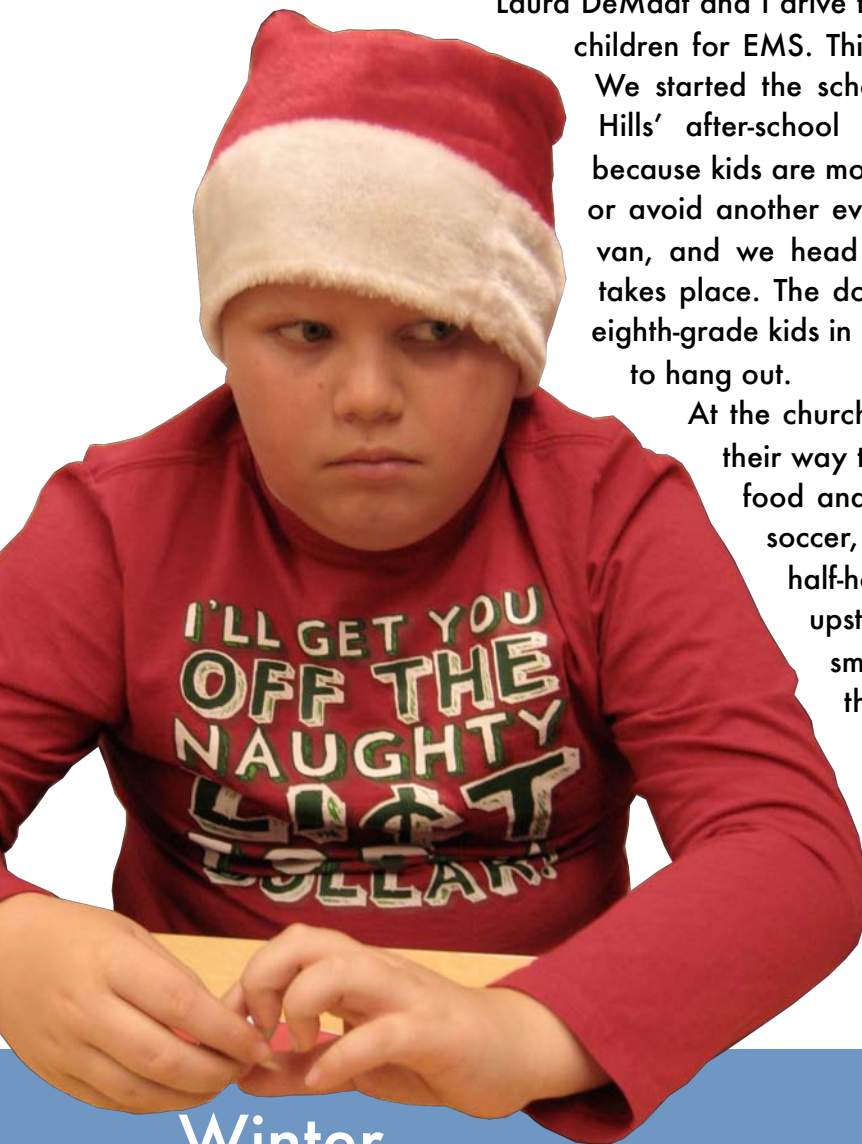


Stories

The Quarterly Newsletter of New City Neighbors

The Truth About EMS - Eric Schalk

EMS is about the kids who are struggling in life and looking for someone to care about them.



Laura DeMaat and I drive to Kent Hills Elementary every Thursday to pick up children for EMS. This particular night we pick up only three students. We started the school year with as many as twelve kids from Kent Hills' after-school program, but the number has been dropping because kids are moving out of the area so their parents can find work or avoid another eviction process. The three we pick up pile into the van, and we head off to 4th Reformed Church where the ministry takes place. The doors open at 5:45 PM for about 40 third through eighth-grade kids in our community who are looking for a safe place to hang out.

At the church, the boys in the van jump out and quickly make their way to the meal line. After prayer, they grab a plate of food and consume it so they can head downstairs to play soccer, pool, ping pong, or some other exciting game. A half-hour of playing hard ends with everyone heading upstairs for dessert. The kids finish dessert, I call out small groups and the room empties as they race for their rooms of choice and settle down for a serious discussion on a hero of the faith. Once Bible Study ends, the night is over, and Laura and I load up kids to bring them home.

This is a portrait of EMS, but it is not the whole picture. EMS is about the kids, like the one on the left, who are struggling in life and looking for someone to care about them. These children

Winter
2009

Seeking to be a diverse, welcoming ministry that works with Northeast Grand Rapids neighbors to restore and develop their community.

Buy Stuff

An easy way to support NCN while making everyday purchases.

We are excited to inform you that we have set up a TRIP program that will provide financial assistance for NCN.

TRIP is a program run through the Grand Rapids Christian Schools that has been used for years to help people earn money for Christian Education. Over the last few years, GRCS has expanded that program to help non-profits like NCN.

