

# Soul Harvest

NEWSLETTER

FALL QUARTER 2009



Wesley House Community Center, Inc.

Helping people learn to help themselves since 1904

Hello Friends,

Welcome to the Wesley website and to my first attempt at writing our new newsletter, "*Soul Harvest*". The staff and I prayed long and hard about the name and decided on this one because it is the very core of our mission...think about it. Each of our six agencies provide services to thousands each year, but the programs under each provide mere tools...opportunities to share Christ with those who walk through our doors on any given day!



So, here we are...school has finally started after a summer of Community Forums, a great "Back to School" kickoff, hosting our upcoming training for Victim Advocates in September along with the start of the Holiday application process. God's work is apparent every turn here at Wesley House whether it be through the one-on-one between a tutor and a little child, or a mom who has been referred for parenting skills...souls, that's the ticket! Destination: Heaven.

## Wesley Community Forum- "*Race has no place...*"

A Community That Cares

This is a story of God's divine guidance and direction in providing for ALL of our children. How does that happen when a spirit of complacency has existed for so long as we sit and watched our school system deteriorate.

Here's how it started;

In May of this year, one of our schools closed and my staff and I began to hear rumblings of escalating violent behavior. Children and parents were expressing fear at the thought of attending schools in which gang lines were being crossed. Since then, another school has closed.

Michael and I prayed for days about the safety of our children and then, I woke up one morning with the answer....a

community forum which would serve as a place where voices could be heard, needs assessed, and an opportunity to work together as a community to rectify the various problems that might arise.

We held four forums and pinpointed several areas that needed to be addressed: Communication, Discipline/Behavior Incidents, Dress Code and, last but not least, Teacher Morale.

We heard from the community, the MPSD board of directors, the administrators, teachers and parents. Every participant was mailed a complete and updated copy of school policy, all forum notes and break out sessions, a flowchart with telephone numbers and email addresses, and the under-

standing that our focus must be the children ...ALL children. Race has no place.

WHCC accomplished our mission in organizing and now it is in the hands of the community and board members. Another forum will be held in October!



A PANEL OF ADMINISTRATORS ANSWER QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO SAFETY IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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# Kids Count! <sup>FALL</sup>

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## Back to School Kick-Off



Impoverished children in the East End Community were given a BIG party to celebrate the new school year!!! That's right! To CELEBRATE! It is important to present a positive attitude toward education and the knowledge that "You're not alone...we will help you get through this!" School can be a lonely place for some children. FBC Young Adult SS class provided popcorn, snow cones and a movie for the community. It was VERY successful and the children are thrilled to get back to school with their NEW (not "used") book bag, paper, pencils, and crayons!

Children have received school uniforms from a fellow United Methodist clothier, Mrs. Robbie Hales, and the children feel good about their new and fresh start this school year. They look like everybody else and feel special...does it get better than that?

## After School Fine Arts Program....accepting applications now!

Fine Arts is being taught in the after school program. Children who are eligible are those who are attending first grade and up, have a "C" average, and a heart for new experiences.

We are teaching Choral Music, Drama, Art and will offer Dance Instruction at the beginning of 2010! Presently, we are preparing for a "Wesley Thanksgiving Feast", as the drama, music and art departments will present a night of entertainment for a local shelter. We are currently trying to tie down a specific date. Check our website for more information!

## Elementary Tutoring ~making a difference one child at a time

Volunteers, working with trained staff, assist elementary children with difficult areas of study and check homework.

A welcome addition to our EDUCATION ROOM is a computer lab. This allows students to go online and put school projects and reports together. Most of our youngsters do not have home computers or internet capabilities.



# Mrs. Annie McKee ~ The Gift Goes On!

Back in June, I received a call from Annie McKee. She told me that she was working with *College for Kids* at MCC and wondered if she might share a drama with our Fine Arts department. I could hardly speak! Would it be alright?! Are you kidding me? You all know who Annie is, right? She is a featured columnist for “The Meridian Star” and a member of the Mississippi Writers Guild! Long story, Annie had written a play, *The Duchess, the Tea Party and Tess* that I found to be amazing! The Wesley Fine Arts children learned the play and so much more under Annie’s tutelage. But the very best part of the Mrs. Annie experience was the way she inspired them and affirmed them in their talents and ambitions. They stood a few inches taller from the experience and want more and more drama and music. You should see them working together and hearing them create their own dramas. Now, they want to follow Mrs. Annie and give back to our community through the upcoming Wesley Community Feast. Wesley will feed the underprivileged in our community at Thanksgiving and they will serve them and perform! Annie planted a seed and helped our kids to think about others...does it really get better than that?



## The Importance of Words

They are POWERFUL!!!



One day, not too long ago, a young man came by Wesley House requesting a “list” of needs. He received a tour, instead, so he might better understand the six agencies that serve under the Wesley roof. As we walked through the corridors, I spoke visions of what God had placed on my heart pertaining to the children in our community. ...more specifically, keeping them safe and offering activities that would engage them in positive play and enrichment while addressing their standing with Jesus.

The next morning, I received a call from this young man. He was so excited about what God had laid on his heart that he could hardly slow down to tell me! He wanted to help put up a “**Playground for Jesus**”. His whole Sunday School Class got behind him and they are doing remarkable things for the Kingdom. He said, “Mrs. Stevens, I’ve been on numerous mission trips, and the place that people are saved is on a basketball court!. Let us help you win souls for Christ!”

So, **WORDS**...keep speaking them! God spoke the universe into existence, He certainly will bring them to pass if we keep our hearts focused on Him and His will!



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**CHECK OUT OUR  
WEBSITE:**

[www.wesleyhousemeridian.org](http://www.wesleyhousemeridian.org)

*Call and make your  
appointment for a  
tour of the Wesley  
mission! The field is  
white and ready for  
harvest.*

*601.527.2722*

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Next quarter is **HUGE!**  
Be sure and check out  
our calendar for current  
events.

**Wesley Belle Concert,**  
"O Holy Night" Sunday,  
Nov. 15th, 6:00 @ First  
Baptist Church.

**Wesley Open House**  
Sunday, Dec. 6, 2-5 p.m.

Also, don't forget to  
adopt a foster care child  
for Christmas!

# Kid's Manna



This program is relatively new and found under the Connectional Agency! It came about when the staff and I realized how stressful life can be for parents going to school or working....pick up the kids, get their homework, cook dinner, clean, make sure they get their baths, put them into bed and WHERE IS THE FACE TIME?!! Parents desperately need time with their children and time to listen to what is going on in their lives. How do they do this when their lives are so full just trying to maintain a household and earn a living....we all know they could make more on welfare.

Thus, the KID'S MANNA program. It is for parents who work and/or go to school! Parents make application and pick up meals for each person in their family five days a week. These meals are nutritionally sound and delicious. Wesley loves to help all people in need, but it is great to help those who are really trying to help themselves.