

THE GLOBE



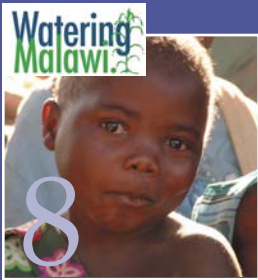
First Edition: Winter 2006

News for the Passport World



Celebrating 15 Years of Youth Camping with a Mission

David Burroughs



Passport, Inc. is preparing for our 15th year of summer camp. Pause here and think about 15 years. That is a long time to be around, and still alive as a nonprofit! OK, thanks for the pause, now let's move on.

represents a new vision for Passport. Sure, it filled up two weeks in just 45 minutes of opening day, but us southern churches won't make that



As we work on the theme of "Imagine" for youth camp this fifteenth summer, I am struck by what we imagined 15 years ago as we started. It wasn't the



journey every year. So Boston is an intentional expansion into New England.

Passport, Inc. that is today. Today, I see a new Passport, one that we never imagined – not in our wildest dreams.

Today, I see a new youth program called PASSways. PASSways will give youth a choice

- Children
- Partners
- Missions
- Development
- Youth
- Spirituality

- 6
- 4
- 8
- 5
- 3
- 7

Today, I see three new sites for PASSPORT *Youth Camping with a Mission* this year including Mercer University in Macon and Gordon College in Boston. Boston



of what to focus on during their week of camp – a distinct departure from *Youth Camping with a Mission*. But as we are watching these Choices develop, I have a growing excitement. PASSways will help teenagers grapple with real issues that face the church and the

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world from Faith and the Arts, to Environmental Awareness.

Today, I see d365.org – a daily devotion, online for students every day of the year. As I write this article, I am listening to the music for our Advent series, *Following the Star*. Ken Medema has arranged 9 Advent hymns and Christmas carols for this season.

Today, I see Watering Malawi. We have now passed our original goal of raising \$150,000 with more church and school projects on the horizon to move us firmly into phase two. And we haven't even imagined phase two yet! The Passport, Inc. Advisory Committee and Board of Directors has instructed us to continue this program that helps teenagers respond to a global concern in a real and dynamic way. Who would have imagined?

Today, I see strategic partnerships with multiple denominations as Passport works to be intentionally ecumenical and provide needed services to shrinking denominational structures. From Faith in 3D to the Youth Worker Summit, these partnerships are helping expand the vision for the church in amazing ways, while helping preserve our denominational identities. Far from being a parasitic 'parachurch' organization, Passport is working to build mutualistic relationships.

But it was part of **our original vision to be in ministry to and through students.** It was a vision to be a place where tomorrow's ministers find training and valuable experience. It was a vision to focus youth's attention away from themselves, and onto the big world and big issues that surround them. And it was a vision to serve the local church as it attempts to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world.

I invite you to imagine with us. Here this word from Ephesians chapter 3, verses 20 and 21: **"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."**

15 year numbers



Campers
49,000

Hours
Volunteered
628,000

Global
Offerings
\$435,826*

*figure does not include
Watering Malawi totals



David Burroughs is Co-founder
and President of Passport, Inc.

Meet Marnie, seven year Passport vet, seminary grad and former youth minister in North Carolina. Marnie is the newest Passport Missions and Summer Team Coordinator. Welcome Marnie!



I recently took a look back at what was going on in the world 15 years ago.

Marnie Fisher-Ingram

- the VCR was the fastest selling domestic appliance in history
- CD's passed cassette tape sales for the first time
- MTV's *The Real World* premiered
- there were more than 4 billion VHS rentals in the US alone
- *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, *Thelma and Louise* and *City Slickers* were the big movies
- Britney Spears appeared on Star Search
- The USSR officially ceased to exist
- Nirvana's *Nevermind*, was the most popular album

Are you finding yourself having flashbacks?

It is amazing to look at that list and know our youth today think of Britney Spears as the bumbling mother of 2. They think of Arnold as The Governator, they would not know what the USSR was, they fluently know how to use a web browser, but probably not a VCR.

15 years ago youth were listening to grunge, wearing flannel shirts, dreaming of getting CD players in their cars and Nintendo's Super NES (Super Nintendo). Youth were begging their parents to get a second phone line or to advance to the current century and at least get call waiting as the only youth with a cell phone

was Zach Morris on *Saved by the Bell*. Computers were becoming more and more popular, but you could still take typing in high school on a typewriter. A lot has happened as the world has drawn closer together through the use of technology, and well, let's just say: the times they are a changin'.

