

# THOMAS TRIBUNE

Winter 2018 Edition



Tim & Sherry Thomas

## LEGACY FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW

**Art Rorheim**

**May 7, 1918 – January 5, 2018**

Arthur R. "Art" Rorheim, Co-founder of Awana®, passed away on January 5, 2018. He was 99.

Art was the beloved husband of the late Winnie Rorheim (nee Hofmann). He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law Ken and Katie; his daughter Kathlyn Brock; four granddaughters, Amy (Gary) Roedding, Julie (Joel) Bales, Kim Ahlgrim, and Kerry (Rich) Gwaltney, 10 great-grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren. Mr. Rorheim is preceded in death by his parents, Olaus and Alida and two brothers, Roy and Leif and son-in-law, Dennis Brock.

Art was born to Norwegian immigrants who settled in Chicago. He placed his faith in Jesus Christ at age 10. He soon began attending the Tabernacle Scouts weekly program (a precursor to Awana), at the Chicago Gospel Tabernacle, a church founded by national evangelist Paul Rader.

It was at the Tabernacle, that Art met Lance "Doc" Latham and joined Doc's White Shirt Brigade, a traveling musical group affiliated with the church. He then followed Lance to the North Side Gospel Center when Doc planted the church.

In 1943 Art became the youth director at the Center and began to conceive many of the features that are distinctive of Awana: handbooks, outreach events, awards, uniforms and, of course, the Game Square. He eventually named this program Awana, based on 2 Timothy 2:15 which tells us that approved workmen are not ashamed.

Art guided the ministry for many years, living long enough to see Awana grow from a single church in Chicago to global ministry used by over 50,000 churches in 120 countries reaching over 4 million children each week with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"We live in a world where billions of people are facing a Christ-less eternity," Art pointed out. "How can I not share the greatest news in the history of mankind with men and women and boys and girls whose futures depend on hearing it? Sometimes God allows things to happen to me so that He can use me to share His good news with people who need it."

Art's unwavering commitment to leadership training and reaching and discipling children and youth will always be remembered. He valued the role that adults play in the lives of young people because of the enormous impact that his mentor, Lance Latham, made on him.

"That's why every child who attends Awana even just once in his life will be introduced to God's plan of salvation through our materials and our teaching," Art pointed out. "I wanted to ensure that no child would leave Awana without having heard the good news of the gospel. Every child who comes to Awana has the opportunity to place his hope and trust in Christ to save him from the penalty of sin, which is separation from God forever. No one leaves any Awana meeting without learning the gospel."

Art's legacy will continue to live on in countless ways around the world, as children, youth and adults continue to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

What will your legacy be?

## CHECKERED FLAG FINISH

OK, I'll admit it, I watched some racing this weekend. Saturday, I watched the Xfinity race and Sunday I watched the Daytona 500. I was a bigger fan when my sons were younger and lived less than 30 minutes from Daytona. In recent years, NASCAR has tried changing the rules in order to try to make the last lap as exiting as possible. There is nothing more anticlimactic as a race ending under the yellow caution flag. This weekend was a prime example of failure and success. It took five overtime restarts in order for a winner to finally be determined in Saturday's race. I no longer cared who won. I just wanted it to be over. Sunday's race also included a late lap crash that brought out the green-white-checked flag. But, thankfully, the race ended just two laps later.



The same thing can happen to our Awana clubs. The weather warms up, time change happens, attendance starts to slip off a bit, and the kids' energy level is through the roof. It must be Spring. About this same time we start thinking about the end of the club year. We order awards and start to plan our closing programs. These are great things. But there is another thing that happens all too often. As the club year winds down our club meetings tend to slow down as well. By the last night we, clubbers and leaders alike, are just going through the motions waiting, anticipating, and even longing for the year to end. Don't let this happen! A club year should end like a NASCAR race – at 200 miles per hour! Here are some tips:

1) In the latter months of the club year stop playing traditional Awana games. Instead play team games, line games, or just plain goofy games. 2) When time changes, and the weather warms, move club outside. 3) Plan special contests and theme nights. 4) Increase the size, or quantity, of points and prizes. 5) Invite special guests like the fire department or police. 6) Restructure your night by rearranging the order of events. 7) Of course, plan that closing ceremony complete with a slide show and refreshments.

Make the last night more exciting than the first. In other words – save your best for last. Like a NASCAR race, the ending should be more exciting than the beginning; and then suddenly it's over. When club ends like this the clubbers have all summer to anticipate the starting up again in the fall. When clubs winds down and slows down, the clubbers have all summer to remember that. What do you want your clubbers thinking about this summer?

p.s. What is your strategy to keep in touch with your clubbers over the summer months?

## NEW WISCONSIN CHURCHES

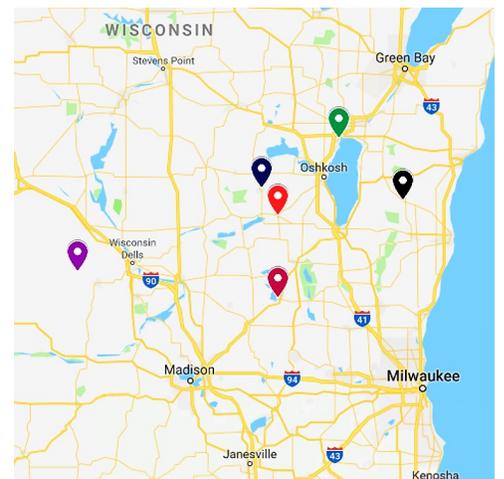
Six new churches registered with Awana for the 2017/18 club season.

Three started in the fall: Trinity Evangelical Free Church, Ripon (Orange), Harvest Evangelical Free Church, Beaver Dam (Red), and Faith Community, Berlin (Blue)

Two started mid-year: Advent Christian Church, LaValle (Purple), Cornerstone Church and Menasha (Green)

One is planning a soft launch for their own church in March before opening up to the community at large this fall: Kiel Alliance, Kiel (Black)

In addition to these six churches, we are continuing to work closely with three second-year churches and five third-year churches.



To keep current with the Awana ministry in southern and eastern Wisconsin, please like our Facebook page: [www.fb.com/awanaswi](http://www.fb.com/awanaswi)



Previous issues of the Thomas Tribune and other news are available from our website: [awanaswi.org/newsletters.html](http://awanaswi.org/newsletters.html)

Tim & Sherry Thomas are missionaries with Awana, serving in Wisconsin. Their sending church is Deltona Alliance Church of Deltona, Florida.

None of this would be possible without prayer and financial partners. Would you please pledge to pray for us during 2018? If so, please let us know by sending us a card, letter, or email. Would you also prayerfully consider becoming a financial partner by pledging a monthly or quarterly gift of any amount to help us stay on the field? If so, please visit the support page of our website or contact us for more information.

Tim & Sherry Thomas • 750 Summerset Dr. • Johnson Creek, WI 53038 • 920-699-1977 • [timt@awana.org](mailto:timt@awana.org)