

The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry NEWSLETTER

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Meet us at
MISSION NET 2009
in Oldenburg,
Germany
8th-13th of April!

DEAR FRIENDS

A new year has started and it is time to let you hear from us again. Although the first month is over already, we wish you all another great year under God's loving care and guidance! In this newsletter you will read about the first Backpacker's Ministry conference which was held in November 2008 and about our Christmas time here in the Shelters. Also we want to introduce to you some of our plans to promote the Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry. Thanks for all the input received. We go for it!
For now, enjoy reading this newsletter.

BACKPACKERS' MINISTRY CONFERENCE REPORT

by George Probek, one of the conference leaders

Between November 17-20 2008, The Shelter Hostels hosted an international backpacker ministry conference. Approximately 40 people attended from 4 continents. This was the largest backpacker ministry conference to date and the first time it was held in Europe!

It was a time to gather together those interested in or already involved in ministry to world travelers, backpackers and youth hostellers. All were encouraged as they shared with one another their ministry or their dream for ministry. Networking and partnering occurred naturally and some of the effects of this has already begun to happen.

One of the participants has just left for India to join a team for a few months. That team has recently established itself there back in mid-2008. Representatives from a Christian university in the USA has plans to send a team to Europe this year.

Different sessions covered themes such as: evangelism, various hostel and hospitality ministries, need for global networking, training of workers, and communicating the vision and opportunities for backpacker ministry around the world.

Doors are opening to establish a hospitality network of people, ministries and Christian communities in Europe to provide friendship, fellowship and discipleship as the backpackers travel around. For those of you in Europe who are interested in being part of this, please email: gpacknz@gmail.com with subject heading "European BPM Network"

It is not fully known as to how different ones are communicating with each other since the conference, but there is no doubt there has been forward movement into 'backpacker ministry' as a result. Future backpacker ministry conferences in different parts of the world will continue to be planned.

To receive backpacker ministry news updates as to what is happening around the world, send an email request to: theseekers2001@yahoo.ca with Subject heading "Backpacker Ministry News". To be informed of future backpacker ministry conferences or have specific questions, contact: info@backpacking.is.it



BACKPACKERS CONFERENCE - A PERSONAL IMPRESSION

by Hennie Maljaars, manager Shelter City

Thinking back of the Backpackers conference, that took place 2 months ago, I ask myself the question: what made it so inspiring? What impressed me during those days by talking to the different participants? What touched me in those meetings?

I am glad that I wrote some things down for myself right after the conference. Not only because 2 Shelter months full of other impressions were added to my brain since we were together in Christ Church, but also because impressions are touching the heart and go deeper than just recalling what it was about, so I have something to write for the Shelter Newsletter.

Talking with a staff member this week, who had also joined most of the meetings, helped me to think back of how it actually was to be together with a group of diverse people, living in different places and in various circumstances around the world. It was indeed inspiring to hear them talk about their life, their passion for the Lord, and to find out that there was a common desire to share Christ and to show hospitality to people traveling around the world.

Hippies, Nomads, trail hikers, world travelers, young people backpacking Australia, students exploring Europe, people that are not planning their trip but who are just surviving in a foreign country: so many people are on the road, going somewhere or not knowing where they are going. This was the first thought that hit me: there are more people traveling than I was aware of.

The next thing that struck me, -something you so easily forget after years of working in a hostel ministry- was: how interesting it actually is, and what a pleasure to meet those people, to spend some time with them. Not from the perspective of ministry / our mission statement / being the one who invests and gives all the time, but meeting each other as real people, relating to people, loving them and sharing the One who poured out this real love in our hearts. Not just sharing truth, but Christ who is the Truth. Because we have a real relationship with Him.

Being at the conference reminded me of something I knew before, but got refreshed in my heart: Sharing Christ is not just a duty because we are a ministry; He is our life. And in the (even short) relationship with people around us (whether it are your neighbors, people in your town, or travelers in the Shelter), we should communicate: I find it interesting and pleasant to meet you, I want the best for you, it is my desire that you receive full life in Christ!

A personal impression of the conference? Inspiring. Refreshing. Motivating, to love people, to meet them, to get to know them a bit, to share my life with them. And for me to live in Christ, so yes; let us joyfully share Christ with our guests. It is not a duty. It is like giving a present on a birth day. With the prayer in our hearts that this present will lead to a new birth in Christ.

SHELTER CHRISTMAS 2008

by Susanne Winkler, manager Shelter City

"I'm dreaming of a white Christmas" ... although it was not a white one, it definitely was a cold one in the Netherlands. So many Ex- cleaners, guests, friends of the hostels accepted our invitation to spend the Christmas evening and the evening of the 1st Christmas Day in our hostel. The Shelter City café was so packed that we had to use the hallway too, bringing in all available tables from the garden. Everybody was busy with the program and serving the meals that we even forgot to take pictures ☺. So the four pictures you see here below show our beautiful staff members when we celebrated Christmas as Shelter City team a few days before the 25th.