It's not a secret that our youth are bombarded and pulled. They travel with mp3 players, mini-dvd players, computers and cell phones. They leave their homes before the sun is up and don't return until it's dark. They stay up late working on homework, and chatting with friends on MySpace. They are exhausted and stressed. They are becoming a generation in which time does not stop. The concept of traveling "light" does not exist for them. As a youth leader you may find yourself asking,

"What do I possibly have to offer these road weary youth?"

- Hope - for a world that is bright, gentle and kind
- Peace - the space to be quiet and still
- Joy - laughter that is pure and uninhibited
- Love - unconditional and unrelenting

After all, these youth will not take the time to experience these truths for themselves. You may very well be the only one providing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love to them. In a world in which our youth are pulled so heavily from different directions we can become the place of safe harbor and calm. The place in which their deepest fears and anxieties are calmed. The place where true hope, true peace, true joy and true love are experienced.

For great ideas for fun, bonding and relaxation with your youth check out: www.egadideas.com

The Center for Parent/Youth Understanding is a great resource for understanding today's youth: www.cpyu.org



We Can Do More Together Than We Can Apart

Allan Burton



Growing up at home and at church, I was always taught that we could do more together than we can apart. As a son and a sibling, I often found myself needing help from my parents or sister (even if I didn't want to admit it). As a parishioner, I was taught that if we partnered with other churches, we could build more houses with Habitat or feed more homeless families.

As a concerned citizen, I learned that change could be enacted more effectively if individuals came together and fought for reform.

Today, however, congregational isolation caused by limited resources and fear of those who are even slightly different has caused parishes to try and do it all themselves. True partnership seems to be gasping for air like a fish tossed onto the beach by the waves of fear, doubt, and financial insecurity. Not so, however, with the Ecumenical Youth Ministries Staff Team of the National Council of Churches, USA, with which Passport, Inc. is an active

participant. From a desire to provide creative and productive resources for youth leaders from across denominational lines, the Youth Worker Summit, held in November at Walt Disney World, emerged as a true partnership event. The Summit gathered youth ministry leaders from judicatories and



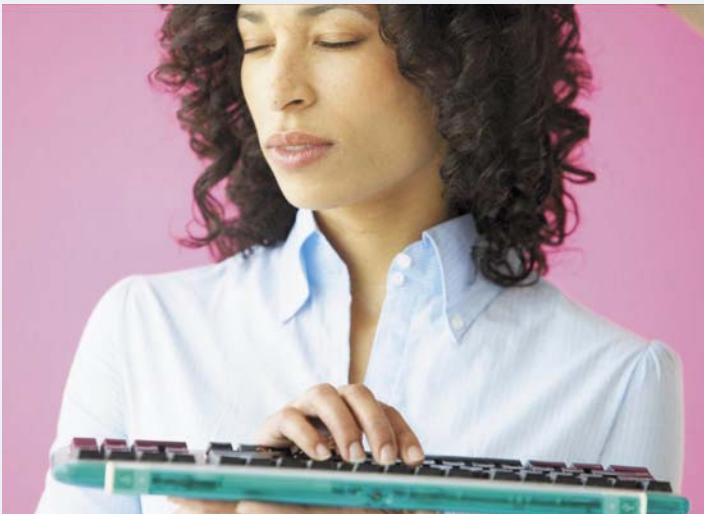
congregations across the country in an ecumenical setting to both hear and speak the words, "...we do not lose heart" (2 Corinthians 4:1 NRSV). **With over 220 participants from 11 denominational groups**, the renewal event included dialogue with youth

ministry professionals and visionaries; worship, skill and awareness development workshops; resource sharing and networking with other leaders; and leadership development seminars led by the Disney Institute.

But more than that, the Summit included honest conversation among individuals who would normally be seen as coming from vastly different religious backgrounds – conversations about shared resources and ministry styles – conversations about youth struggling in similar situations and how to stay focused and renewed in tough situations – but even more importantly, conversations about how we can do more together than we can apart.

Allan Burton, Youth Programs Coordinator, joined the Passport staff in 2001 and has been involved in ministry for over 16 years.





Technically Speaking



Daniel Ingram

Fifteen years ago, connecting to the internet was something like two children talking from tree house to tree house with tin cans and a string. Even if you were savvy enough to have a CompuServe or AOL account, you were forced to connect at a snail's pace, making even the smallest emails an arduous task. It's no wonder that the real gurus abandoned this early network for their own homegrown bulletin boards.

