



# Christian Comic Arts Society



1984 - 2009

COMMEMORATIVE BOOK



# INTRODUCTION

*To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the sun. — Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Someone has said timing is everything.

Looking back over the brief history of the Christian Comic Arts Society (CCAS), I have often wondered why didn't this happen before? Why didn't someone come up with the idea of reaching out to Christian cartoonists and comic book/comic strip fans before it actually happened? The only answer I can come up with is that it just wasn't time yet. It wasn't God's timing.

Within the short history of CCAS, I've witnessed a number of God "things." These are ideas and concepts that once they were put before the public they took off seemingly by themselves. They didn't have to be forced or pushed or argued for—they found easy and ready acceptance. I believe God's Spirit was involved in some mysterious way.

Things like the initial response to the *Valiant* newsletter "way back" in 1984. The response to the founding of *Alpha-Omega* in 1985 and its survival for over 145 bi-monthly issues especially in this age of near instant email communication and social network websites. The favor that CCAS has had at the San Diego Comic-Con for over a decade with its small press table, *Spiritual Themes Panel*, Sunday chapel and panel discussions. CCAS has had a direct or indirect influence for Christian activities and tables at other conventions around the country. Projects like the humble *Alpha-Omega* Challenge with its evangelistic impact and the amazing response by artists to the *Proverbs & Parables* anthology. More recently is the electronic community of Christian writers, artists and fans growing up around the CCAS social network website.

However the greatest God "things" are the wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ that I've been privileged to meet, enjoy fellowship and work with over the years. Folks like Paul Johnston, Ralph Miley, Billy Leavell, John Pierce, Kevin Yong, Jesse Hamm, David Porta, Clint Johnson, Christine Kerrick, Larry Blake, Steve MacDonald, George Macas, Jr., Steve Firchow, Geoff Strout, Eric Jansen, Robert Flores and so many, many more. We are all divine works in progress with the aim of glorifying our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

CCAS is just one aspect of what God has done and is doing within the realm of Christian Comics. We applaud the Spirit-directed efforts of Nate Butler (Comix35), *Megazeen*, christiancomics.net and so many others. CCAS is just a small leaf on the tree that God has planted.

We hope you enjoy this brief survey and reminiscences about the past 25 years of CCAS history. Robert Flores has put a lot of hard work into it and we appreciate his efforts.

We believe that the best is yet before us. We believe in a big God who wants to do big things. As someone has also said "We ain't seen nothin' yet!"

God bless,



Don Ensign

*But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. — Galatians 4:4,5*



## DON ENSIGN'S MEMOIRS

Disclaimer: This is my version of the history of CCAS and it is as factually true as my memory and records allow. It is important to realize that there were others who used sequential art (comics) for Christian purposes long before I was ever born. I do not take credit for originating Christian comics.

I was born in the late 1940's and was raised in a Bible-believing, church-going home. I made a personal commitment to Christ as a young child and this was by far the most important decision of my life. As a kid growing up in the 1950's I was fascinated by media entertainment such as television and comic books. The earliest comic book memory I have was on a trip to western Colorado to visit relatives when one of my brothers purchased a 1953 copy of Fawcett's *Lash LaRue*. Most of the comics I read during that time were Dell Comics like *Donald Duck*, *Uncle Scrooge*, *Mickey Mouse* and various other Disney TV and movie comics. I even subscribed to Dell's *Turok Stone of Stone* in the late 1950's. The first Bible-oriented comics I discovered during that time were David C. Cook's *Sunday Pix* (a Sunday School handout) with the wonderful *Picture Bible* series and a Bible adaptation strip in *Boy's Life* magazine. I became a dedicated comic book collector in 1961 and 1962 and was captivated by the Julius Schwartz-edited DC comics (*Green Lantern*, *Flash*, *JLA*, etc.) and the early Marvel super hero comics.

By 1963, I'd discovered comics fandom and throughout the 1960's was a contributor to several fanzines of the period. My older brother Elvin encouraged me to do Bible story adaptations. As a kid, that didn't sound that interesting as it had already been done and I was hugely smitten with superheroes. My first Christian super hero (Summer 1963) was a missionary character called *Dynamic Man* (no relation to the Golden Age hero) who battled Marxist guerillas in South America. In late 1964, Dick Pryor of Castro Valley, CA. ran an ad in the leading comics adzine, *Rocket's Blast-Comicollector* (RB-CC), announcing a new fanzine that he would publish and requested submissions. I was working on a story featuring a knight type character called "*The Protector*" and I sent Pryor the origin story. I had also envisioned the Protector as a Christian. Amazingly, he accepted it and printed a heavily edited version of it in *Heroes Illustrated* #1 (Spring 1965). In 1966, with my friends Bob LaRievre and Rick Nelson (we also went to the same church at that time), I published one issue of a fanzine called *Valiant*. If Star Studded Comics had their Texas Trio then Bob, Rick and I dubbed ourselves the Borderline Blockbusters (we lived within 20 miles of the US-Canadian border). However, *Valiant* lasted only one issue as the mail orders were not overwhelming.

I accepted an opportunity to join the Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) staff full-time and by the end of 1971 was working at their headquarters at Arrowhead Springs near San Bernardino, CA. Shortly after arriving, I became friends with cartoonist Johnny Meitz who produced the art for the children's evangelistic tract *Good News* comic and *Good News Glove*. Several months later, Johnny, who was responsible for the rapidly growing overhead transparency area, was hard at work

on a second evangelistic comic called *The Greatest Treasure*. I was asked to take over the transparency area to give him time to work on the comic. I felt honored to relieve Johnny of those duties. As the 1970's progressed, my interest increased in the Creation/evolution debate, I started developing ideas for a Biblical epic comic set in the times before the Genesis Flood. Through the fan press, I read about the San Diego comics convention. It took me several years to actually get down to the convention. I went for one day in July, 1974 and was completely blown away by it. There were many pros whose work I had admired giving panel discussions and lots of back issue comics for sale. Over the years, I have enjoyed numerous San Diego Comic Conventions.

I came back from that first convention with two desires. One was to return next year for the full four-day event and plan a Christian outreach to the convention attendees. I began working on the pre-Flood book, but, because of various delays the finished comic, *Tales of Antediluvia* was not published until 1977. The book was printed in the Campus Crusade print shop and I received permission to use an abbreviated form of *The Four Spiritual Laws* (CCC's main evangelistic presentation) on the back cover. That year, I arrived in San Diego with 500 copies of the *Tales of Antediluvia*. I displayed them on the freebie table and they were gobbled up by eager convention attendees. After the convention, I patiently waited for responses. And waited and waited. If memory serves, I did not get one response (I had included my address on the book) from the effort.

Around 1978 or 1979, I was sharing my interest in Christian comics with a friend and he encouraged me to find other people who shared a similar vision. Up until that time, I felt like "I was the only one" who was interested in producing Christian comics (I was aware of the *Spire* Christian comics and the Jack Chick comics and tracts).

After making it a matter of prayer, I met another CCC staff member, a writer in the editorial department named Paul Johnston. Paul was a very intelligent young man with a real love for comics. He and I worked on several unpublished strips.

During the early 1980's, I started researching and writing an article on the early 1970's *Fourth World* comic book series by Jack Kirby. I believed it was a tragedy that the series was canceled before any real conclusion had taken place. I also saw a thread of spirituality running through the stories—a thread of Biblical Spirituality. Toward the end of 1983, Paul and I began planning a newsletter. This newsletter would be geared towards comics fans who were Christians. We named it *Valiant*—a sort of revival of the short-lived fanzine I'd help produce in high school 18 years earlier. We ran a short ad in the classified section of *Comics Buyers Guide* announcing a free newsletter for "Christians interested in comics." Our first issue was dated May, 1984 and began with a six-issue installment series of my New Gods article. The letters from Christian comics people came in at a slow, but steady rate. At the end of *Valiant's* 14-issue two-and-one-half year run, we had accumulated around 200 on our mailing list. We developed a "phantom/umbrella" organization called the Christian Comic Arts Society that "produced" the

newsletter. Paul and I were essentially the CCAS at that point.

Through the newsletter *Valiant*, we made the earliest contact with Christian comics fans who are or were well known in the movement. Billy Leavell, John Pierce and Harry Miller all responded early on to the CBG ad. One local Southern California Christian comics fan called me in the summer of 1984 and wanted to check me out. Was I a real Christian or just some sort of cultic mole? Every month or two thereafter, we had some great discussions on comics and faith. Finally in 1986, I made a trip to his new home in nearby Santa Fe Springs where I met him and his beautiful wife. This was Ralph Ellis Miley.

Toward the end of 1984, Paul Johnston suggested that we produce an amateur press association (APA) publication where the newly forming community of Christian comics fans could connect and express themselves creatively. I thought it was an excellent idea. I had been involved in a short-lived comics Apa-zine back in the mid-1960s. We made announcements in *Valiant* about the upcoming Apa-zine that we christened *Alpha-Omega*. The first issue of *Alpha-Omega* made its debut in March, 1985 and has been published on a bi-monthly basis ever since. About that time, Paul was bowing out of involvement (he did write some material for *Valiant*, but never contributed to the Apa-zine that he had originally suggested).

That left me as the Central Mailer for the Apa-zine. I believed that, if the Apa-zine were to be a long-term success, I needed others to help carry the load. I asked several older, more mature *Alpha-Omega* contributors to be part of a CCAS Board that would help direct the newsletter (still being published at that point) and the Apa-zine and any other publications/activities that would be generated in the future. These contributors were John Pierce (Ohio), Harry W. Miller (Kentucky) and Billy Leavell (Tennessee). During and after my first Central Mailer tenure, the Board (pastor-cartoonist Steven Shipley was also involved) conducted its business entirely by mail and produced the first CCAS by-laws that has brought stability to the Apa-zine over the years. *Alpha-Omega* has published over 140 bi-monthly issues over the past 24 years making it a fixture in the Christian Comics movement.

In the late 1980's, I also became acquainted with Nate Butler, who was a professional cartoonist working for Archie, Marvel and other companies doing humor and funny animal comics and coloring books. Nate would go on to produce *Aida-Zee* comics (1990) and the *Christian Comics and Games Magazine* (1995, 1996) for which I wrote a column and several reviews. Nate also approached the leadership of the San Diego Comics convention about having a panel discussing the emerging Christian comics movement. The first such panel was held in 1992 and was entitled *Christian Comics: The New Underground*. Nate was the moderator with Stan Lynde, Nestor Redondo, Ralph Miley and myself as panelists. A similar panel, *The Christian Comics Explosion* made it on the 1995 San Diego Comic Convention program with Nate again moderating the panel composed of Reggie Byers, Rick Law, Kathleen Webb and myself.

In 1989, I made a trip to New England and New York State.

The main objective of the trip was to research my family history. However, a secondary consideration was to meet other Christian comics folk who lived in the region. I met Aaron Reed who became *Alpha-Omega* Central Mailer in late 1989. Also, I met Ernest Heramia (Rhode Island), an *Alpha-Omega* contributor who earlier established a sister organization to CCAS called "Christian Fandom" composed of Christian science fiction and fantasy enthusiasts. In Binghamton, New York, I visited artist David Transue, on whom I wrote an article in *Valiant* several years earlier. Two years later, I made a similar mid-west trip where I met *Alpha-Omega* members and others like Ken Leach, John Pierce, Gary Robinson, G. Raymond Eddy, Henry Chmielefski, Jimmy Stewart, Harry Miller and Jim Erskine.

Perhaps the most gratifying happenings have been the CCAS's participation at the San Diego Comic Convention. In 1996, Kevin Yong, Ralph Miley and I decided to publish a newsletter highlighting news from the Christian comics movement. This time, the newsletter was named *New Creation* and each of us made a minimum two-year commitment to it. This worked out as Nate Butler was winding up his *Christian Comics and Games Magazine* stint. During the 1996 San Diego Comic Convention, there was a large gathering of Christian comics folks at pro comic artist's Ben Herrera's home. Over the next year, Ralph, Kevin, Steve Firchow, Devin Parker, Eric Jansen, Clint D. Johnson and others began meeting at Ralph's home or my apartment. The *New Creation* newsletter did a good job reporting on the movement through 1998. However, it didn't grow in circulation beyond a certain point and we decided to suspend publication after our two-year commitment. One reason is we all wanted to put creative energy into other projects. Ralph spear-headed a project that initially asked members of *Alpha-Omega* to do one or two-page comic strip adaptations of their favorite Biblical proverb or parable. Early on in the planning, Kevin Yong and I became involved in helping Ralph. Soon, other Christian artists (originally limited to *Alpha-Omega* members) heard about the venture and wanted to contribute art. What was originally planned as a normal-sized comic ballooned into a 144-page real trade paperback book called *Proverbs & Parables*!

Our local meeting agenda was to plan for the San Diego Comic Convention and pray for each other and the Christian comics movement. At the 1997 San Diego Convention, we had our first CCAS-sponsored *Spiritual Themes Panel*, which have continued ever since (several of which I have moderated or been a panelist on). The San Diego Convention has become a meeting place for many Christian comics folk. It has been great meeting and fellowshiping with Harold Buchholz, Hal Jones, Mike S. Miller, Gary Shipman, Jesse Hamm, Monte Wilson, Christine Kerrick, Chris Yambar, Bud Rogers, David Porta, Gary Martin, Sergio Cariello, Shelton Drum, Robert Flores, the late Edgar Williams and so many more.

Over the years, CCAS has generated several publications besides *Alpha-Omega* including the popular collaborative comic, *The Alpha-Omega Challenge* (1994), *A Christian's Survival Guide to Comics Fandom (& Conventions)* (1999), *Guide to Christian Comics* (2005-2008) as well as many pubs put out by



various CCAS members.

In the 1990's, I designed the first CCAS website which was posted by Harry Hopkins (publisher of the Fandom Directory). Since that time, the CCAS website had gone through several redesigns including one by Carl Borg and with the current web master, Geoff Strout. It is very heartening to see the growth in this website as over 400 members have joined its social network connection. CCAS has also had Christian comics tables at Wizard World Chicago hosted by George Macas, Jr. George has also conducted chapel services for several years at that convention. Likewise, Carl Borg hosted CCAS comic tables at the FallCon (Minnesota) as well as moderating *Spiritual Themes Panels* at that convention. Similar efforts at other conventions like the Mid-Ohio Con with John G. Pierce, George Macas, Jr. and others also occasionally surfaced.

The best is yet to come. God has certainly blessed our humble efforts to honor and glory Him in the weird and wonderful world of comic art. All honor and glory goes to Him alone.

