

# THOMAS TRIBUNE

Winter 2019 Edition



Tim & Sherry Thomas

## A Friday Night in Reedsburg

What is the best day of the week for your Awana Club?

Churches have debated this question for years. When I was a kid, very few clubs met on Wednesday. At our church, in Medinah, IL, the girls met on Tuesdays and the boys on Thursday. Today, 82% of the 121 churches in southern and eastern Wisconsin meet on Wednesday. I am confident that this ratio is true for all the clubs in the United States.

The answer is there is no *best* day. Each church figures out what works for them in their culture and in their context. Currently there is only one day of the week that we have no clubs meeting in our part of Wisconsin, Saturday. I know of no Saturday clubs in America, though Saturdays are popular in other parts of the world.

If there is no *best*, is there a "bad" day for Awana. What about Friday? Could Friday possibly work?

For at least one church in Wisconsin, they have decided Friday night is just right.

Recently, I had the privilege of visiting Bible Baptist Church in Reedsburg, WI. Associate Pastor Chris Anderson is the Awana Ministry Director (a.k.a. Com-

mander) and Lead Pastor, Fred Weiss, serves as Game Director and van driver.

On this particular Friday there were 40 children (Cubbies through Trek) and 19 volunteers. Down just a little bit, but it has been a difficult winter. They average about 45 on Fridays with up to 2/3 of the clubbers unchurched, being picked up by the van and bus. They reached a high of 55 clubbers last fall.



Club has not always met on Friday. Prior to 2013 Awana was on Wednesday. They averaged 15 clubbers and were the only mid-week activity. Since moving to Friday, Pastor Weiss has restarted

Bible Study and Prayer on Wednesday nights with about 40 faithfully attending each week. On Sunday, they average 110 for services.

When asked what people thought about transitioning to Fridays, Pastor Weiss said, "Many in the church and community said it would not work; families have too many things going on." One reason for the success, he added, is this perspective: "We will take your kids for two hours on a Friday. For free. Most parents have no problem sending their children to Awana."

## New Hispanic Work in Fort Atkinson

Our newest club is First United Methodist Church's Hispanic Ministry. After training in December, they started in January. Each week about 15 children attend Awana while adults worship in the church fellowship hall. This week there were over 50 in attendance. Please pray for FUMC and for opportunities to serve Wisconsin's growing Hispanic population.



The 4/14 Window Movement is a Global Mission Movement focusing on Reaching, Rescuing, Rooting, and Releasing children and youth to reach their full transformational impact in their family, community, and nation.



The 4/14 Window Movement exist because:

- Most decisions for Christ are made by those between the ages of 4 and 14
- Children are the largest 'unreached people group' and yet they are the most receptive group.
- In too many churches, children and youth are not part of the disciple-making process.

Recognizing the critical need in evangelizing children, Awana, along with other ministries, have joined the 4/14 movement. See [4to14window.com](http://4to14window.com) to learn more.

Another 4/14 ministry is Global 4/14 Day. It happens every April 14 (4/14). This year it falls on a Sunday. On Global 4/14 Day all are invited to participate in a day of prayer for children in the 4/14 Window.

- Pray for your own children and those in your community and around the world.
- Pray for human needs (safety, nutrition, health, shelter, education)
- Pray for their spiritual needs (for salvation, for God to send a teacher, or missionary, to share the Gospel to them. For an opportunity to engage in long-term discipleship).

## 4.5 Million Children

2018 was a year of exciting milestones for Awana as we celebrated 4.5 million children hearing the name of Jesus in 56,000 churches in 123 counties around the world.

When Sherry and I came on board as missionaries in 2006, the global impact of Awana was 1.2 million. Now there are over 2 million children in Africa and, with over 820,000, India is now the country with the most children in Awana.

Download the entire 2018 Awana Annual Report [www.awana.org/about/our-impact/](http://www.awana.org/about/our-impact/)

## Awana Missionary Support

Awana missionaries are on the front lines of children's ministry. We work to engage churches in the global mission of Awana, by providing training, resources, and prayer to ensure that boys and girls have the tools to come to know, love and serve Jesus. Partnering with your Awana missionary enables us to continue the important work of reaching every child, everywhere with the gospel.

Please pray as over the next several months we will be working to not only eliminate a monthly shortfall of over \$1000 per month, but to also replenish our depleted account reserve.

If Awana has been a blessing to you, please consider supporting the ongoing work of Awana in Wisconsin. <https://www.awana.org/missionary/thomas/>

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.

Thank you for your ongoing support.