Christmas - what a great chance to tell people about the greatest gift of all, that God send His Son to this world out of love for us. One guest from England said to us: "I have never known the real meaning of Christmas till this very day."

During Christmas we had a lot of Arabic speaking guests with Muslim background in the hostel. They were very open for the Gospel! So our staff members started to print out the Bible texts and Christmas songs in Arabic for them. And can you imagine how great it is when you suddenly hear "Joy to the world" in many different languages. We really saw God at work in the hearts of these people. Omar for example got here in the Shelter a New Testament. Often during the day you could see him reading it very concentrated. Rania, another guest, went to church for the first time in her life.

And isn't it great how God provides? Just during the time the Arabic guests were here we have an Arabic speaking staff member in the Shelter Jordan team who came over to do Bible studies with the Arabic guests in their own language. And we could connect these guests to an Arabic speaking church here in Amsterdam, where two former guests, who accepted Christ in their lives are now a member. Thinking about this, while writing it down makes me so thankful about what a loving Father we have! Pray for Rania, Omar and all the other people who heard the Good News that it will change their lives.

PROMOTION PLANS SHELTER

In the last newsletter we already announced it, the Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry wants to make its work and ministry more known to people, churches, bible schools...

Quite some ideas have reached me already, Thank you! Keep on emailing.

With this newsletter I send you also our new Shelter Flyer with information for people who might be interested in the Youth Hostel Ministry. It would be great if you could spread it among the Christians you know, the church you go to a.s.o. Thanks a lot!

I can send you also printed flyers, just let me know the address and the amount you want to have (info@youthhostelministry.org)

On YouTube we put the Shelter Promotion Video and soon a PowerPoint presentation will be available as well. If you want to do a presentation in your church, (bible)school, student group please mail me as well.

Furthermore we will present the Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry with a stand on the following events:

Mission Net 2009 8th- 13th of April, Oldenburg (Germany)

Soul Survivor 25th -29th of April, strand Nulde (The Netherlands)

Opwekking, 29th of May till 1st of June, Biddinghuizen (The Netherlands)

Flevo Festival, 20th- 23th of August, Bussloo (The Netherlands)

CAN YOU JOIN US? Are you planning to go to one of these events? Could you help us on the Shelter stand for some hours? That would be great. Please let me know (info@youthhostelministry.org).

NAMES & NEWS

Good bye **Auke Algera!** 11 years he worked in the Youth hostel ministry, as manager, in the personal department, marketing and in February he will leave us. Auke thank you so much for all these years you supported the Shelter. Auke and his wife Tyleen (a former staff member by the way ☺) will emigrate with their kids Timothy and Joel to the home country of Tyleen – to Canada.

May God bless you and your family with this big new step in your life.

Welcome **Jacoline Marchal!** Jacoline knows already all the In's and Out's from hostel life cause she was a former staff member from the Shelter Jordan. Now she will support the Shelter City team as regular part time reception worker.

Welcome **Gerrit Brouwer!** You can't imagine how valuable it is to have a "handy man" repairing all the broken things in the hostel.

Jacoline & Gerrit we are glad that you are now part of the team. May God bless you in your new tasks.

Just (a few days till he is) married! **Peter de Graaf**, nightman in the Shelter City will get married on March 21st. Yes, we will celebrate with you! May Gods love be always your source to love one another!

PRAYER POINTS

Give thanks that applications are coming again!!! Still many positions need to be filled but we thankfully realize God is answering our prayers.

Give thanks that our organisation guests and cleaners are so interested in getting to know more about Jesus.

Give thanks that the Backpackers conference really encouraged and inspired the people from the different travellers ministries.

Give thanks that although less travellers slept in the hostels we did not end up in financial loss for 2008.

Pray for long term staff members.

Pray for our staff team and managers team. Many feel sick right now and of course we all can feel the extra energy it costs when you have to do extra shifts or double shifts because of a lack of staff members.

Pray that we all continuously focus on Christ.

Pray for the Backpackers Network and all new initiatives and ideas that came out of the conference

Pray for Gods blessing for Auke, Tyleen, Timothy and Joel and a good start in their new home country.

Pray for growth in faith and the desire in our hearts to reach out to people

The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry is a Christian ministry to travelers. In the centre of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we run two Christian hostels: Shelter City and Shelter Jordan. Each year, we provide accommodation to 40,000 travelers from all over the world. Our desire is to be a blessing to them and to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with these travelers. The ministry is part of the association Tot Heil des Volks, a non-denominational mission organization registered in Amsterdam. Internet: www.youthhostelministry.org

Donations. The work of The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry would not be able to continue without financial support. If you want to help us with a gift you are very welcome: 541914057 t.n.v. Stichting Tot Heil Des Volks, Amsterdam
International: IBAN: NL75ABNA0541914057, BIC code: ABNANL2A

This Newsletter can also be found at www.youthhostelministry.org

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