— Don 

## BILLY LEAVELL'S MEMOIRS

I was one of the charter members of *Alpha-Omega*. I came across Don's ad in *The Comic Buyers Guide*. I was intrigued and sent a letter to Don. I also asked him what CCAS was, and he replied this would be revealed in due time.

It turned out that CCAS wasn't fully developed at the time. But Don did take the correct step of setting up a Christian Apa. This was, and still is, a good stomping ground for would-be Christian cartoonists. Since then, the Internet has taken over, but it looks like CCAS is keeping up with it.

I had no previous experience with Apas, though for a very brief time I was involved in a club when I lived in Nashville. It was a club involved in comics, science fiction, and other forms of like entertainment. I didn't fully feel comfortable because these were worldly-minded fans. I remember one time they passed around a photograph of nudes! I eventually left the group.

Also, here in Memphis for a short time I was involved with some cartoonists, both pro and amateur. I didn't keep up with the meetings, though I feel I would like to go back someday.

My first impression of the *Alpha-Omega* Apa is exactly what I thought it would be: a mixture of real talent—and to be kind to describe it—amateur work with little skill. I also was interested to see the different religious temperaments represented. Some tried to push the heretical idea that Jesus and Satan were brothers. Some even tried to take over the Apa. But through the years, *Alpha-Omega* has weathered the

obstacles in its course.

I also expected some results from the Apa and CCAS: real comic books printed for a wider audience. Don's *Valiant Efforts* books made a foray into the public, but unfortunately didn't make a strong enough impact to be a lasting force. I think, however, it did pave the way for later Christian comics that came along.

Like Don, my tastes in comics are universal. While I love the superhero genre, I also love other kinds of comics. Examples are Milton Caniff's *Steve Canyon*, Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy*, Blondie originated by Chic Young, etc. I could easily add the *Donald Duck* stories by Carl Barks and the EC series of science fiction and history (I hate their horror comics though). I loved the Classic Illustrated books, though I'm sorry that the book is on an on-off basis with different publishers. Apparently nowadays the public isn't ready for comic-book adaptations of famous novels.

I was intrigued whenever a comic book or strip showed belief in God and Christ. For example, in a *Dick Tracy* strip of the early 60s, the remark was made that only one man had actually risen from the dead. The late Johnny Hart made many references to his Christian faith in his *BC* strip. EC Comics even made surprising forays in this area. In one of their comic books on history, they had a priest convincing Aztecs that their gods were false! And in one of their O. Henry-type books, they decorated the grave of a loyal but poor doctor with the old sign that led upstairs to his office. The legend read "Office upstairs." The reference was unmistakable. Ham Fisher's *Joe Palooka* was a strip that made unashamed references to God, especially when the story was about Joe's obese but charming friend Humphery. And the late strip *Wee Winkler* had a Sunday strip which showed a point-headed kid flying to the moon where he met people who didn't know about God. He taught them about God!

Nowadays, you may catch a glimpse of the cartoonist's faith in the various comic books. Some of them are outright open about their faith!

I think that the CCAS makes possible this openness of one's faith. Of course in a public that consists of atheists, agnostics, Christians, Muslims and Hindus, this can become difficult. But after all, our Lord demands we go out into the world and make disciples for Him!

So, I'm happy to be associated with CCAS, and hopefully it will continue to evolve and to begin exerting an influence on the world today.

— Billy 

## JOHN PIERCE'S MEMOIRS

The Christian Comic Arts Society was first introduced to me by Don Ensign. But first, a little history.

Back in the early 60s, when I attempted to witness to Roy Thomas (an agnostic) in letters, he put me in touch with a fellow fan named Bob Butts, who was a Christian. Bob and I corresponded for a while, lost track of each other for years, came back into contact in the 1970s, but then he disappeared again.

The idea of forming any kind of Christian comics group or club or association never came up, however, as I recall. From time to time over the years, I would discover that some fellow correspondent was also a Christian, but again, nothing ever came of it, and most of these contacts eventually faded away.

In the 1970's and early 80's, I had been a member of two other apas, *Interlac* (the first Legion apa), and *CAPA-Alpha* (the first comics apa). It was via *Interlac*, I think, that I met a couple of other Christians, including a lady named Karla Jarrett, as I recall. There had been some discussion via private mail with Karla and other Christians about the possibility of a Christian apa, but nothing ever came of it. Unfortunately, I lost track of these Christians.

It was in 1983, in a *World's Finest* letter column, that I read a letter from a person who identified himself as a pastor. I wrote to that person, he wrote back, a few months later we met in person, and we have been best friends ever since. I refer to a fellow named Gary Robinson. He used to write reviews for *Amazing Heroes* and other publications, using Scripture quotations. Years later, Gary would be able to collaborate with George Macas on a chapel presentation at Mid-Ohio Con.

I first heard of the concept of CCAS from Don's ads in *CBG*, and was intrigued, so I wrote and ordered his fanzine. I was really impressed with Don's scholarly approach in his writing.

When Don formed the apazine *Alpha-Omega*, I became one of the charter members, and have been an active member and contributor ever since issue #1. Of course, I can't forget that it was through my *Alpha-Omega* associations that my superheroine feature, Jonni Star, first got into print, via the apa and then via Ken Leach's *Peacemakers* small press comic. I'd had stuff in print before, since the early 60's (in Steve Gerber's fanzine *Headline*), but always in prose with spot illustrations. This was the first time any of my material ever appeared in comics format (as drawn by Brazilian artist Emir Ribeiro).

At Don's invitation, I was a member of the first CCAS Board, and may even have served as chair for a while. (Many years later, I served on the Board again, including, reluctantly, as chair).

I don't recall that I've ever specifically invited anyone to come on board, but it was via Don's mail and phone association with me that Jimmy Stewart became a member for a while. If there were any others who owe their participation to me, I don't remember

them at this time.

My favorite parts of CCAS include the fellowship, mutual edification, instruction, and the opportunity to do together what we would have difficulty doing on our own. It has been great having an avenue for fellowship with a diverse group of fellow believers who are also comics enthusiasts. *Alpha-Omega/CCAS* is also a great venue for the development of talent.

— John 

## STEVE FIRCHOW'S MEMOIRS

I first became aware of Don Ensign's existence in the mid-80's through one of his illustrations in *Radio Free Thulcandra*. *RFT* was a 'zine similar to one I was involved with (*Axis*) that brought together Christian writers and artists of Science Fiction/Fantasy.

In 1991 my fiancée (at the time) was in a band with John Depace, a guy who worked with Don at Narramore Christian Foundation. John said to me "You should meet Don Ensign, he does comic art". I responded, "I've seen his work, I'd like to meet him."

I met Don in person at Charles Whitley's home (in Huntington Park, CA) in 1991. Ralph Miley and Scott Clark were also at that meeting.

We met a bunch of times at Charles' place and also at Ralph's home and Don's. Don was living in a huge old ranch house in South Pasadena that had owls in the attic! I can't remember what the group was called at the time but we also met at my apartment in Costa Mesa on a couple occasions. Those meetings were the beginning of a whole string of great professional and personal relationships.

I did some illustration work for Narramore with Don and spent hours in the blazing sun painting murals with Ralph. Scott Clark helped me get work at Homage Studios which later became Wildstorm Entertainment and TopCow Productions Studios I spent many years working for (and still do!).

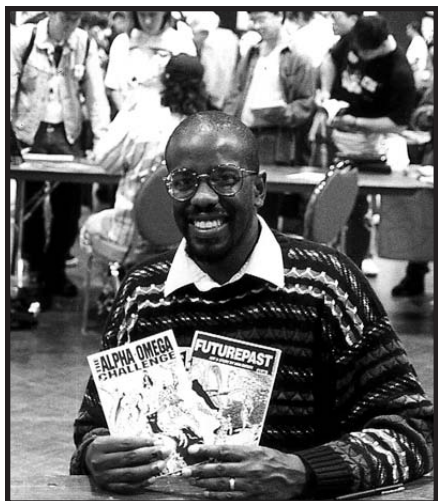
Later, other great artists and writers joined the group that eventually became CCAS: Jose Guillen, Kevin Yong, Clint Johnson, Eric Jansen, Wayne Cash, Robert Flores, Buzz Dixon, Geoff Strout and a small army of others!

I live in the Pasadena area and often drive by the old ranch house in South Pasadena where we used to meet when I first joined. What great memories!

I dropped out of CCAS largely due to other commitments but the connections/associations are still strong.

— Steve 

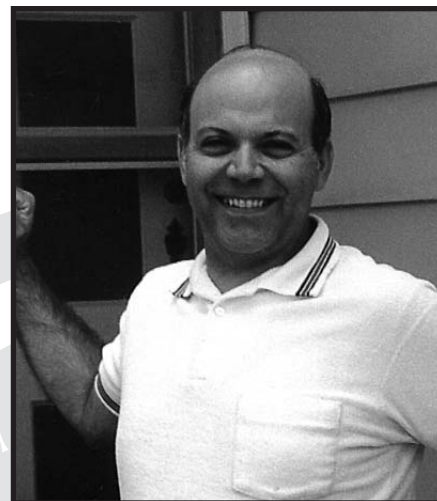




**1996 SAN FRANCISCO APECON**  
*Ralph Miley at the CCAS Table, holding up  
 ashcans of the Alpha-Omega Challenge and  
 FuturePast*



**1991**  
*Don Ensign (founder of CCAS) and Henry  
 Chmielefski (member of Alpha-Omega)*



**1991**  
*John Pierce*



**1991**  
*Ralph Miley, Mark J. Paul and Don Ensign in the house of Ralph Miley*



**1995 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Ralph Miley and Harold Buchholz*



**1990 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Nate Butler and Ralph Miley*



**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Don Ensign, Kevin Yong, Ralph Miley and Devin Parker*





**1997 CHICAGO-CON**

*George Macas, Jr., Steven Butler (Marvel/DC artist), Jay McGowan (friend of George Macas) and Ellen (George's daughter) gather for time of prayer.*



**1996 SAN FRANCISCO APECON**

*Gary Shipman, Rick Law, and Jesse Hamm at the CCAS table*



**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**

*Gary and Rhoda Shipman, creators of Pakkin's Land*



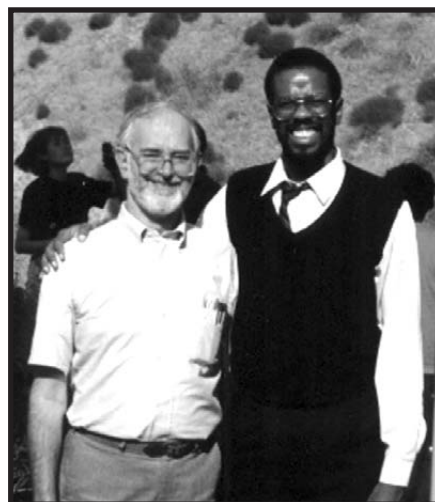
**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**

*Devin Parker, Ralph Miley, Jesse Hamm, Kevin Yong, Dave Porta and Don Ensign*



**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**

*Get-together after the convention. Various people showed up, including Ralph Miley, Don Ensign, Jesse Hamm, Devin Parker and Kevin Yong*



**1997**

*Billy Leavell and Ralph Miley, during Billy's trip to Southern California. Billy, Ralph and Don were able to meet in Bakersfield, CA.*



## RALPH MILEY'S MEMOIRS


My involvement with the CCAS began in 1984. While reading *The Comic Buyers Guide*, I came across an ad for the *Valiant* newsletter. This publication was aimed at Christian comic book fans that focused on comics from a Christian perspective. I noted that the publisher, Don Ensign, was located in the Southern California area. I contacted him by telephone and after several pointed questions, he assured me this was a Christian publication.

The newsletter ran from 1984 to 1986. It was in 1986 that I met Don Ensign at my home in Santa Fe Springs and that meeting has led to over 23 years of friendship. In 1985, Don put out the first issue of *Alpha-Omega* apa (Amateur Press Association). I contributed to that first issue, along with John Pierce, Billy Leavell, and Harry Miller. During its 25 years of publication, I have been a member three separate occasions and served as Chairman and Vice-Chairman on the CCAS board, and as Central Mailer.

Since I have been involved in the CCAS, I have had the privilege of being a part of numerous collaborative publishing ventures. There were two issues of *Valiant Efforts*, *The Game of Life* in four issues of *Alpha-Omega*, the *Alpha-Omega Challenge*, the *New Creation* newsletter, *Alpha-Omega* #100, *Proverbs and Parables*, *New Visions*, *New Crew*, and most recently *Ragged Capes*.

Since about 1985, Don and I would meet about once a month along with Jack Martin and Charles Whitley to talk comic books. These meetings would eventually lead to monthly meetings of the CCAS, which continue to this day. In 1996, there were two meetings of Christian comic books pros and fans during the annual San Diego Comic Con. Then in 1997, the CCAS would have its first table in the Small Press area in San Diego. This would lead to the *Spiritual Themes in Comics* and *Open Meeting of the CCAS* panels and having going on for over a decade. In 2008, the CCAS was able to have its first Saturday night meeting, which will prayerfully continue with the same success as the panels.

With a lot of prayer and hard work, the CCAS seeks to expand its wings. Members of the CCAS have launched *New Creation Now* (a publisher of web comics) and also partnered with Foursquare Missions Press to produce the *Street Comix* line of gospel tracts. We had a very successful 2008 at the Comic Con International with increased attendance at the panels and traffic at the table. We also had a table at the Wizard World Convention in Los Angeles in 2008. We're not only looking to be in San Diego and Los Angeles, but there are plans to be at conventions in Tuscon, AZ and San Francisco, CA. May the Lord be glorified in all we do for the CCAS. Special thanks must go to those who have been an important part of the success of the CCAS, especially in Southern California. Along with Don Ensign, there is Robert Flores, Kevin Yong, Eric Jansen, Clint DeRon Johnson, Geoff Strout, Buzz Dixon and others.

— Ralph 

## KEVIN YONG'S MEMOIRS

My years with CCAS have flown by so swiftly that they were becoming a blur. It wasn't until I was asked to actually contribute my memoirs for this collection that I began to fully appreciate just how much I've been a part of CCAS, and how important CCAS has been to me over the years.

Comics were a part of my life growing up. I learned to read through my local library's collection of old hardcover *Peanuts* and *Garfield* comic strip treasuries. As a kid, I loved the various superhero cartoons on TV, and my watching those shows coincided with my newsstand discovery in the mid 1980s of the digest-sized books of DC reprinting old *Legion of Super-Heroes* stories from the Silver Age. From there, I was hooked! I loved comics, I loved superheroes, I loved the worlds, the characters and concepts. If I wasn't reading the stories of others, I was busy inventing characters and stories of my own. Somewhere boxed up in my garage, I'm sure I still have the old hand-made comics I would create from ball-point pens and typing paper.

