

*From Where I Sit . . .*

## **"LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND LADS TO LEADERS"**

In the late 70's I read of a program that caught my attention called "Lads to Leaders and Leaderettes." At that time I was preaching in Oklahoma but nearing a transition point to move to Valdosta, Georgia in 1979. After getting our feet wet there in world missions and many other exciting ventures including working with young men to teach them how to preach, the need became more apparent for a systematic program. In 1983 the Education Committee and Youth Committee of that congregation spent a lot of time researching our needs and by 1984 we were ready to invite Dr. Jack Zorn, Founder and Chief Executive Office of Lads to Leaders..... to visit us at Forrest Park. That's where my story really begins.

Later that year we had begun an exciting curriculum of leadership training material on Wednesday nights, and began our preparation to attend our first National Convention. It was a much smaller convention back then. I can't remember exactly, but somewhere around 2000 or so. It had grown from 60 at the very first convention back in 1969 or 1970. Our program blossomed and the adult-youth relationship soared. Over the next 17 years we built a dynamic base of development for our boys and girls that I have never regretted being a part of. By 1991 Dr. Zorn honored me with the opportunity to serve as National Convention Director at Opryland Hotel in Nashville. For several years after that I served on his planning staff for conventions and organized awards ceremonies. I was given other opportunities to direct, but situations prevented my accepting that responsibility again until the year 2000. Meanwhile we had divided into 2 conventions and I had spent several years helping with the Atlanta Convention. In 2000 and in 2001 I directed the convention back at Opryland, and still serve as Awards Ceremonies Coordinator. In fact I already have scripts ready for this year's exciting programs.

But, alas, I won't get to attend. This tumor on my hearing nerve must come out and the surgery clashes with the convention dates. It's the first convention I've had to miss, and I must add, Kathy too, since 1985. A part of us feels a bit empty since something so important to us must go on without us. And indeed it will!! A lesson worth learning in life is that no one is indispensable. It's humbling to know that there's a line of people capable and willing to step right up and take one's place. I'm thrilled that Jim Flowers plans to attend and observe so we can have some discussions at Broad Street about the possible need here.

Meanwhile, we are in for a treat. This Sunday night, the Lads from Plainview congregation in Hazelgreen, AL will be conducting the entirety of our services. Young men who have been trained in their program will conduct the song services, prayers, scripture readings, and 3 speakers. I hope the whole congregation will make a special effort to be here for this exciting opportunity to witness first hand what thousands of young people are doing all over our brotherhood. There are 9,000 registered to attend the convention in Nashville and another 4,000 will attend in Atlanta. Probably 50% of these will be students, and the other 50%, adult sponsors. We are seeing a generation of young men and women prepare themselves for leadership in the Lord's kingdom. Yes, there are roles for the young ladies that stay within the proper description of God's woman in the Scriptures. I'm excited that we have the opportunity to host Plainview, and may I say to these young people, "Welcome to Broad Street, and thank you for taking the time to come share with us."

..... Terry Broome

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