

John Michener

Oklahoma & North Texas

<u>Newsletter</u> January 2011



Over the holidays I did a lot of reading with our children. I broke out the old children's classic <u>Charlotte's Web</u>, by E.B. White. You may remember it is the story of how Wilber, the runt pig of the litter, is saved through the hard work and sacrifice of his friend Charlotte the spider. I had not read the story since I was a boy. Reading it fresh with adult eyes gave me quite an unexpected start. In fact, before I could finish the first page I had a lump in my

throat, my heart was pounding, and my pulse was racing.

"Where's Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

"Out to the hoghouse," replied Mrs. Arable. "Some pigs were born last night."

"I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight.

"Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it."

"Do *away* with it?" shrieked Fern. "You mean *kill* it? Just because it's smaller than the others?"

In all honesty, my eyes were inordinately moist as well and it was not Wilber's fate I was contemplating. Of course the parallels are obvious and need no illumination. But there is one point about the overall story that I would like to make.



On the next page Fern convinces her papa to grant a stay of execution. However, it is only a temporary reprieve. For Fern's sake Papa spares the runt for a season, but he still plans on bacon and ham by Christmas. The point is, Fern saved Wilber for the day, but his long term safety required more. Wilber was ultimately saved by the daily diligence of Charlotte weaving her webs.

In the same way, as God's stew-

ards, we have much saving to do. One day we play the part of Fern, saving a baby from immediate destruction; the next we play the part of Charlotte as we weave webs of support and recognize the value of those less fortunate.

## **Seat Work to Feet Work**

In 2010 the JFA team

• conducted 34 Debate to Dialogue seminars,

- trained 1,357 participants,
- facilitated outreach events on 13 campuses in 9 states, and
- presented one-time lectures to at least 38 audiences, reaching approximately 3,180 people.

The good news is that 563 of those who participated in a Seat Work seminar continued their training by helping create dialogue during a Feet Work outreach event. That is a 41% conversion rate from head knowledge to activism. Lind-



sey Entz, a high school junior in Yukon, Oklahoma was one of those who did both. She said, "Trusting God had to change suddenly from just words to actions."

## **Local Mission Work**

One senior high school girl who worked with us said, "I thought that going to OU wouldn't be bad because we are still in the Bible-belt of Oklahoma. My eyes were opened to just how much of a mission field there is right here."

Speaking of mission work, thanks to new donors and some special Christmas presents, our shortage has dwindled to only **\$835 per month**. I have asked a few churches to consider supporting me this year and am hopeful those inquiries will be fruitful.

The team is preparing to spend about two weeks in Arizona. Pray that we will have a high conversion rate from Seat Work to Feet Work, so that we see transformation in our volunteers and in the student bodies at the University of Arizona and Arizona State. We will be conducting private training seminars during the last week of



1<sup>st</sup> Place: Most Festive Getup

January, but community training events are scheduled from 29 January through 3 February in Tucson and Phoenix. Please call or email me for more details if you are interested in joining us.

I was particularly impressed the other day with the good writing, thinking, and maturity on display in the reflection of Jordan Bruce, a junior at Southwest Covenant High School in Yukon, Oklahoma. You would be tremendously encouraged by reading his enclosed reflection, or at:

www.jfaweb.org/John Michener/Reflection Bruce.pdf

-John Michener