As I was growing up, the amount of Christian comics available was very limited. Our family received Andre LeBlanc's *The Picture Bible* as a gift, which I eagerly read cover-to-cover many times over. My local Christian bookstore also carried a few random titles from the *Spire* line of Christian comics (i.e. *Archie* and *Barney Bear* series), but not much else. A few years later, I found the *Archangel: The Saga* series, which I found to be very exciting when it first appeared, but also very disappointing after the distribution for the series dried up in my area and the bookstores stopped carrying the title. The lack of easily available Christian comics helped reinforce the feeling that I was the only one—and that if I wanted to see Christian comics I would somehow have to create them myself.

Sometime around the summer of 1995, an ad in the back of *The Comics Buyers Guide* led to me to discover *Alpha-Omega*, the CCAS APA. I joined right away, and have remained a member to this day. However, while this was my first "discovery" of CCAS, I had actually crossed paths with it earlier!

During the early 1990s (my late high school years and into college), I was heavily involved in politics and volunteer work. During my participation with certain church-sponsored pro-life ministries, I would occasionally cross paths with a guy named Don Ensign. We went to different churches and had never been formally introduced, so our acquaintance was limited to a polite hello as we passed each other in the crowds. On some occasions we would talk about our outside interests, and I'm almost certain that Don had mentioned Christian comics and CCAS at one point... but at the time, I had felt that comics were just a hobby for me and that political activism and Christian ministry were really the direction I wanted to go with my life.

I was wrong. After a few years of intense involvement through high school and into my college years, I found myself growing increasingly disillusioned with politics, and burning out on traditional church ministry. I also felt an incompleteness at

having neglected my more artistic and creative interests; I was beginning to feel like the servant from the Parable of the Talents, the one who buried his master's gift in the ground rather than using it productively (Matthew 25:14-30). The old desire to create comics of my own—Christian comics—began to surface again.

When I saw the ad in *CBG* and finally joined *Alpha-Omega*, it was like a breath of fresh air. But I was hesitant to involve myself too closely—I had seen how easily I had been sucked into volunteer work for politics and ministry. I needed to be involved with something that could creatively renew and encourage me, not just drain me and burn me out as my other involvements had in the past. That's why I was originally so hesitant to follow up on the invitation to meet with *Alpha-Omega* members Don Ensign (whose name I didn't even think to connect to the guy I knew from other church ministries) and Ralph Miley, who were not only fellow Californians, but also lived very close by to my then hometown of Temple City.

Eventually, they won me over, and I agreed to stop in for a visit at the local Christian comics meeting they were holding in Don's apartment. Praise the Lord that I did! Through the long-distance fellowship of *Alpha-Omega* and the local support and encouragement of the meetings with Don and Ralph, I finally felt renewed. And when the opportunity for Christian comics ministry and creative collaboration opened up to us, I was ready and eager to tackle it.

Since then, I have remained an active participant in *Alpha-Omega*. In fact, I don't think I've ever missed an issue in the many years I've been a part of it! I've helped set up comic convention ministry tables, host panel discussions, publish newsletters, and create our own comics—both as part of official CCAS-related projects and also “just for fun” between the various members. I've been honored to be part of the leadership in CCAS, taking turns as a Central Mailer and Assistant Central Mailer for the APA, as well on the CCAS Board. I've seen us grow from a couple fanboys meeting in someone's kitchen to a vibrant online community and fledgling non-profit ministry. I'm proud to be a part of this creative and Christ-centered group, and I look forward to all that lies ahead of us as part of the Christian comics movement.

CCAS has given me not only the feedback and encouragement to creatively grow as an artist, but also as a person. Throughout the painful metamorphosis of growing up from moody unemployed college student to hardworking married man, my friends in CCAS have been with me every step of the way. The fellowship and prayer shared in CCAS has been a profound blessing through the tough times—I've gone through church splits, family strife, college burnout, depression, job frustrations—and through the friendship and prayer of my brothers and sisters in Christ, I'm always forced to remember: “I'm not the only one!”

— Kevin 

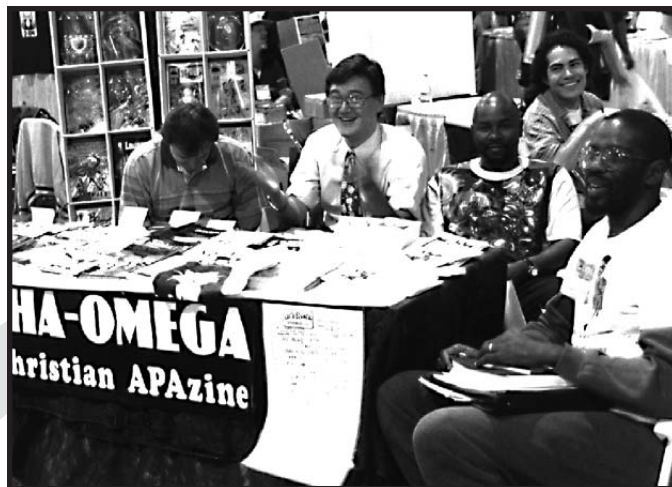
## PAST AND PRESENT SO-CAL CCAS MEMBERS

Linda B.  
Josh Burns  
Wayne Cash  
Jerrell Connor  
Chris Davila  
Buzz Dixon  
Don Ensign  
Steve Firchow  
Robert Flores  
Jose Guillen  
Wendy Guinn  
Kendra H.  
Eric Jansen  
Clint Johnson  
Josh Judd  
Holly Knevelbaard  
Micah Larsen  
Steve Lyles  
Jack Martin  
Ralph Miley  
Janae Miley  
Scott Shuford  
Geoff Strout  
Wendell Washer  
C.T. Whitley  
Kevin Yong  
Heather Yong





**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Monte Wilson, Christine Kerrick and Jesse Hamm on the Spiritual Themes Panel*



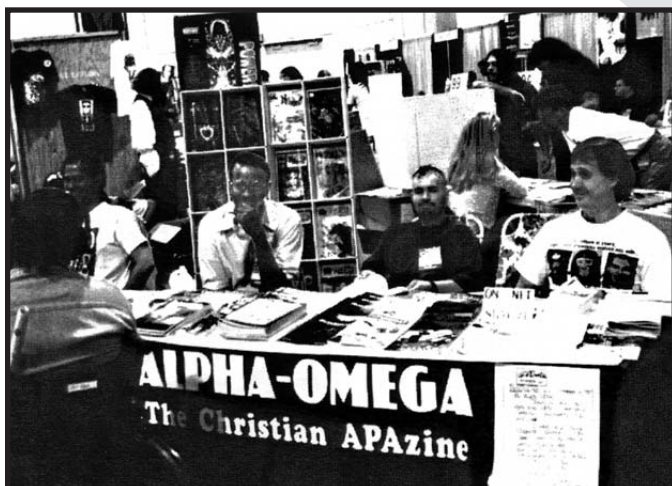
**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Monte Wilson, Kevin Yong, Clint Johnson and Ralph Miley at the CCAS table. Notice the Alpha-Omega banner*



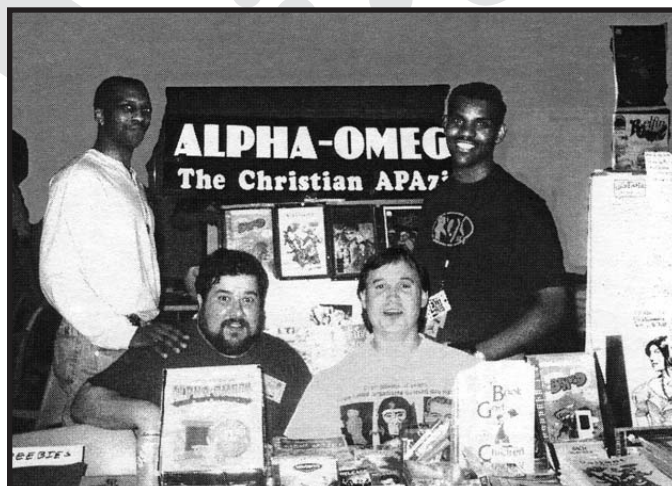
**1996 SAN FRANCISCO APECON**  
*Don Ensign, Jason Dube, Gary Shipman, Rick Law, Jesse Hamm and Ralph Miley*



**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Back row: Chris Davila, Mike Lee, Neal Marrs, Shelton Drum, Cynthia Drum, Ralph Miley, Christine Kerrick, Kevin Yong, Monte Wilson, Don Ensign, Jack Martin. Front Row: Cheryl Moorfield, Shadow McKenna and Jesse Hamm*



**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Ralph Miley, Jesse Hamm and Monte Wilson at the CCAS table*



**1997 CHICAGO-CON**  
*The Alpha-Omega table at the 1997 Chicago Comic-Con. Duane Perry, George Macas, Jr., Monte Wilson and Torrence King*

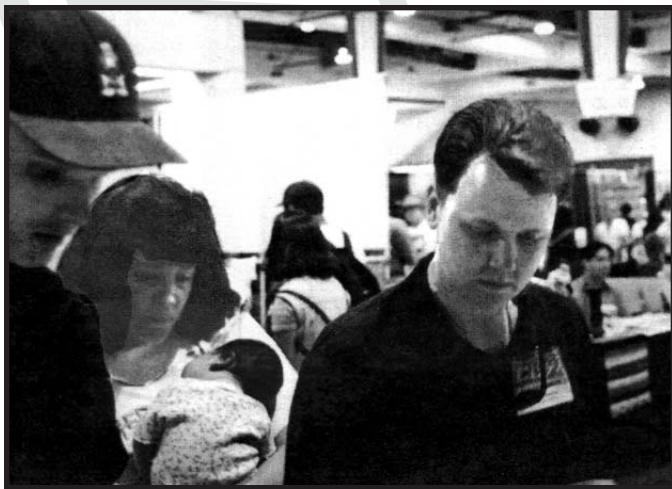




**1998 MINNESOTA COMIC-CON**  
Carl Borg at the CCAS table



**1997 NORTH CAROLINA HEROES-CON**  
George Macas, Jr. at the CCAS table



**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Rhoda and Gary Shipman visiting the CCAS table



**1997 NORTH CAROLINA HEROES-CON**  
George Macas, Jr. and Bob Turner (Sword of the Trinity comic book)  
at the Heroes Convention chapel service



**1998 MOTOR-CITY CON**  
Group shot: Aaron Trudgeon, George Macas, Jr., Larry Blake, Chris Yambar, Keith Newsome, George Broderick, Jr., Dave Ernst, G. Raymond Eddy and K.J. Kolka  
CCAS • PO Box 254 • Temple City, CA 91780 • [www.christiancomicarts.com](http://www.christiancomicarts.com)



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Brian Farrens, Steve Ross, Roman Morales III, Eric Jansen and Ralph Miley at the Spiritual Themes panel



## DAVE PORTA'S MEMOIRS

Lifelong agnostic Democrat east coast comics fan New York State native Dave Porta (B.A. 1977, Economics, Philosophy, State College at Brockport, New York; M.A. 1979, Economics, Virginia Tech) gets Bible-believing evangelical born-again religion at the Union Rescue Mission (URM) in Los Angeles, 1982, age 27, pals up with Dave Crowley, another Christian comics fan there who introduces me to Golden Apple Comics shop (I meet Bill Liebowitz) and the monthly L.A. Comics Show. I glom to Ms. Tree from its near beginning in Eclipse Magazine #2, and a year later Crowley buys the other issues for me at the show (gets one signed by Butch Guice). In 1983, upon solicitation by the new editors, Don & Maggie Thompson, I resume my subscription to The Buyer's Guide to Comics Fandom (now renamed Comics Buyer's Guide), which lapsed in 1980.

After moving to Sacramento, I wrote my 2nd or 3rd letter of comment to Ms. Tree in 1985. It was printed, and I followed with a letter to *Jonny Quest* (also printed) and embark on a "letter of comment" ministry, writing letters of comment to comics (almost always seeing print), raising topics of Christian (and politically conservative) concern, making Christian analysis of stories and story elements, surreptitiously slipping in passages from The Holy Bible by quoting Scripture unattributed. I get reviled by lefty comics editors and creators, and readers (and am harassed by mail and phone). This all happens in the days before the internet made comic book letters columns moribund.

I get invited, cold-call by mail, to join *CAPA-Alpha*, an apa, the which (apa) I never heard of. I read the sample issue they send me, but I do not follow up. A year or two later I get a mail invite to join *Alpha-Omega*, another of these "apa" things. I read the pamphlet, see the phone number, so I call Harry Miller, and he talks my ear off. Apparently, some *Alpha-Omega* member has read one of my letters of comment, and thinks I may be "one of them." Indeed I am. I join the apa, and I'm off into a new fellowship, the first time in my new-found faith that I truly feel cozy (instead of merely tolerated) among fellow believers!

I accepted the cold-call invitation to join *Alpha-Omega*, and undertook the apa experience. Minim-ac requirement forced me to once more try my hand at writing and drawing comics, a task I found to be more and more like work. Some people like to work. Some people have to create. Through my involvement in *Alpha-Omega*, I discovered within myself a thorough lack of any overpowering need to express myself via the comics medium. I likewise undertook to write my Christian witness, and found that to be a chore. The one aspect of A-O which I enjoyed was the social aspect, that of responding to others' contributions, and picking at what I perceived to be their errors. My confrontational attitude made me quite unpopular, as time passed. I left under unhappy circumstances my first time, and under less unhappy circumstances my second go-round at A-O. *Alpha-Omega*, while a blessing in many ways, was not perhaps the best fit for me. Nor was it the entirety of my association with CCAS. Thank God.

Don Ensign lived in Los Angeles County. I had been saved at the

rescue mission there in 1982 before moving up to Sacramento in Autumn of 1984. Once every other year circa 1986-1998, I journeyed by Greyhound to visit Christian friends in L.A. County. About 1990 or 1992, Don Ensign proposed that we get together during one of my visits to the southland. I met Don, we had fellowship, and I found a friend. Two years later, he introduced me to Ralph Miley. And, circa 1992-1994, in tow with Don and another friend of his, I attended my first San Diego Comics Convention. We stayed at Howard Johnson's Hotel, and I enjoyed the comics convention experience for the first time since I had been a teenager attending the New York City conventions circa 1968-1972.

CCAS gave me the *Alpha-Omega* epistolary network of fellowship with comics fans who are Christians. Through the agency of Don and Ralph and the rest of the gang, it also provided me with a faith-centered experience of one-on-one fellowship, the like of which I had never known during the first decade of my walk with Christ.