But what a difference 15 years can make! Now, we find ourselves connected to each other through this ethereal web of information. We've developed an entirely new vocabulary of verbs from Google to Mapquest to blogging. Our identities are all online from our email addresses to screen names, photos and bank accounts. The internet has changed nearly every form of our interaction with each other.

For Passport, the internet has changed the way we conduct business. In November, 2004, we introduced online registrations, where groups could register and pay for camp online. The following year, we required all registrations to be made online. **Registration for the 2007 camps opened at 8:00 AM on November 1, 2006, and within 1 hour we had nearly 5000 individuals registered for camp!**

Although we hoped that this tool would make our registration process easier, we never anticipated that this registration system could also be a ministry tool for emerging Passport partnerships. This year we were able to manage registrations for two ecumenical conferences: Faith in 3D and Youth Worker Summit. Opportunities like this enable Passport to cultivate relationships with congregations and denominations that we may not have been able to reach otherwise.

Registration isn't the only Passport resource that you will find online. We have created a new website which will be a comprehensive resource for students and adults. Just about anything we produce in print will be available online. In addition, information about all of our camps and other ministries will be accessible through this site. This level of access will enable anyone to have a wealth of information, literally at his or her fingertips.

And so we launch ourselves into a new era for Passport. Although we may never have anticipated the way technology and the internet has enabled us in this ministry, we are thankful to be equipped to serve congregations in this way. It makes me wonder where we will be fifteen years from now! Perhaps then I will be writing you to say, "can you remember the old days when we used to register... online!?"



Meet Daniel: Passport veteran, Electrical Engineer, seminary grad, and former Habitat for Humanity man in North Carolina. Daniel just joined Passport overseeing Information Technology and International teams. Welcome Daniel!



Can children change in fifteen years?

Mark McClintock

Ask any parent of a teenager! How does ministry with children keep up with cultural shifts of the past decade and a half? Here are some of the trends we've observed.

Protective Yet Permissive. Parents today circle the wagons ever closer around their children. Internet solicitation, human trafficking, and sexual abuse by trusted adults and even clergy—once truly shocking—are now the common subject of books, television, and every parent's nightmares. Playing freely in the neighborhood has dwindled to occasional and highly supervised outings. Many churches now require employees and volunteers to undergo careful screening before working with children, and those who do not run an increasingly grave risk of attracting pedophiles. Our ministry has become, in part, one of protection—a true sanctuary, or safe haven.

As the safety leash tightens, behavior boundaries have relaxed. Mass media, those modern babysitters, continue to push the margins of propriety so that preschoolers regularly hear scatological humor and sarcasm, school-age children accept profanity as commonplace, and violence no longer disturbs but tends to be glorified. Fast food and quick snacks appease hungry youngsters and send our obesity rates soaring. When a child acts out the behaviors natural to such an environment at church, adult leaders often shrug and grumble about the youth of today. Issues of discipline are not new, but parents feel more helpless than ever to give proper guidance. Children's ministers often play the role of family counselor.

Consumerism. TV ads have long targeted young cartoon viewers. Today, however, an incredible array of industries cater to children as consumers. Fast food chains build playgrounds in their restaurants. Breweries finance family-friendly institutions like zoos or construct their own theme parks. Supermarkets strategically place kid-attractive merchandise at intervals that ensure a cacophony of "Pleeeeeeease, Mommy" entreaties, and booksellers woo young customers with fantasylands, train sets, and video theaters. Some churches buy into this trend, selecting curricula with video and merchandising tie-ins, and installing gift shops in the foyer. Others have responded by giving greater emphasis to social justice issues and refocusing attention from self-interest to global well-being.

Entertainment Overload. Consumers like to be entertained, and children have no shortage of options. Middle class households have, on average, more televisions, computers, and stereos than they did fifteen years ago—not to mention video recording/playback units and portable media devices. Cars are equipped with these units as well. How can a church compete? Some have built theme park environments or performance venues into their children's facilities. Group Magazine now publishes a sourcebook with a substantial listing of "Christian entertainers" for children and youth. Alternatively, church can be a refuge where relationship and simplicity remain important values. Technology and faith-building need not be mutually exclusive. The church's challenge is to employ cultural advancements judiciously and without obscuring the message of the gospel.



