

KIDS KORNER

*Why do all these people have fire in their eyes:
A Report on the 2002 International Children's Expo*

—Jill Harris

Imagine a room filled with children's workers, Christian school teachers and homeschooling parents on fire for children and missions. The air seems to buzz. One woman comes up to Jill Harris, Expo Coordinator, and exclaims, "This is the most incredible place I've ever been. Everyone here has the same heart as I do! I don't have to explain myself or feel like a freak because I'm passionate about children and missions." Comments like this are heard every time an International Children's Expo is held.

Attracting participants from around the U.S. and other countries, the International Children's Expo is a biennial conference that teaches people to mobilize, equip and disciple children to advance God's kingdom. Xenos Christian Fellowship in Columbus, Ohio hosted the most recent Expo April 11-13, 2002. This year participants came from four countries in addition to the U.S.: Canada, Mongolia, South Africa, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Over 55 workshops were presented on a full range of children's and missions topics: Puppets Speak 3000 Languages; How to Use Music to Energize Your Bible and Mission Lessons; Cultural Simulations and Field Trips; Missions in the Inner City, Missions Skits and Dramas; Technology in Missions: Connecting, Challenging and Commissioning Kids; Preschoolers Can Do Missions Tool; and Legacy of a World Christian Home.

Gerald Robison from Unveiling GLORY Ministry (ACMC- Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment) challenged the attendees with his keynote addresses. "Cat and Dog Theology" takes a look at our relationship with God. Are you a "cat"

who thinks everything revolves around you, or are you a "dog" who is totally devoted to the Lord? "The Story of the Bible" helps us read the Bible as one story with God as the main character. Robison's fast-paced, visually-stimulating presentations complete with sound effects kept the audience engaged.

"The church in North America would be twice its size if Christian parents disciplined their children," asserted Rick Osborne, author and speaker



Jill Harris (seated, left) with Rosemarie Brooker of Trinidad (seated, right) and Magriet Lotter of South Africa (standing) at the International Children's Expo

from Lightwave Publishing of Canada. Osborne's vision is to see kids disciplined to impact their world, whether next door or around the globe. He has authored over twenty books, many published by Focus on the Family and ZonderKids. Osborne also presented two well-attended workshops.

What would an International Children's Expo be without involving kids? A special time of videos, music,

crafts, international games, and ethnic snacks were part of a morning session that included praying for the world and how to study the Bible on your own as a child. Kids 5 to 11 years old went out the door ready to change the world!

A variety of ministries exhibited and sold a wide range of children's missions education materials. Many groups premiered new products, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators' new Bibleless peoples book, *From Akebu to Zapotec*. Caleb Project debuted *Kids' Missions Skits and God's Got Stuff to Do* as well as *He Wants Your Help*—a 13-week follow-up curriculum. YWAM introduced its *Heroes for Young Readers* series.

A highlight in the exhibit area was Joy Sutton's "Prayer Chair". Six-year-old Joy came up with the idea all by herself that when people stopped by her mother's booth (Pray Kids! Magazine) she could pray for them. So with a sign drawn and two chairs next to the table, Joy was ready to pray for anyone who came by. She had a line of people waiting at one point!

Special-interest groups met for networking on children at risk, developing a national prayer network, how to host a Regional Children's Expo, and Children's Perspectives. Over 30 people spent time brainstorming ideas on how to see a Children's Perspectives Course be developed in conjunction with the adult Perspectives Course. Plans are forming to see a curriculum produced and available by 2004.

Jill Harris, International Children's Expo Coordinator and Children's Mobilization Specialist for Caleb Project, commented, "Every International Children's Expo is as exciting as the first one held in 1994 in Mesa, AZ. Over the years thousands of people have gone away with their passion enlarged, their vision refocused, and resources to get the job done, no matter what their area of children's ministry is." If you would like to receive information on future International Children's Expos or Regional Expos held around the country, e-mail your contact information to: kidsmobilization@cproject.com or write Caleb Project, 10 W. Dry Creek Circle, Littleton, CO 80120.

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