Christian culture was new to me when, at the age of 27, I got saved at the rescue mission in 1982. Church life was new to me, and, while I shared the faith with the congregation, I never found folks with whom I had much else in common. I had never found in church a group of friends with whom I felt comfortable and at home. CCAS provided me with that in my Christian walk, and I am glad of it. Through my experience meeting with the gang in L.A. County and at the Con in San Diego, and staying in touch with members of the gang, and getting to know others, CCAS has been a blessing to me, feeding me with spiritual and emotional nourishment.

Don Ensign and Ralph Miley are two Christian men whom I count as true friends. CCAS is more than these two, most assuredly. And I am sure Don and Ralph have done much to ensure that CCAS has a reservoir of competent individuals duty-bound to Christ making themselves available for service in positions of responsibility within CCAS, so that the idea of the CCAS ministry has a life beyond any one person (except for Jesus of Nazareth, himself).

I recall a telling remark Don once made to me, that he was devoted to a ministry. As I understand it, Don's specific ministry has been that of reaching out to the world of comics with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This has included the creation of a network of Christian fellowship among comics fans, comics creators, and comics publishers. It has also included the creation of a Christian witness through comic books themselves, including both small-press faith-centered comics, and reaching out to individuals within large secular comic book publishers. CCAS is a ministry. I cannot stress that enough. It exists to provide the faithful a specific venue through which to serve our Lord and be a blessing to others. I have been blessed to participate in it.

Ralph Miley, more than anyone, I think, has, through his kindness, been a real encouragement to me, and I am so grateful. Because of my selfish, abrasive and alienating personality, I often seriously doubt I have been of any service to God. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Good works are jewels in your

crown. Ralph has gone into ecstasies over my ability to finagle the system, get hotel bookings for the gang when none were available, get into the Convention Center sans a badge on a couple of occasions (once to help him set up the CCAS table; another time to attend a CCAS Meeting/panel discussion, to photograph it), and otherwise accomplish feats which I doubt I undertake in a spirit of servant-hood. Ralph makes me feel like I am somehow of some worth to the body of Christ.

In San Diego, there have been all those gatherings of Christian fellowship in group prayers in hotel and motel rooms, and restaurants and the food court, and at the Convention Center.

One year (circa 1997), we all crammed ourselves into several rooms of a motel that was not on the list of Convention's bus-stop hotels (we had to walk some 8 blocks to reach a Convention bus stop). That was the year I met Jesse Hamm and Kevin Yong. I was in my mid-40s, as was Ralph (who is my age), and Don was older than us by some 5-6 years. That was also the year when Don put out a flyer at the freebie table by the elevator, inviting anyone to come to a meeting at one of our motel rooms. A bunch of strangers showed up. All we had in common was Christ and Comics. That was plenty enough! There was much sharing of personal stories, discussion of ministry visions, Christ-centered comics-talk, and prayer.

Another year, at San Diego, one evening, there was a big gathering of fans and professionals at someone's home in the suburbs of San Diego. There were refreshments, and socializing and prayer, and one-by-one self-introductions, and filling out of a contact sheet. Unless I am mistaken, the *New Creation* newsletter was born out of that. That was the year I met a slew of Christian folks in the creative and business end of comic-dom.

Kevin it was who taught me to shop for beat-up old comics that could be had for a song. For him, it was finding an 80 Page Giant from the 1960's that featured *The Legion of Superheroes*. When, at my next San Diego Convention, I followed suit, it was, for me, the discovery that I could purchase beat-up non-superhero comics from the 1950s and 1940s for under five bucks each. This led to my discovery of a whole world of old comics which were almost entirely new to me. In particular, I discovered comics from long-defunct publishers such as Fiction House, and Avon, and, most importantly, old Dell Comics.

Nate Butler, one of our comics family within the body of Christ, is another fellow who has been a real blessing to me. Through his *Christian Comics and Games Magazine*, which was distributed at one of the first *Spirituality in Comics* panels at San Diego, Nate published the last comics work of legendary comics writer Gaylord Du Bois. I had first become aware of Du Bois through a series of biographical articles about him written by Irvin Zeimann that appeared in *Comics Buyer's Guide* in 1989-1990.

Because of Nate's emphasis of Du Bois' Christian faith, and because of the influence of CCAS on me over the years, and because of Kevin's having shown me the way to acquire and discover Golden Age (Dell) comics, I became interested to learn more about Du Bois' body of work, some of which I had already

acquired without knowing it, at first (some *Roy Rogers Comics* and *Tarzan* comics published by Dell).

Through the help of the Christian network of fans, particularly Don Ensign, I contacted the father of comics fandom, the late Jerry Bails (who emailed me the Du Bois credits page from his massive database), and eventually I acquired a photocopy, through InterLibrary Loan (ILL), of Randy Scott's transcription of the Gaylord Du Bois Account Books, listing all of Du Bois' comics work since 1943. Armed with this tool, I embarked (at the Sellers' booths in San Diego) on a cheap-o buying enterprise of Du Bois-written comics. I overheard one clerk remark about me to another, "Look at what he's doing. It's amazing. He's setting out to buy everything that comics writer ever wrote." Being the suggestible fellow that I am, I thereupon made that my very goal as a comics buyer and reader. This, in its turn, reinvigorated my interest in comics buying.

Because of CCAS, I found a new interest in comics, to wit, the comics written by Du Bois, who had been a lay minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, an evangelical Christian who happened to embark on a career as a writer of juvenile adventure fiction. His personality shows through the stories he wrote. He said in an interview that before undertaking any given writing assignment he would pray God bless him to write a good story.

Because of CCAS, I have become a minor expert on the work of Du Bois, and I have contributed to comics fandom with information about Du Bois' work (notably, that he created *Turok and Andar* as a one-shot spin-off of his *Young Hawk* and *Little Buck* characters from the back-up *Young Hawk* feature he wrote for Dell's *Lone Ranger* comic book series).

Jesse Hamm lived 45 minutes south of Sacramento, and he became a real friend to me, driving to Sac several times a year to visit with me, having fan fellowship, and so forth. Because I live somewhat the life of a hermit, but still crave some connection with other human beings, Jesse's visits became high points for me. We shared the faith, and we shared common interests.

Tony Marco, a poet friend, once remarked to me that, in evangelical culture, the church seems, generally, not to know what to do with its creative people. Perhaps people who are poets and writers and actors and artists and musicians are simply regarded as strange by normal Protestant folk. Of course, my being a comics fan does not help, in that regard. Comics fans are a minority subculture to begin with. Add to that the further fact that comics fandom is often comprised of folks vocally hostile to Bible-believing Christianity, and it should be no surprise to anyone that being a comics fan in church is a lonely life.

Ralph Miley perhaps summed it up best with a button he produced for the CCAS table one year, which read, "I Thought I Was the Only One." Ralph is not alone as a Christian who is a comics fan, and he wants other Christians who are comics fans to know that neither are they. Ralph is married, has a wife and kids, and he impressed me over the years with his faithfulness in




calling his wife every day he was at the convention.

Like Don, I am an aging bachelor, but with the further element of a semi-hermit-like life. Church attendance on a regular basis is something I gave up after several failed attempts. I have had no regular church life since 2002. But the fellows of CCAS have provided me with spiritual nurture and real friendship. It was a time of joy when Kevin Yong married. Likewise when Jesse married. Through Jesse, I met Monte, another member of the CCAS, who lives in Oklahoma. Monte has become a good friend, as well.

With CCAS, I feel I am among my own, to a significant extent. The church is one big family. But it doesn't usually feel that way, for me, anyhow. Comics fandom has always felt like a family, to me. But after I got saved, I began to discover that comics fandom and I were not on the same wavelength beyond the limited venue of comics. And comics professionals began increasingly to write comics that evinced a rebellious spirit, the spirit of anti-Christ. I still liked some comics, but by 1986, I was seeing more and more decadence and moral decline in comics. Patriotism and moral purity seem to have gone out of fashion among comics writers. By 1993, I had nearly given up buying most new comics. But, by then, CCAS had entered my life, and had begun to bless me with friends, fellowship, and a new way of seeing comics, a new way of seeing fandom. Fandom is both for fun, and for ministry.

There have been losses. One of our members who I knew briefly from San Diego, Edgar Williams, a soft-spoken soul from the South with inner strength and martial arts expert who was a devoted father, died in a car wreck. Ernest Hiramia (first-founder, with Don Ensign, of Christian comics fandom), shipwrecked his faith. The talented Dave Davis in Texas left *Alpha-Omega*, and has dropped below my radar.

But there has been much growth. It is an encouragement to know that Christian booths have proliferated at comics conventions throughout the country, and I hope that "spirituality in comics"-type panels are not unique to San Diego. I have seen Christian comics publishing produce some excellent work. I thank all those in CCAS for blessing me with their friendship, fellowship, prayers, and encouragement in my walk with the Lord and my time here in this world. — Dave 

## GEORGE MACAS, JR.'S MEMOIRS

In my attempt to share, I will be primarily focusing on my part in the mosaic that is CCAS—I do so hesitantly, and in unfeigned humility. In retrospect, I can see that God was working through, and most often, in spite of me, in all that was begun, continued and accomplished.

In 1996, after nearly a decade as a Comic Dealer, a "professional" standing as a comic creator (how did that happen?) and over 15 years attending and/or selling at comic conventions, (and only a few months after joining A-O), God decided to answer

my prayers for a chapel at conventions, by giving me the opportunity and responsibility to establish and lead both a Christian comics display table, and a chapel service. Oh, and one other thing—I was only given 30 DAYS NOTICE! (Who says HE doesn't have a sense of humor!)


CCAS to the rescue! By opening day, June 21, 1996, I had a table full of stuff. Nate Butler, Monte Wilson, Jesse Hamm, Bruce Yeo, Don Kelly and future CCASers Torrence King and Duane Perry, my church and even Pacific Garden Mission contributed product, posters, give-aways, and man-hours.

For the next 11 years or so, The Chicago Comic Con (later named Wizard World Chicago) had a chapel and display table. We took the display table "on the road" to Detroit's Motor-City Con for many years, unable to get a chapel OK'd, same thing in Dallas—but we did get chapels at FallCon in Minneapolis, Mid-Ohio Con (2 years), Big Easy Con (2 years), Heroes Con in Charlotte, also smaller shows in Atlanta, Las Vegas and Indianapolis. With all fresh, comic-referenced, scriptural themes, aimed unabashedly at "lone-ranger" Christians who have a "vision" and are unable to or unheard if they try to share it. They are the missionary potential to our subculture, as well as those who will bring their churches across the great divide.

We also managed to encounter atheists, agnostics, skeptics, movie stars, porn stars, and lots and lots of 'oblivious' people and suprised them by shaking up their view of "Christians." Along the way, I've come to meet many "family" members, many by mail only, others by phone, and some in person. I've shared prayers, lodgings, meals, driving times, bruises, frustrations and joys, and most of all—bad jokes!

In 2000, Ralph Miley and I were interviewed in a 15-minute segment of *Prime Time America*, on the Moody Broadcasting Network. I was in the studio in Chicago, and Ralph was "with" us by phone. I'd brought a small mountain of product and promotional stuff. We were supposed to be discussing "Christian comics and chapels at comic conventions," but for 13+ minutes, we were sucked into the (then-nasty) vortex of controversy around, of all things, Harry Potter! We managed to barely get out of there without trampling on anyone's sensibilities, I think, but I know I was sweating!

In late 2000/early 2001, I met with Hal Jones, and together, we "pounded out" S.A.L.T. (Sequential Arts in Literature Testimonies) Services. After a year or so, we tried to make it part or a subsidy of CCAS and it didn't end up like we planned, but it appears to have been a catalyst for many others to get "off the fence". I've been told the example set by these events was both encouraging and instrumental in others' decisions in outreach to our specific sub-culture—"children of the Imagination."

Since 2003, I have experienced ten surgeries and multiple disability periods. Those, and even moreso, the marital/emotional disabilities I've caused/encountered have semi-permanently "sidelined" me, but I will always cherish what I've been allowed to be a part of with CCAS. — George 

## ERIC JANSEN'S MEMOIRS

I'm not exactly sure of the order of events that first led me into the ranks of CCAS, so I'll just throw out all the pieces I can remember in the order they come to me.

It had to be July, 1995 that I attended the San Diego Comic-Con to promote a comic book I worked on for a small publisher, *Dinosaur Mansion* for Edge Publications.

It may have been the same year that I attended a *Spiritual Themes Panel* for the first time and I remember seeing Ralph Miley on the platform. I'm pretty sure I came across the CCAS table too, but I don't remember who I might have met there.

I saw a flyer at that meeting that I attended, advertising a pizza party thrown by Nate Butler in a park behind the Convention Center. I remember meeting Nate there, and Nestor Redondo, and Leo Partible. I remember Nestor (a star artist whose name I remembered from 70's DC comics) talking about wanting to start a Christian comic book company, or, really, it seemed that he thought Nate was the man to do it. Leo, I believe, worked for Nestor as an artist, but he was walking around giving people his music CD. Years later, I would start attending a church in Eagle Rock and, at a backyard party the church was giving to start off summer, I turned around and there was Leo!

I self-published my comic *Freedom Fighter* #1 for January, 1997, which was available through Diamond, (which brought in orders from as far away as England and one fan in Belgium!) and, I think I also had my own table at the Comic-Con that year but definitely the next year. I seem to recall Don Ensign ordering it from me somehow, and then I think Ralph Miley called me up at some point and (I assume from spotting the Biblical themes in FF) asked me if I was a Christian. (I have no idea how he got my number! Did I fill out a card at the CCAS table one year? Or was it simply because I was listed in the phone book?) I said Yes, and he invited me to the CCAS meeting being held at Don Ensign's place in Temple City.

My first meeting at Don's place seemed to go on forever! (It was only three hours, and now our meetings are five hours!) Don Ensign, Ralph Miley, and Kevin Yong were there. Clint Johnson may have come late or it might have been another meeting later. He had someone else with him, but I don't remember who that was. I attended only about every other meeting at Don's place—they were just so long! Soon, a new member, Linda, started attending, and she talked about her daughter Kendra, who I wouldn't meet for maybe a couple more years when she too started attending meetings. Linda would end up coloring my *Paraman* comic years later.


It was after Don moved out of state that we started meeting at Ralph's house in Santa Fe Springs. We stayed there for a year or two (or longer?), until the Mileys started some renovation on their home. I had begun working at Foursquare Missions Press in Norwalk in 1999, and it was about a year after that that Ralph asked if we could meet there one time during the

construction. We ended up meeting there for about seven years, until late 2007, when FMP sold the building and moved to Anaheim.