TRIP is a simple program that allows you to support NCN while shopping at the stores you visit regularly. You purchase gift cards through TRIP, and NCN gets a percentage back from the retailer. For instance, if you buy a \$100 gift card to Meijer, NCN gets \$4.

To find out more about getting involved in this easy program, please contact Eric Schalk.



come every week looking for stability, safety, and love. Much of their lives are in turmoil; there isn't enough food at home, their parents aren't around, and their homes are temporary apartments that offer little security.

EMS is about loving these kids, reminding them that they are important, and giving them a reason to hope. Our goal is to help them encounter the love and compassion of Jesus who suffers with them daily.

EMS takes a lot of work. We have fifteen volunteers each week who give up their time and energy to build relationships with children. It isn't always easy either. There are fights, bad attitudes, and the general craziness that comes from working with kids. Despite these challenges, the truth about EMS is that it is a ministry where kids can interact with Jesus and find the life-transforming power they so desperately need. It is a place where nearly 40 kids each week learn that they are loved deeply by God and have a special purpose in this world.

New City Neighbors is a 501(c)(3) nondiscriminatory, nonprofit organization.

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2009 Reflections - Dave Langerak

As I finish my first year on the board I look back with awe at how God has blessed New City Neighbors. When I first started I found it very difficult to understand how NCN could accomplish so much with so little. In reflecting on the last year, some things really made an impact for me.

I spent some time with the Bakery this past summer. I had assumed that I would be helping with recipes, and the kids would be standing

around. I was wrong. After devotions, they took their assigned baking recipes and started like any professional. As I watched them prepare, I was impressed by their teamwork and the way that they handled themselves. They each knew what ingredients to use, the reasons for how things were mixed, and what the expected result would be. They made the best baked goods I have ever tasted!

While all this was happening, I watched two summer staff interact with over 20 kids participating in regular Breaktime, which includes Bible studies, games and crafts. Lunch with that many kids was overwhelming, but these two staff managed them with ease.

I walked through the garden last summer and was very envious of how things looked. I went home and walked through my garden explaining to my wife that we must have done something wrong because our plants were no where near what the Community Garden was producing. More importantly, the connection that the garden was making between neighbors was amazing. I saw neighbors from different cultures, ethnicities, and ages helping and teaching each other.

I was also blessed to participate in the Spring Benefit Concert and Fall Banquet as well as represent NCN at a ministry fair at Rockford Reformed Church. It really is amazing how much NCN does with so little. As I look to the future, I envision bigger things for NCN: a larger garden, a community center, and an expanded bakery for job-readiness skills. There is so much potential, so much good we can build on.

While that is true, I am concerned for our future. I see our financial statements and compare that to the needs of the neighborhood. I remember the faces of the children that participate in the NCN activities and fear the smiles and laughter might be gone if we cannot have your support. I ask for your prayers during this time. I also ask that you consider giving to NCN so we can continue helping this neighborhood grow and bring these children to know Jesus' love.

2010 Volunteer Opportunities

The following is a list of volunteer positions at NCN. For more information on any opportunity, please call Eric Schalk (970.4817).

- Become an EMS volunteer.
- Donate a meal to EMS.
- Volunteer to work with girls at GEMS.
- Join the Garden Team.
 - Become a reading partner for a Breaktimer.
 - Sponsor a Breaktimer.
 - Become a prayer partner.



Ministry Wish List

The items listed below are things that will enhance our ability to do ministry. If you are not able to purchase the item; but would like to make a donation toward it, simply make out a check to NCN and include the item description in the memo line.

- Gas Grill - \$250
- Room cooler/air conditioner (not a window unit) - \$400
- Rototiller - \$500
- Digital Camera - \$200

Stories

A Community Impacting a Community.

What does it take to transform a community? It takes a community. That may sound silly, but it is true. For nearly three years, New City Neighbors has been working in the Creston Neighborhood to bring hope and renewal.

Through our assortment of ministries we are connecting with children and adults in ways that are making a lasting impact. We're helping children see that they are not a lost cause, we're helping adults get involved in meaningful relationships, and we're not doing it alone.

While Eric Schalk does most of the behind-the-scenes work for NCN, it is our community of volunteers that make the ministries possible. Every week, dozens of adults join us to lead the girls of GEMS, the kids of EMS, and the students who attend our High School ministry. Lives are being changed, but only because we have

been blessed with this tremendous community of people who are dedicated to impacting the community at large.

In this edition of Stories, you will get a glimpse of what these volunteers do through "The Truth About EMS." You will also get to read about the fruit of their work in, "2009 Reflections." Furthermore, you will be invited to join us in ministry by participating in our new TRIP program and many other volunteer opportunities.

We invite you to seriously consider becoming involved in the work of New City Neighbors. We need more people to join our community of volunteers so we can continue to expand our reach into our neighborhood. And we need more people to consider making a monthly, quarterly, or one-time contribution so we can continue to reach these children--God's children--exactly where they are. Join us and become a part of God's transforming work in the Creston Neighborhood.

newcityneighbors



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