a question. . .*

*"Bill, where on earth does man keep his most priceless treasures and valuables?" I said "Lord, usually these treasures like gold, silver, diamonds and precious jewels are kept locked up somewhere out of sight, usually with guards and security to keep them under lock and key."*

*God spoke. "Like man, My most valuable treasures on earth are also locked up." Then I saw Jesus standing in front of seemingly thousands of prisons and jails. The Lord said, "They have almost been destroyed by the enemy, but these souls have the greatest potential to be used, and to bring forth glory to My name."*

*Tell My people, I am going this hour to the prisons to activate the gifts and callings that lie dormant in these lives that were given before the foundation of the earth. Out from these walls will come forth a spiritual army that will have power to literally kick down the gates of Hell and overcome satanic powers that are holding many of My people bound in My own House. "Tell My people that great treasure is behind these walls, in these forgotten vessels. My people must come forth and touch these lives, for a mighty anointing will be unleashed upon them for future victory in My kingdom. They must be restored."*

*Then I saw the Lord step up to the prison doors with a key. One key fit every lock and the gates began to open. I then heard and saw great explosions which sounded like dynamite going off behind the walls. It sounded like all-out spiritual warfare. Jesus turned and said, "Tell My people to go in now and pick up the spoil and rescue them." Jesus then began walking in and touching inmates who were thronging Him. Many, being touched, instantly began to have a golden glow come over them. God spoke to me, "There's the gold!" Others had a silver glow around them. God said, "There's the silver!" Like slow motion they began to grow into what appeared to be giant knights, armed warriors. They had on the armor of God and every piece was solid and pure gold! Even golden shields! When I saw the golden shields, I heard God say to these warriors, "Now go and take what Satan has taught you and use it against him. Go and pull down the strongholds coming against My Church." The spiritual giants then started stepping over the prison walls with no one to resist them, and they went immediately to the very front line of the battle with the enemy. I saw them walk right past the church, and big-name ministers--known for their power with God-- were surpassed by the giant warriors like David going after Goliath! They crossed the enemy's line and started delivering many of God's people from the clutches of Satan while demons trembled and fled out of sight at their presence. No one, not even the Church, seemed to know who these spiritual giants were or where they came from. They were restored to God's House and there was great victory and rejoicing. I also saw silver, precious treasures, and vessels being brought in. Beneath the gold and silver were the people that nobody knew: Rejects of society, street people, the outcasts, the poor and the despised. These were the treasures that were missing from His House.*

*Then the Lord said. "If My people want to know where they are needed, tell them they are needed in the streets, the hospitals, the missions, and the prisons. When they come there they will find Me and the next move of My Spirit."*