The time in Norwalk was a very stable time for CCAS. We had a meeting room and a parking lot and a photocopier and a computer and a kitchen—it was very comfortable there and numerous people came and went during that time, including Robert Flores, Wayne Cash, Buzz Dixon, Geoff Strout and many others. Our meetings also extended (in a way) to 7 or 8 hours, as many of us always went out to dinner (usually at Denny's) afterward and continued the fellowship.

I served as Director of CCAS for 2006, Assistant Director and Treasurer in 2007 and 2008, on the Board for all those years as well, as Central Mailer of *Alpha-Omega* all through 2005-2006 and became Assistant Central Mailer in January, 2008. I've helped serve at the CCAS table ministry at Comic-Con perhaps for the last ten years, and we recently expanded to include the Wizard World Con in L.A. in 2008. I have become, basically, the editor/art director for FMP's line of evangelistic Street Comix, written and drawn by a number of CCAS members.

I feel blessed to know so many people with whom I share so much in common. My friends at CCAS are friends on so many levels—Christian, comics, arts, society.

— Eric 

## JESSE HAMM'S MEMOIRS

I was saved when I was around 4, and I decided when I was 16 (1991) that I'd like to use comics to glorify God. I began writing and drawing Christian-themed comics, and hunting for Christian comics that might show me ways to present the Lord in the comics format.

A friend of mine was a subscriber to *Breakaway*, a Christian magazine for teens. He showed me one issue in which they profiled some Christian cartoonists, including Nate Butler, who sold a variety of Christian comics through a catalogue. I wrote to Nate and requested the catalogue, and began ordering various Christian comics. Among these was *The Alpha-Omega Challenge*. Through the *A-O Challenge*, I met Ralph Miley, who invited me to join A-O. I joined in '94 or '95, and continued to participate for 2 years.

I subsequently met several A-Oans at the San Diego Comicon, and have enjoyed fellowshiping with them at numerous conventions since then. It's been a lot of fun, and I count some of them among my very best friends. I've even been able to visit a few at their homes, despite living hundreds of miles away: Kevin Yong, Monte Wilson, Dave Porta, Don Ensign. These days I'm too busy at my own table at the Con to help out at the CCAS table, but it's always a pleasure to stop by and see all the familiar faces. I recall praying in '91 that God would send harvesters into the fields, and it's amazing how many have turned up.

— Jesse 





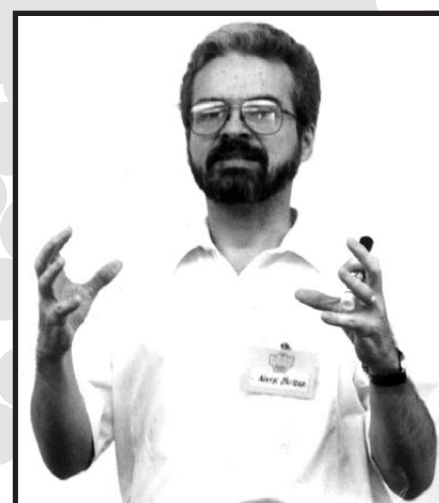
**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley at the CCAS table



**1998**  
Planning Meeting at Ralph Miley's house. Attendees included: Eric Jansen, Ralph Miley, Clint Johnson, Kevin Yong, Devin Parker, Don Ensign, Steve Firchow and Jack Martin



**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Jesse Hamm, Ralph Miley, Rick Law, Devin Parker, Don Ensign and Kevin Yong



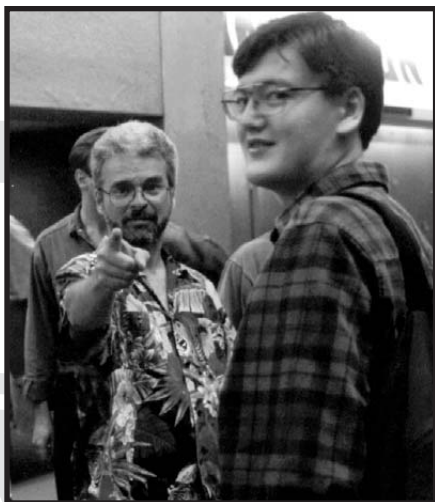
**1996**  
Nate Butler at the Atlanta Christian Comics Training Seminar (Not CCAS-related)



**1996 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Kevin Yong



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Group shot. Back row: Eric Jansen, Kevin Yong, Joseph Serpico, Harold Buchholz, Gene Gallatin, Ralph Miley, Warren Fitzpatrick, Gabriel Valles. Front Row: Don Ensign, (?), Jimmy Stewart, Jimmy's son, Jesse Hamm, Dave Porta, Clint Johnson, Nate Butler and Mrs. Kim Fitzpatrick  
CCAS • PO Box 254 • Temple City, CA 91780 • [www.christiancomicarts.com](http://www.christiancomicarts.com)



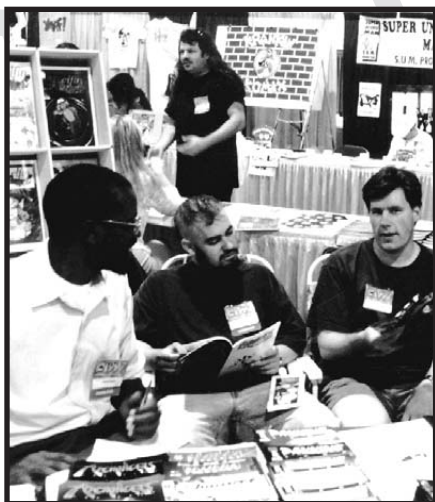
**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Nate Butler and Kevin Yong



**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
The late Edgar Williams, preaching at the  
Christian Comics Sunday Panel



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Eric Jansen, speaking at the Christian  
Comics Sunday Panel



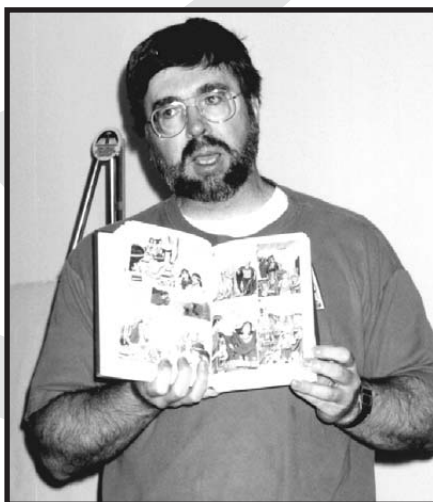
**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley, Jesse Hamm and Devin Parker  
at the CCAS table



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley, Sergio Carriello, Kevin Yong and Don Ensign



**1997 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Christine Kerrick



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Don Ensign, speaking at the Christian  
Comics Sunday Panel



**1998 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Christian Comics Sunday panel audience



## BILLY WAMSLEY'S MEMOIRS

"I can't be the only one." That is honestly where it all started. I was nearing the end of my college career, on my way to my double B.A. in Christian Studies and Art. It was an unusual combination at my college. In fact, I was the only student that was, at the time, majoring in both areas. The reactions of people are pretty well summed up in the playful ridicule of the campus minister, who, upon hearing my combined areas of studies, said, "What are you going to do with that?!? Make stained glass windows?"

In fact, I didn't have a clue what I was going to do. God hadn't revealed that to me just yet. In my heart, I hoped it would have something to do with comic books. I'd loved comics since I bought my first, *Peter Parker, The Spectacular Spider-Man* #60, in 1981. Throughout the years, I had picked up the occasional Christian comic book, mostly those from *Spire*, as I found them, but I always wished there were more available. I thought it would be great to produce an actual Christian comic myself.

It was a blessing that God hadn't revealed any specific details about my vocation early on. It put me on a searching path at the perfect time in history: the early days of the internet.

The internet started out as little more than a toy for me. Sure, there was email, which was great, but other than that, my time online was spent mostly looking at *Star Trek* fansites. (Hey, it was early internet time. Science fiction geeks ruled the web!)

At some point, I started looking for ministry opportunities over the internet. Again, at that point, I was desperately searching for where God wanted me, and I was open to anything. Then, it hit me: surely I'm not the only one interested in comics and ministry.

Something changed when I typed "Christian Comics" into that search engine. Prior to that, I was the only person I knew that ever thought about creating a Christian comic book. After, I found out I wasn't the only one - I was one of many!

I can't say how long I spent combing the internet for anyone and anything about Christian comics. I ordered a lot of things, early on, just to get a feel for the Christian comic book industry. During those early searches, I stumbled onto the Christian Comic Arts Society.

One of the things listed on the site was information about an "amateur press association" called *Alpha-Omega*. There was an address I could write to to get a couple of sample copies, to see if it was something I was interested in, so I did.

When they arrived, I was amazed. Pages and pages, produced by fellow Christians that were also interested in comics! I was thrilled! I was overjoyed! And, I did NOTHING.


That's right. I read those issues over and over. . . but I didn't

follow through and join myself. I'm not sure why. I probably came up with many excuses, but not one that I can legitimately say is the real reason. Every so often, I would take out those same issues, and think about joining, but never following through.

After a while, God led me to a calling into the field of chalk art ministry. My thoughts about Christian comics were put to the side. Then, my father got sick.

To everything, there is a season. I found myself in a position where my ministry was at home, being there to help care for my father. The chalk art ministry was put on hold.

That is when *Alpha-Omega* came back to my mind. Participating in *Alpha-Omega* was something that I could do and take care of my familial responsibilities as well. It would also give me the chance to really explore the idea of creating a Christian comic.

I joined, and *Alpha-Omega* has been a source of strength and encouragement ever since. Without the examples and support that I've gained through membership, I don't think I ever would have had the courage to start my very own webcomic, *The Crimson Scarab*. I don't know what God has planned for that strip, but since He gave me the desire to do it, and put in place wonderful people like my fellow *Alpha-Omega*-ans to encourage me in it, I know He must be planning something! *Alpha-Omega* has been a blessing to me, and I'm excited for its future, and the future of the CCAS. — Billy 

## HENRY CHMIELEFSKI'S MEMOIRS

I do not remember how I came to know about *Alpha-Omega*, or who I first contacted. I think I saw a mention of A-O in *The Comic Buyers Guide* and was surprised to see that something like that existed, mixing comics and Christianity together. I remember I sent a check to someone and I received three issues in reply. The issues I received were numbered in their teens: the APA was only a few years old. I immediately noticed through those issues that nearly all the members did not like Super-hero comics, with the exception of the Golden Age *Captain Marvel*. I was a heavy DC comics reader and also into Japanimation. Funny animals and monsters were the popular comic genres within the APA at the time. I sent another check, joined anyway and immediately started producing super-hero comic work, writing and drawing the superhero adventures...

In *Alpha-Omega* #27 (July 1989), under the 'Trib' title of *Hindsight Comics* ('Always 20/20!' ... did I really write that?), I introduced "The Enforcement Agency (T-E-A)" to the world of fandom with a 12-page story called *Last Hope*. That ran three issues, and I followed immediately by introducing *Spacelad* to the world in a 24-page epic called *Personal Prologue*. I had begun a third T-E-A story, *Hunting Prodigals*, but shelved it due to apparent lack of interest by APA and non-response to a later published Small Press collection of the first two stories. Only recently did I find

out that I had caused quite a lot of good discussion within the CCAS since the powers of the main character of *Last Hope* were demonic. I had no idea!

Around this time Aaron Reed became Central Mailer and almost immediately he and the CCAS board began warring with each other. Aaron, as I remember it, tried to change too many things too fast running afoul of the APA's by-laws and several CCAS board members. I also felt in the middle of the argument as I heard it from both sides... I did share fellowship and friendship with most of the members in the APA though I was closest with Aaron since we both liked and traded Anime. Aaron soon left the APA altogether. Later I would write/draw an Anime-styled strip *Summer Job* and a couple of A-O members thought Reed did it!

In early 1992, I left *Alpha-Omega*, primarily to concentrate on running a comic book store in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. I thought I was going to get rich quick in my own business. God had other plans... three years later, I closed the store after the death of my first wife: I could sell comic books or raise my 4 kids. Turns out I missed the comic book title implosion by one year that closed many comic shops across the country.

Shortly thereafter I was contacted by mail. I was asked by Harry Miller to write a letter congratulating *Alpha-Omega* for reaching its 10th anniversary. I wrote that letter. I also wanted to rejoin A-O, but I was so busy with working full time and raising my children that I didn't know how I would do it. The issue turned out to be academic: I was told that I could not rejoin since the APA was extremely popular and had a long 'wait list'... about a year to rejoin, maybe? I didn't try... I was equally disappointed in the fact that Harry referred to the Teen Enforcement Agency as "C.E.A." in his anniversary piece. Ouch!

Several years later, I received a phone call out of the blue from Ralph Miley wondering if I would be willing to participate with *Alpha-Omega's* Issue #100. "You're also welcome to rejoin", he added. Not sounding very intelligent I stumbled over the words to say. Finally I just laughed, "You couldn't have called at a better time!" Minutes before I was just praying, asking God what direction he wanted me to go with my life and how I was to use my talents for Him.

I rejoined (no waitlist) and discovered a different atmosphere prevailed throughout the APA. New people like Rob Marsh, Frank Humphris and Veli Lopenen had or soon joined, with their interests in *December Sun*, *Dan Dare* and John Burns, in addition to those wonderful cornerstones folk like Don Ensign, Billy Leavell and John Pierce, still talking about that Golden Age *Captain Marvel*! I didn't care; it was great to be back and they warmly welcomed me, too!

I was still too busy with the family and skipped an issue or two before I could begin to contribute regularly. My first contribution was *Alpha-Omega* #98, May 1998. *Pop Comics* became as my 'trib title, (the 'Pop' meaning many things), *T-E-A* (now under the name "TEEN Enforcement Agency") were reintroduced. I soon reran the original adventures from the late 1980's and went back


and finished that third, shelved tale. What an interesting attempt to match artwork and lettering styles from 10 years previous, but I did it and that third *T-E-A* adventure ran 40 pages... six pages at a time almost every issue!

Right after finishing that, then Assistant Central Mailer Carl Borg wrote an editorial about "Each of us using our best gift... those best at writing write, those best at drawing draw, those best at lettering letter, to create our best work for our Lord". I was inspired by Carl's piece and in *Alpha-Omega* #110, I announced the re-working of *T-E-A*, starting the series over. I was going to just try to clean up my artwork, but fellow A-Oans Frank Humphris and Veli Lopenen offered their services as artists and later became co-plotters, offering many ideas to help the series. I changed the title to *Original Teen Enforcement Agency* so not to conflict with *The Teen Enforcement Agency* series my son Matt had started (with my permission).