Lest we be too ethnocentric, it is important to remember that these trends are not indicative of all world cultures nor even all families in our own nation. Children in our churches have greater opportunity today to learn about and interact with people from around the globe. As they do, we are obligated to help them understand the values of others and critically examine our own. Therein lies the passage from adolescence to adulthood. Welcome to the next fifteen years!



A meditation

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything.

They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water.

Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.” When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.” Jonah 3:1-10

“Go, go, Jonah! Go, Jonah, go, go!” My children’s voices ring cacophonously from the back seat of the car. “It’s our favorite song from last summer,” they insist loudly.

“Go, go, Jonah! Go, Jonah, go, go!”

Beyond the obvious appeal of the raucous song, something had captured my children’s imaginations about this recalcitrant, all too human prophet. And for those not well acquainted with his story, there’s much more to Jonah than a tale of a whale.

In this text, Jonah is given that most of elusive of gifts: the second chance. God, after first calling Jonah to speak a word to the city of Nineveh, only to watch him take off in the opposite direction, tosses Jonah about just a bit. Following his undersea adventure, Jonah, this time, is apparently a bit more willing to obey God’s directive. We expect a converted soul, a passionate servant, after all he’s been through, but Jonah goes about his assignment half-heartedly.

“Go, go, Jonah! Go, Jonah, go, go,” I can almost hear my children egging him on.

Jonah trudges forth, uttering but a terse statement to this great city, called by God to repent of its wicked ways. And, miraculously, his simple words – delivered, perhaps, with the bare minimum of conviction and passion – are nevertheless successful. The Ninevites – from king to beasts – upon hearing Jonah’s pronouncement, don sackcloth and repent.

And so it is that God is calling each of us to spiritual disciplines and to ministries we may initially resist. But once we get up and go, amazing results may ensue.

In the summer of 2006, I was the least likely candidate to serve as an adult chaperone for PASSPORTkids! Because I already travel extensively in my work for the Presbyterian Church (USA), the prospect of expending a week’s vacation at a mission camp with 3rd through 6th graders found me scrambling for any available excuse. With no place to hide, I reluctantly signed on. Signed on to witness and to experience firsthand the great miracle of what God is calling our children to become. And, God knows, I am still one.

“Go, go, Jonah! Go, Jonah, go, go!” May the children’s chant likewise speak a good word to us all.

Rev. Emily Odom - Associate for Communications
Mission Initiative: Joining Hearts & Hands
Presbyterian Church (USA)



Mark McClintock, Children’s Programs Coordinator, joined the Passport staff in 2002. A professional ventriloquist, Mark has been involved in children’s ministry for over 18 years.

Watering Malawi.

We did it! You did it. You met and surpassed the phase one goal for Watering Malawi. A year ago right now Watering Malawi (WM) was just being dreamed into reality. **Eleven months and \$150,000** later, deep bore hole wells will be drilled and irrigation techniques offered in twenty remote areas of Southern Malawi where the droughts hit the hardest.

With Katrina swamping us just after a catastrophic Tsunami, last year's drought in Malawi just didn't seem to be on anyone's radar. So we put it in front of Passport teenagers and they took the ball and ran with it!

Students began events prior to the summer, gave an offering during camp and then went back home and created Watering Malawi events all over the map. It has been like Christmas to come to work, read letters from all over the place and hear how teenagers brought this issue up with their schools, churches and civic organizations. Teenagers have done everything from aution off eye-brow waxes to throwing



rock concerts. The results are astounding. Grants were also contributed by national groups including the tri-denominational *Faith in 3-D* youth gathering, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, *Pure Water Pure Love* and The Florida CBF. Fifty-six individuals and forty-six congregations from multiple denominations have also contributed.

So, what's next? Passport's Board and Advisory Committee strongly encouraged the continuation of the project. *"It's important to help young people know that long range solutions can't be solved in one year,"* said committee member Dr. Horace Hambrick of Georgetown, Kentucky. *"We all need to understand that significant change takes time and commitment to the task."*

So, stay tuned and keep watering those gardens. Thanks to teenagers' faithfulness in hearing and responding to God's leadership in their lives, **Watering Malawi II** is already well underway!

Watering Malawi advocates for clean water and simple irrigation systems as long term solutions to hunger and drought in the country of Malawi.
www.wateringmalawi.org



Colleen Burroughs is Executive V.P. of Passport, Inc. and founder of Watering Malawi.

PASSPORT

Empowering Students, Embracing the World, Extending Grace

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