About this time, I accepted a position on the CCAS board. I would be on it for 4 years. I was also the Assistant Central Mailer for two years at the same time. The ACM was a fun job; assembling issues, counting dues, and receiving lots of e-mail on almost a daily basis! I did a lot of work on *Alpha-Omega* covers, working with people like Rob Marsh, Frank Humphris, Eric Jansen, Don Ensign, Larry Blake & others who supplied me with great art or spot illustrations to work with. Veli Lopenen gave me covers for an issue of A-O on a week's notice when a previous person couldn't keep their promise. Being ACM, except for composition and coloring, I pretty much ran out of time for being an artist. I even put together a contributor's section occasionally, too.

George Macas in his Trib "Apa-Go-Ge(orge)" suggested *TEen ENforcement AGENCY* instead of *T.E.A.* I loved the idea but had things in motion and could not incorporate the idea immediately. His idea is now prominent on the T-E-A website, though people seem to prefer the initials O-T-E-A. For the *Alpha-Omega* #121 March 2005, I created the composite front & back cover celebrating "20 Years as The APA of Christian Comics." I assembled a complex collage of A-O members' artwork, new and scanned from back issues, making sure all present members were represented. It took me quite a while to put that cover together, but since I was the pastor, (on computer, that is). I made sure I included my-own drawn *T-E-A* and a panel from *Original T-E-A* #3 by Veli Lopenen. When my term ran out, I turned over ACM duties to Rob Marsh and became just a contributor.

In 2007, I was asked by Eric Jansen and Robert Flores to color an 8-page tract comic called *Homeless Harry*. Co-published by CCAS, Street Comix & Foursquare Mission Press, this tract would be distributed at both the San Diego Comic-Con International and the streets of New York City. My proudest achievement, so far! At the time of this writing, I am beginning another coloring project with Eric and Kevin Yong.

I am still an active member of the APA to this day and hate missing an issue as a contributor, even if it's only just two pages.  
— Henry 



## CCAS AT COMIC CONVENTIONS

### 1992

San Diego Comic-Con. The first Christian Comics Panel entitled, *Christian Comics: The New Underground*. Panelists included: Nate Butler (moderator), Stan Lynde, Nestor Redondo, Ralph Miley and Don Ensign.

### 1995

San Diego Comic-Con. The second Christian Comics panel at the San Diego Comics Con, *The Christian Comics Explosion*, also organized and moderated by Nate Butler. Panelists were: Reggie Byers, Rick Law, Kathleen Webb and Don Ensign.

### 1996

San Francisco Alternative Press Expo. CCAS table run by Ralph Miley, Kevin Yong and Don Ensign.

### 1996

San Diego Comic-Con. Friday Night Meeting at Ben Herrera's home. Included were Ralph Miley, Don Ensign, Don Chin, Jesse Hamm, Devin Parker, Kevin Yong, Gary & Rhoda Shipman, Gary Martin, Leo Partible, Rick Law, Jim Pruett, Randy Emberlin and others.

### 1996

Saturday Night Meeting in hotel room: 15 people including Ralph Miley, Don Ensign, Kevin Yong and others.

### 1997-2008

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS table, displaying tracts and comics.

### 1997

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel* (First Spiritual Themes). Panelists included: Ralph Miley (moderator), Jesse Hamm, Monte Wilson, Christine Kerrick and Harold Buchholz.

### 1998

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Ralph Miley (moderator), Eric Jansen, Roman Morales III, Brian Farrens and Steve Ross.

### 1998

San Diego Comic-Con. First CCAS Open Meeting. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Ralph Miley, Kevin Yong, Clint Johnson, Eric Jansen and Don Ensign.

### 1999

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Gary Shipman,

Kevin Yong, Jesse Hamm, Ralph Miley, Nate Butler, Mike S. Miller and Howard Simpson.

### 1999

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Ralph Miley (sermon), Clint Johnson, Eric Jansen and Jesse Hamm.

### 2000

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Don Ensign (moderator), Chris Wichtendahl, Nate Butler, Laurie W. Smith and Jesse Hamm.

### 2000

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Sergio Cariello (worship), Clint Johnson (sermon), Ralph Miley, Nate Butler and Clint Johnson.

### 2001

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Jesse Hamm (moderator), Don Ensign, Peter David and David Greenfield.

### 2001

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Edgar Williams (sermon), Hal Jones (moderator), Eric Jansen, Clint Johnson, Christine Kerrick and Monte Wilson.

### 2002

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Buzz Dixon (moderator), Kyle Baker and Tom Spurgeon.

### 2002

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Buzz Dixon, Mike S. Miller and Tom Spurgeon.

### 2003

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Buzz Dixon (moderator), Kurt Busiek and Tony Isabella.

### 2003

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Geoff Strout, Eric Jansen, Kevin Yong and Jesse Hamm.

### 2003

October. Las Vegas Comic Convention. CCAS table run by Ralph Miley and George Macas, Jr.

### 2004

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Buzz Dixon (moderator), Robert Luedke, Gary Martin,

Doug TenNapel and Craig Thompson.

### 2004

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Eric Jansen, Clint Johnson and Buzz Dixon.

### 2005

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Buzz Dixon (moderator), Brett Burner, Leo Partible, BJ Oropeza and Ben Avery.

### 2005

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Kevin Yong (moderator), Patrick Scott, Don Ensign and Ralph Miley.

### 2006

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Scott Shuford (moderator), Robert Flores, Don Ensign, Christine Kerrick and Robert Luedke.

### 2006

September. Phoenix Cactus Comicon. CCAS table run by Don Ensign.

### 2006

Tampa Con. Two CCAS tables run by Geoff Brenneman.

### 2007

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Scott Shuford (moderator), Doug TenNapel, Holly Golightly, Miriam Libicki, Christine Kerrick and Leo Partible.

### 2007

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday Meeting. Panelists included: Thom Parham (moderator), Buzz Dixon, Eric Jansen and Robin Parrish.

### 2007

Church Ministry Fair, Evangelical Free Church, Green Valley, AZ. CCAS table run by Don Ensign.

### 2008

San Diego Comic-Con. *Spiritual Themes Panel*. Panelists included: Leo Partible (moderator), Corey Edwards, Holly Golightly, PC Hamerlinck and Scott Wong.

### 2008

First *Christian Comics Social* at the San Diego Convention Center. About 60 people show up from 8:00 to 11:30 PM! Moderated by Ralph Miley and Robert Flores.

### 2008

San Diego Comic-Con. CCAS Sunday

Meeting. Panelists included: Leo Partible (moderator), Robert Luedke, Robert Flores, Clint Johnson, Jerrell Conner and Sergio Cariello.

## **2008**

December. Claremont Comic Convention. Ralph Miley and Buzz Dixon ran the CCAS table.

## **OTHER "FRIENDS OF CCAS" COMIC CONVENTIONS**

### **1996**

Chicago Comic Con. First chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1997**

Heroes Convention. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1997**

WizardWorld Chicago Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1997**

Indianapolis ConSept. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1998**

September. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table debuts.

### **1998**

Motor-City Con. Informal and unregistered Christian comics table.

### **1998**

WizardWorld Chicago. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1998**

Mid-Ohio Con. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1999**

Spring. Motor-City Con. Christian comics table only.

### **1999**

New Orleans. BigEasy Con. Chapel Service and Christian comics table.

### **1999**

WizardWorld Chicago. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1999**

New Orleans FallCon. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **1999**

September. Minnesota FallCon.

Christian comics table.

### **1999**

Fall. Motor-City Con. Christian comics table only.

### **1999**

September. Minnesota FallCon. Chapel service message "Are You Challenging the Unknown or Hiding in the Phantom Zone?" by George Macas, Jr. Hosted by Carl Borg.

### **1999**

October. Motor-City Con (Detroit). George Macas, Jr met with other Christian creators. No chapel service. Christian Comics table. Reported in *Alpha-Omega* #89.

### **2000**

Wizard World Chicago. This was a CCAS/S.A.L.T. table run by George Macas, Jr., Monte Wilson, Warren Fitzpatrick, Duane Perry, Torrance King. No chapel service. Reported in *Alpha-Omega* #94.

### **2000**

September. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table.

### **2000**

New Orleans. BigEasy Con. Hal Jones standing in for George Macas, Jr, ran the Christian comics table. No chapel service.

### **2001**

September. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table.

### **2001**

Chicago ComicFest. Christian comics table.

### **2001**

Spring. Motor-City Con. Christian comics table only.

### **2001**

July. Karitos Christian Arts in Worship Conference. Christian comics table.

### **2001**

WizardWorld Chicago. Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **2002**

October. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table. Prayer Meeting, led by Carl Borg.

### **2002**

October. DallasCon (Plano, TX). A CCAS table was manned by Monte

Wilson, George Macas, Jr.

### **2002**

Spring. Motor-City Con. Christian comics table only

### **2002**

Karitos Christian Arts in Worship conference. Christian comics table.

### **2002**

Duckon (SF Show). Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **2002**

Dallas Comicon. Panel discussion and Christian comics table.

### **2002**

WizardWorld Chicago Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **2003**

WizardWorld Chicago Chapel service and Christian comics table.

### **2003**

S.A.L.T./Karitos. Christian comics table. Eddie Medina, Bud Rogers and Don Ensign. Reported in A-O #107.

### **2003**

October. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table. Prayer Meeting led by Carl Borg.

### **2004**

October. Minnesota FallCon. Christian comics table. Chapel service debuts with message by Bud Hanzel, led by Carl Borg.

### **2004-2006**

WizardWorld Chicago. Chapel services with guest speakers.


### **2005**

April. Minnesota MicroCon. Christian comics table debuts!

### **2005**

October. Minnesota FallCon. *Spiritual Themes Panel* debut with Carl Borg, Joe Spicer and Ken Lillie-Paetz, moderated by Sherwin Schwartzrock. Co-sponsored with Community Comics and the Christian Comics Clearinghouse.

### **2005**

October. Minnesota FallCon. Chapel service message *Finding Your God-Given Superpower* led by Carl Borg. Co-sponsored with Community Comics and the Christian Comics Clearinghouse. 



## CARL BORG'S MEMOIRS

Sometime in 1991, I visited what at the time was the leading comic store in Minneapolis, MN, where I found three comics that greatly changed my collecting: *Aida-Zee* and two issues of *Valiant Efforts*. What were these openly Christian comics doing in a secular store? It blew me away! I could only afford two of them, which greatly bummed me out, so I thought hard for a few minutes and chose the two #1s. It took years to track down another copy of *Valiant Efforts* #2, but that's another story.

At the time, Nate Butler was the focal point, the main activist. Along with assembling "his own" books, Nate also ran the *Christian Comics Catalog*. Over the next few years, I ordered several things from him and we even corresponded a little.

One day in October of 1995, a large envelope arrived in the mail. It contained the "test drive issue" (#0) of Nate's newest publication, the *Christian Comics and Games Magazine*. I was fascinated and read literally every word in it at least twice. I noticed the ad in the classified section asking for reviewers, reporters and photographers for the magazine. My interest in writing was resurfacing, and I decided to send in reviews of a couple of the Christian comics in my collection to see if Nate thought I had what it takes. Apparently he did, because his response was an assignment: interview creator Reggie Byers and review his latest "Kidz of the King"! I quickly agreed, and the results appeared in *Christian Comics and Games Magazine* #1 (February, 1996).

After the sad and untimely demise of the *Christian Comics and Games Magazine*, the guys who published the *Valiant Efforts* comic, along with friends in CCAS and *Alpha-Omega*, decided to try filling the gap with the *New Creation* newsletter. In an effort to get the newsletter to people who might want it, they bought a copy of Nate's mailing list. As a result, the #0 issue appeared in my mailbox in October, 1996, and I subscribed immediately. They kindly printed some reviews I wrote for them, and even asked for a feature article. Somehow, I also became their most printed letterhack during their short two-year run.

This was my first contact with organized Christian fandom. Once I realized there was a group of Christians (the CCAS/*Alpha-Omega*) who shared my love for Jesus and comics, my wife & I both knew the question was not "Would I join," but "When would I join?" That happened in February, 1999 with my first true contribution to *Alpha Omega* #85.

In a letter to the *New Creation* newsletter I had announced in my plans for a website devoted to Christian comic books. Because of this, the CCAS Board quickly invited this rookie member to become the CCAS's first webmaster.

In the early 1990's, Don Ensign arranged with an organization called FanData to design and host the CCAS web site, which they did. Due to an unfortunate series of misunderstandings and miscommunication, his relationship with FanData was never good. At one point, they encouraged us to move our site to another host, assumed we had or would do so, and forgot about

us. When I contacted FanData about the possibility of redirecting people from the existing site to the new one, their reaction was something like, "You mean it's still there?" If God had not prompted that August, 1999 move to WebJump, FanData would have trashed that site before the end of the year to make room for another customer.

As webmaster, I was included in the CCAS Board mailings, even though I wasn't officially a board member. That changed in January of 2001, when George Macas, on behalf of the Board, invited me to join. A-O #97 announced my acceptance. I served as Vice Chairman under John G. Pierce (a.k.a. Captain Chairman John Sir) for two terms and was responsible for initiating a major revision of the bylaws, which included many long overdue improvements.

I oversaw moving the website twice. The first site at WebJump was the FanData site with added graphics, courtesy of A-O alumnus Monte Wilson. The CCAS site grew and changed while it was at WebJump. Our next host was a supposedly Christian organization called JesusAnswers.com (I cannot verify they truly were Christian). I don't remember exactly when that move occurred, but it was there in the summer of 2001, when A-O #100 was assembled and printed. I've always thought that Monte and I made the CCAS site attractive, informative, useful and used, in reverse order.

God and my wife allowed me to succeed Billy Leavell as the Central Mailer of *Alpha-Omega* for issues 108 through 119 (2003-2004), with Henry Chmielefski as my trusty and hardworking ACM. During my tenure, CCAS became better known internationally. New overseas members included Frank Humphris (England) and Veli Lopenen (Finland). The *Alpha-Omega* group also made friends in Germany, Russia and South America during those years. It seemed to me the Christian side of our humble APA needed more emphasis at the time, so I included a short devotional in my introduction to each issue.

I may be best known in the Christian comics community for my efforts to distribute Christian comic books in my area for three years (2002 -2005). I met a lot of great creators and retailers during that time and learned some important lessons, not the least of which was that I was not the right person for the job. Comic books will not sell themselves; they need someone to push them, and I am not that "pusher." However, I may revive the "Christian Comics Clearinghouse" as a one-stop-finds-all website in 2009. Then again, I may not. I'm still thinking about that.

In 1999, CCAS graciously allowed me to start representing them and using their name at the Minnesota Comic Book Association's conventions, FallCon and MicroCon, where I've had a table for Christian comic books since 1998. For the last five years, I've also led a Chapel service and a Spiritual Themes in Comics panel discussion at FallCon. I've been blessed to meet and get to know several local believers involved in comics, including Sherwin Schwartzrock, Devin Parker, Sam Hiti, Pat Gleason and more. In the summer of 2004, Sherwin, Devin and I met at my house for supper and conversation. Similar meetings continue to this day, as do my convention activities. God has not

released me from this “comics ministry” yet.

After spending seven highly enjoyable years with A-O, I left to have more time to be creative, but so far other commitments have taken precedence. I expect that will change in 2009, however, and I can get back to writing SF that presents the Christian worldview as a viable alternative to its worldly counterparts. I still get some group emails and I like to hear what’s been going on. I’ve also joined the Ning. I’ll always be a friend to Alpha-Omega!

— Carl 

## GERRY LEE’S MEMOIRS

Walking around a comic book store one day, I realized that there was plenty of Christian music, BUT NO CHRISTIAN COMIC BOOKS! Ha ha, you may laugh today, but something weird happened. The only way I’d ever have the courage to write again would be if no one else was doing it. That was the source of my courage, ‘I thought I was the only one!’

I wasn’t only going to do a Christian comic, I was going to do a Christian manga! A little research turned up that a fellow named Bruce Yeo had published a comic called *Captain Salvation*, which I ordered. And then I found Nate Butler’s *Christian Comics and Games Magazine*. But in spite of finding others, I didn’t feel like my own vision was threatened.

It was in the late 80’s, I think, when I first heard of the *Alpha-Omega* fanzine. I was, as usual, down on my luck, and going nowhere with my life, and I think I was despairing. Working as a night security guard, I found myself drawn to Bible teaching radio, at first to ridicule and mock it, but then later out of a hunger for God’s Love. I was also an obsessive anime and manga fan, and in this new season of my Christianity, it occurred to me that I might be the first to write a Christian comic.

Coincidentally about that time, Nate Butler’s *Christian Comics and Games Magazine* appeared in the local comic store. I was both fascinated and a little disappointed. It was exciting that there were Christian comics after all, they were just hard to find, but it was a blow to my ego that I was not uniquely chosen for the task. You see, I am very average at writing and drawing. Had I been the only one, God would likely have performed some great miracle:) But there were others who were faithfully honing their talents and investing their energies and resources in Christian comics already. I discovered many of them through the “*Alpha-Omega*” fanzine!

Harry Miller welcomed me into the group, and I immediately sent my awful drawings to the fanzine. I reasoned that once they had seen my work, the cat would be out of the bag; Gerard can’t draw, ha ha. So, like many frustrated wannabe artists, I decided I was a writer instead. I saw the first Christian Manga that I know of, Aaron Reed’s *The Baker’s Story*. I discovered Jason Dube and Jesse Hamm. I got to write to Bruce Yeo, who had done the first Christian comic I had ever bought, *Captain*

*Salvation*. My dear ones, I was, have been, and am, very fond of all of you!

Harry Miller graciously invited me in reply to my letter (circa 1995), and Don Kelly endured the first wave of my scribble drawings as the ACM of the time. A drawing of *Edge of the Flock*, my *Shoople* character, and a very bad drawing of Don Kelly in a superhero uniform talking to Kevin Yong. Don was on the phone, his superheroic powers stripped by my ‘trib. “It’s Scriptonite!!!” Ha ha, stop projectile barfing, it still makes me laugh.

Everything was in place! I immediately began to talk about drawing and writing, and never doing any of it. I was waiting for God to drop a manga artist in my lap. And I was so mentally and emotionally unstable, I didn’t feel worthy of starting yet. Everything had to be perfect or I might get it wrong! I kept waiting to be sinless before I would feel worthy of writing.

I found many wonderful people in *Alpha-Omega*! Kevin Yong, who was then a single young fan boy otaku whose enthusiasm and talents put mine to shame. Don Ensign, Ralph Miley, Harry Miller, Billy Leavell. . . If you’re new to *Alpha-Omega*, get the back issues when they are available!


Through *Alpha-Omega*, I was able to learn to do Christian comics. To actually produce one, even if it would take years. At first, I just couldn’t ever see it happening. I had ideas, but I was a very young Christian, suffering from a mental/emotional disability, and all I did was talk about writing. I never did any. But time passed, and I became encouraged by the members. As you all became friends rather than just acquaintances, I began to scribble out my comics in small sections. I came to trust you enough to be open and vulnerable artistically and creatively.

God uses our faithful Christians brothers and sisters to do His will.) Now that I was actually writing and scribbling for the APA, other people could actually see what I was proposing, instead of just listening to useless wishful vagaries.

A hard time came into my life when I was forced to go to Portland, Oregon and live alone. It was the worst year of my life, and I almost killed myself, so I quit *Alpha-Omega* and gave up on. . . well, everything.

But in time I tried again, and God was good, though I couldn’t see Him through the tears and the pain. It’s been very difficult, but with *Alpha-Omega* and your fellowship, along with JCServant and the gang from Cyberlight and MZ Joey and company at ChristianComics.net, Recently, 150 copies of the *NSOT* book by Larry Blake has done based on one of my stories. It’s not much, but it’s so much more than I ever believed would happen. It’s so much more than I’ve deserved, for all the backsliding and wasting my time whining instead of writing.

God is faithful! And so is the CCAS! If you’re thinking about joining *Alpha-Omega*, what are you waiting for? Welcome aboard, and get ready for dreams to come true!

— Gerry 





**CIRCA 1992**  
*Ralph Miley, Dave Porta, Fred Watchman and Don Ensign*



**2000 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Kevin Yong, Nate Butler, Sergio Carriello, Kathleen Webb, Ralph Miley, Jesse Hamm, Clint Johnson, Geoff Strout, Efran A. Crespo and Don Ensign*



**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Hal Jones, Christine Kerrick and Monte Wilson on the Christian Comics Sunday panel*



**2000 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Nate Butler, Ralph Miley and Clint Johnson on the Christian Comics Sunday panel*



**2002 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Clint Johnson at the ClearVision and God And Country Graphics table next to the CCAS table*

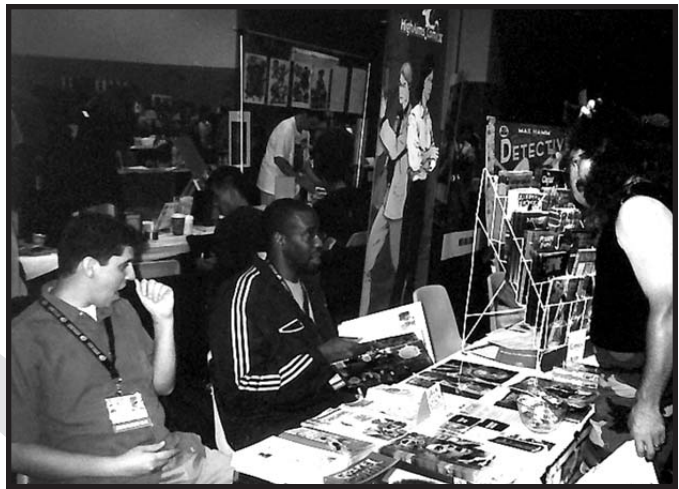


**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Don Ensign, David Greenfield, Peter David and Jesse Hamm on the Spiritual Themes Panel*





**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Christine Kerrick, Ralph Miley and Robert Flores at the CCAS booth



**2003 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Robert Flores and Ralph Miley at the CCAS table



**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Group shot. Front: Kendra H., Linda B., Edgar Williams, Jesse Hamm, Monte Wilson, Robert Flores, (?), Back: Dave Porta, Kevin Yong, Bud Rogers, Eric Jansen, Ralph Miley, Christine Kerrick, Devin Parker, Gene, Chris Yambar, Harold Buchholz and (?)



**2000 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Chris Wichtendahl, Nate Butler, Laurie W. Smith and Jesse Hamm at the Spiritual Themes panel



**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Clint Johnson and Eric Jansen at the Christian Comics Sunday Panel



**2001 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Christine Kerrick, Ralph Miley, Hal Jones and Robert Flores at the CCAS booth



## ROB MARSH'S MEMOIRS

Years ago, I stopped in at the Chicago comic book show at the Rosemont convention center, north of Chicago. I don't do conventions anymore, primarily because I just can't take the bleak and overwhelmingly dark atmosphere of these shows. Anyhow, as this particular convention seemed to be, as usual, dominated by darker themes of paganism, sexuality, profanity, and an overpowering stench of hot dog from the concession stand, it was very refreshing for me to find the Christian presence of the CCAS booth at this convention, with George Macas at the table. George was very helpful with explaining the CCAS to me, as well as sharing some copies of *Alpha-Omega*, which to me was an absolute blessing of a find. I had been a part of an APA previously, but one with a more worldly bent, so how refreshing to not only discover the CCAS booth, but to also discover *Alpha-Omega*, a fellowship of Christian comic book fans!

Leaving the convention that day, I had my large plastic bag filled with a dead tree worth of comic show fliers, mini-comics, 4-for-a-dollar comics, etc, but the highlight of all of this material for me was the *Alpha-Omega* samples. These two issues were fascinating, as here in *Alpha-Omega* was a collection of articles, reviews, comics, discussions, sketches, etc., etc., all by various Christian creators from all around the country. (I think Frank joined *Alpha-Omega* around the time I did, and Veli shortly after that, so I could be wrong, but at the point I read these issues A-O had yet to be an "international" publication.) I loved it!

Shortly after, I got on board, and started submitting two of my principle creations: *December Sun*, the generic comic book super hero I would have wanted to be reading at age 14, that also serves as the biggest personal playground for artistic experimentation; as well as the *Reformed Theological Fruit*, my comic strip about poorly-drawn rotting fruit, loosely based on *Veggie Tales*, but with a more heavily-doctrinal bent (which ultimately brought humor to some in *Alpha-Omega* and ire to others). I also fired off a number of reviews of comics and films, and have tried to faithfully give feedback to all other tribs offered.

I've seen a number of changes with people coming and going in *Alpha-Omega*. I've also observed some fascinating (and sometimes controversial) confrontations between members. And most interesting to me, in the last eight years I've watched *Alpha-Omega*, the 2-month lag paper publication, strive to remain relevant in light of the explosive development of technology. There's a novelty to being in *Alpha-Omega*, and corresponding with others every couple months via this means. In a way, it's stifling to have your hands tied by the time delay, and yet in another sense, there's something humbling about yielding to an old-fashioned, old-school mode of communicating with others, in a day and age when you can instant message a friend and have a reply in mere seconds. Granted, I'd be first in line to sign up for e-*Alpha-Omega* but until then, I'll continue to enjoy the fellowship and contributions via one of the most unique and fascinating print interactions that I know of, *Alpha-Omega*! God bless you all.

— Rob 

## CHRISTINE KERRICK'S MEMOIRS

It was July, 1997. I got to San Diego from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida using the airline frequent flyer miles of a kind pastor here. I got to stay for free with a couple from a Calvary Chapel in SD, and they lent me their truck to get to the Convention every day! I sat at one of the free tables (I didn't know you had to pay for Small Press tables, but the girl whose table I took, it turns out, didn't feel like sitting this year, so she let me sit there!).

So when a perky guy named Monte walked up to my table, which featured my first comic, *Empire*, and asked if I was a Christian, it shouldn't have surprised me. Here I was, at Comic-Con International, a little nervous about being the only Christian there—or so I thought. When I said yes, I was a Christian, Monte took me down to the Christian Comic Arts Society table where I met my future comic—and godly—family! It has been tradition from that point on to go to Horton Plaza for dinner and meet Sunday in one of the convention center rooms for church service. It is true: 'He sets the lonely in families'. It was amazing how good God was on that first trip! Since then, almost every year, I have made sure to get a table next to or at least near my new family so we can all be effective for Christ in that ever-darkening world at Comic-Con! CCAS has been essential in keeping the fires of creativity and light in the media jungle burning, and they have inspired me to keep going in my gifting of writing down the revelation and making it plain' (Habakkuk 2:2). I think it is especially notable that CCAS is based in Los Angeles which, while the center of media of all types, is an industry which is notoriously unfriendly to Christians. I can only hope that I continue to know these Godly men and women and keep working on projects with them to get the world's attention on Christ and the truth of His sacrifice for every one of us!

— Christine 

## STEVE MACDONALD'S MEMOIRS

I quit. After decades (wait...could it have been only four years? Seems like decades...) of reporting, writing, editing, and writing about Christian comics (henceforth 'CC's'), I hit the wall. Sure, there were outside factors, not the least of which was my Mom passing away prematurely last October (2007). But I tried to keep on writing. My priorities usually hit the ol' slippery slope during my writing jags, and my wife (my number one supporter, by the way) was, as always, the first to notice. Too many nights up late on the computer, too many requests for a 'writing weekend', too little interest in vacation planning (a week away from my email? Why not just gouge out my eyes!) and she could feel the tectonic shift while I thought it was just my stomach rumbling. And so I quit.

Luckily, I didn't tell anyone. It started simply enough, in the Spring of 2003, when looking for potential good future reading

material for my kids, then just two years old and newborn, and fondly remembering those classic Spire Comics of yore. After discovering *Community Comics*, *Megazeen*, *Kingdom Comics* and more, I contacted one Henry Chmielefski about his comic production, and he pointed me in the direction of CCAS and *Alpha-Omega*, which I joined in early 2004. Letters of complaint can be sent in care of Mr. Chmielefski, at whichever asylum he is currently inhabiting.

So I dug in, and started buying and researching CCs. I found that the history was both deeper and more diverse than I had imagined, and discovered the vast groundwork laid by Don Ensign, Nate Butler and others. I also came to understand that with CCs there was clearly a divide in artistic quality, whether in actual artwork or in the packaging (did you know that you can run off comics on 8 ½' x 11' paper? You did? I'll shut up now). But something else was about to happen that I never saw coming. For this, I need to take you back before going further.

I grew up in a Christian home in the 70s, with a very strong Christian mother, and prayed that sinner's prayer way back when I was still in Underoos...or at least in smaller sized Underoos than I wear today. Am I over-sharing? Unlike some people, I took my 'conversion experience' very seriously, but internal family struggles in the early 80s caused my attention to shift from active religious involvement to just claiming to be a Christian and justifying my life by not reading the Bible too much...you never know when you'll come across a part that will convict you, and who wants that in their wild and crazy teens? So I put it into neutral and coasted for a while. A long while. Too long, in fact.

Meanwhile, I still thought I was a good Christian lad, and God in His infinite mercy, took pity on me. I don't know why He chose me, because I didn't deserve it (like us all, but I know myself, not anyone else, and I KNOW I didn't deserve it). He answered a prayer that I prayed because my personal search for a wife was utterly fruitless, and He brought me a wonderful woman who overlooked my idiocy, married me, and inspired me to become a better man. Through her gentle proddings, I left the position in my company (Christian Book Distributors, or 'CBD') that I had been in for 6 years, and, in 2003, I became an internet product editor ('IPE') responsible for Missions, Evangelism and Apologetics ('MEA' – keep an eye on that 'Evangelism' part).

"So, Steve," you may be thinking if you haven't stopped reading by now, "what does this have to do with comics?" Well, it was in my first year as the MEA IPE for CBD (gotta love those abbreviations!) that I created a webpage covering the CCs that CBD carried at that time, which was not many, but got me looking for more for us to carry. It was also at this time that I conducted an interview with a man named Ray Comfort, and his book, upon which the interview was based (*The Way of the Master* – highly recommended), illuminated a few extremely important things. First, modern evangelism as we know it in the modern church is very different than what it was in Jesus' day, in the early church, in the Reformation, during the Great Awakening, in fact right up to about 150 years ago (due in no small part to one Charles Finney, who reached many with a gospel based on the idea that people can achieve salvation

based on their own works. The old heresies die hard). Second, I myself had not been properly evangelized (biblically evangelized as opposed to modern-ly evangelized. There's gotta be a better word for that, but you get the point), and quite possibly was not a Christian – which was quite a surprise to me!

Now, since many CCs are intended for outreach, evangelistic messages are included in many of them. Since there are very few 150+ year-old CC creators, the fact about evangelism's shifted focus from "sinners in the hands of an angry God" to "God has a wonderful plan for your life" is largely overlooked by many evangelists today, including CC creators. And so, after actually repenting and putting my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior (maybe I had been a true believer before then, but I was NOT going to let it remain ambiguous), I started to realize that, besides the art/packaging quality issue, there was an extreme lack of evangelistic quality in the books that were out there. There were a few accurate attempts, and I was able to help a few creators include appropriate presentations, but many didn't seem to care, or at least chose not to listen. And that's bad. I mean, really and truly bad. I mean, this is the soul-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ here, not just another ad for Hostess snack products!

Meanwhile, back in reality, my Mom died in October of 2007, which is like a meteor hitting your house. Forget about going back in to save your precious comic book collection – everything was vaporized, leaving only a smoking crater. My life still isn't back to normal, although if she were still alive she'd be the first to tell me to get over it and get a life. Writing projects got put on the backburner. Then the backburner got put on the backburner. I tried to keep communication going through A-O, but it became more tiring researching and refuting people's misconceptions (yes, that's what I wrote, but I use the term in love, and if you are one with whom I discussed theology with in A-O I implore you to dig deeper into the Bible for complete answers to the questions that I tried to answer), getting farther away from the core problem of evangelism, and I was either being misunderstood or dismissed. These frustrations led up to my quitting the CC business.

I wrote out my last trib and testament in April, 2008 and attempted to format it for sending as an e-trib in early May, but something kept messing it up. Over and over again. It got close to submission time. I couldn't format it. Submission time passed. I still have the trib. I'll probably cannibalize it for some of the better parts, but I've decided that perhaps I shouldn't quit. See, my Mom was an evangelist. The Sunday before she had the heart attack that precipitated her death she was in prison. That was her little joke. She was part of a worship team that went into a local prison to witness to guys at the end of life's rope. She would ask them to write their prayer requests on 3" x 5" cards and pray for them whenever she could. That's just the tip of the iceberg of what she did; maybe someday I'll write a proper tribute. But she ran the race as if to win, and I think she may have handed the baton off to me. Now it's my turn.

I need to follow what God has planned for me. My life has been transformed since reading Mr. Comfort's book and now



since my Mom died. I can't have been put here to back out now. I'm not just a Christian now; I'm an evangelist, like my Mom. I'll be much more focused on evangelistic content of the CCs that are in production and on producing more CCs with overt evangelistic content. I need to balance it with my homelife, and have resolved to make sure that my wife and family are my number one ministry (which is the way it should be, period) and not give them short shrift.

So what about you? Do you understand that you are a sinner, having both failed God's standard for perfection (the Ten Commandments) and been born into a fallen race (the human race, through Adam's sin)? Do you understand that, if God gave you justice for your offenses you would spend eternity in Hell? Do you realize that, through God's Grace, Jesus (both fully God and fully man) took your place and died as a sacrifice for the sin of the world? Do you understand that the only way to eternal salvation is by repentance (turning from your sin) and trust (as an active, persevering faith) in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? I didn't, until after I had become a member of the CCAS. Please re-read this paragraph again slowly, and please make sure that you understand it all.

Don't get lost believing that it's easy to get to heaven, or that all paths lead to God. Don't get caught up in denominational distinctives or niggling bits that take the emphasis off the eternal perspective. Study and know the core of the Gospel, and include it succinctly and clearly in every evangelistic product you publish. People's eternal lives are dependent on it.

— Steve 

## ROBERT FLORES' MEMOIRS

In 1997, a year after I graduated high school, I attended the San Diego Comic-Con for the second time, and I discovered something extraordinary that year: I discovered that there was a thing called The Christian Comic Arts Society! (I later found out that this was the first year that CCAS had a table at Comic-Con, though they met unofficially in 1996). My memory is vague, but I think Kevin and someone else were sitting behind the CCAS table. Out of the sea of chaos, there was a table with Christian comics! I slowly walked over and said "Hi. Christian comics!?" Kevin and the other person kind of smiled. Since I didn't identify myself as a Christian I'm pretty sure they thought I was there to mock them. The fact is, I was so excited to have discovered Christian comics that I didn't even introduce myself to them! I then proceeded to go through the freebie stuff. I picked up a tract called Unshackled, a preview newsletter called New Creation (#0) and an ashcan by Kevin Yong named Marking the Trail. As soon as I picked those up, I said "Thank you" and walked away. I didn't even go through the "for sale" books.

Days later, I poured over the stuff I got at the CCAS table. I was particularly impressed with both *Marking the Trail* and the

*New Creation* newsletter. I wanted to make comics like these! I wanted to get involved in this movement! I signed up for a year's subscription to the newsletter. And for the next year and a half I was kept informed of all the happenings of the Christian comics movement. But, before I could actually get involved in Christian comics, God had to do something in my life first.

In April 1998, through various circumstances, God called me back into the fold. He called me to a deeper relationship with Him. Over the years, I had grown distant and my faith had become shallow. God saw my need and miraculously brought me back with open arms. It was during this time that my interest in secular comics waned and my interest in Christian comics grew. I had been toying with the idea of a Christian comics series since 1996, so the CCAS newsletter was kind of the impetus to keep working on it. Later that year, I gave up reading secular comics altogether. It was during that time that another milestone occurred: a book called *Proverbs and Parables* was published.

When that anthology came out, I was so excited! This is what I wanted to do with Christian comics! This is how Christian comics should be! It was like a breath of fresh air. For the next year, I reworked my Christian series to become a graphic novel. Draft after draft I tried refining the story, but I just couldn't get it right. I began to lose interest in my own project. Coupled with this, the *New Creation* newsletter ceased to be published after 12 issues. I didn't lose interest in Christian comics, but I decided to put it away for a while. Time constraints, work schedules and going to college full-time kind of made that decision for me. In the back of my mind, I wanted to do a Christian comic someday, but not anytime soon. And God waited. . .

Years passed. I had been to various jobs working as a graphic designer. My own artistic projects consisted of paintings and watercolors at that point. Christian comics were cool, but they were the furthest thing from my mind. Then something happened in October 1999. I was working at a minimum wage Photoshop job. Life had really gotten me down. I so wanted to break out of graphic design and do something else with my life. I dusted off my manuscript for my Christian graphic novel. But I didn't want to work on that anymore, and so, I put it back in the drawer. I wanted to do something else.

During my 15-minute break, I would go and find a quiet place to sit down, usually the stairwell or some other out-of-the-way place that was away from people. I would just talk to God during that time. I would tell Him how frustrated I was and how I wanted to create art for Him. I would read my Bible. I would daydream and doodle. It was in one of these sessions that God gave me the idea to adapt some epistles of the New Testament. But what epistles? I looked through the list and eventually settle on the "J" epistles (1 John, James and Jude). I began reading them over and over, trying to find the themes of each epistle. During the next year and a half, during whatever free time I could allocate, I worked on the book that would eventually become *The Graphical Epistles of First John, James and Jude*.

In April 2001, I was wrapping up *The Graphical Epistles* and wanted to get some people's professional opinions on it. I decided

to send mock-ups to a few Christian comic creators. I sent one to Ralph Miley, Kevin Yong, Nate Butler and a few others. I wondered if any of them would write me back. One night, I received a call from Ralph Miley: "I received your package and your comic looks very good. By the way, we have a monthly meeting of Christian comic creators in the L.A. area if you want to come and attend." "A group of Christian comics creators!" I thought, "Oh, this was too good to be true!" This sounded more exciting than when I first saw CCAS at Comic-Con four years earlier.

Indeed, I did go to that first meeting, not fully knowing what to expect. I so desperately did not want to get into another Christian art group where the artists were weird. And I did not want to get involved with Christians that made me feel like an outcast. What I found, instead, was a group of people who loved God, loved people and loved comics (in that order). Their heart was in comics evangelism. Their words and their actions spoke the same thing: use comics for the glory of God.

It was at that first meeting that I met Ralph, Kevin, Eric and others—more friends than I had met in my entire life. They encouraged me and gave me suggestions for *The Graphical Epistles*. I left that meeting knowing I would be back. And I was back the next month. And the month after that. And the month after that. I was a part of CCAS and there was no turning back.

Four months later, *The Graphical Epistles* was published and given out at the CCAS table at the San Diego Comic-Con. That convention also marked my reentry in attending comic conventions again. Though, I wouldn't be going as a fan; I'd be going as a minister of the gospel. I wanted to reach comic enthusiasts for Christ. It was a calling of sorts, and the intense, yet gratifying work of the four days only seemed to emphasize that. Without the existence of CCAS, I don't think that would have happened.

As I write this, I've been with CCAS for over eight years. CCAS is a huge part of my life, and, over the years, I have increasingly gotten more involved with the group. The monthly meetings are one case in point: Where else can you get Bible studies, updates on personal projects, discussions on pop-culture, prayer, carrying each others' burdens, constructive criticism, coupled with fellowship, encouragement and a deep desire to know Christ more? That kind of environment doesn't just happen; it's a blessing from God. And that kind of environment isn't limited to the local Southern California group. It's something that is shared by CCAS worldwide.

You know, I've been to different Bible studies over the years, but I have never really been able to connect with the non-artist. I've always been "out there" in their eyes. CCAS, on the other hand, understands me and I understand them. We speak the same language: Comicbookese. (I think we communicate through word balloons.) And, as shocking as it may sound to the Church at large, Christ can be spoken in that language.

I was loved and welcomed and encouraged into the group, and I want to do the same for others. CCAS is in a unique position.

We are at the intersection where God and comics meet. Not a lot of groups can say that. CCAS should be a place for fans, professionals and amateurs alike. We should be mentoring the younger artists in this great medium. We should be praying for influential comics leaders. When the world sees CCAS, I want them to see Jesus.

May God continue to bless all CCAS members with success, fellowship, love and a growing relationship with Him! Let's grow together and make some comics together! God bless!

— Robert 


## **BOB WIERDSMA'S MEMOIRS**

My association with CCAS already began in the days that Don Ensign was publishing his *Valiant* newsletter, which was sent to those who answered his ad in *The Comics Buyers Guide* seeking "Christians interested in Comics." So far as *Alpha-Omega* was concerned, I didn't start contributing until several years after it was started up and then only cartoon reprints without any comment included.

However, eventually, I realized that this is what *Alpha-Omega* was all about: to share any ideas or tips that I might have so that other budding cartoonists could succeed in their own endeavors, and so I began to make comments whenever I could.

Much of the material I printed were cartoons I had published elsewhere in smaller venues and several village and at least one ethnic newspaper. It certainly made it easier that I already had plenty of stuff in my files! However, I did make some special comics especially for the APA, including the odd cover design.

I hope then this can be of some interest for those who receive this commemorative booklet. Happy Anniversary to the Christian Comic Arts Society and thanks to people such as Don Ensign, Harry Miller and others for getting the ball rolling and keeping her going!

— Bob 

## **SHERWIN SCHWARTZROCK'S MEMOIRS**

*Alpha-Omega* and CCAS really filled an important role when I joined somewhere around 2001. It was so nice for me to quickly get plugged into the grassroots Christian comics movement. *Alpha-Omega* was a great vehicle to show work and converse with other like-minded creators. Probably the very best thing that came of my involvement was my friendship with another member, Bud Rogers. Bud has become a close and dear friend, the kind of friend very rare to find. He has not only been an inspiration to me, he was the glue that kept Community Comics together during the tumultuous times of 2003-2005.

— Sherwin 





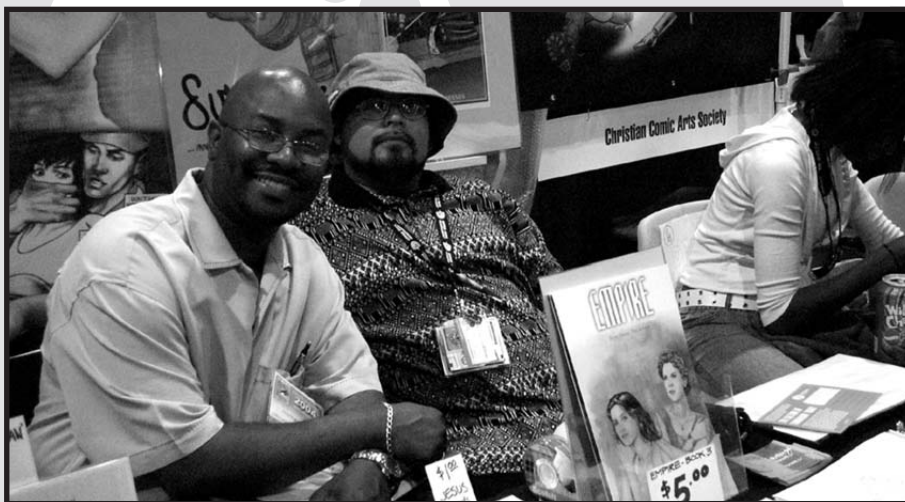
**2002**  
Robert Flores and Eric Jansen at the SoCal CCAS Monthly meeting at Foursquare Missions Press (Eric's employer)



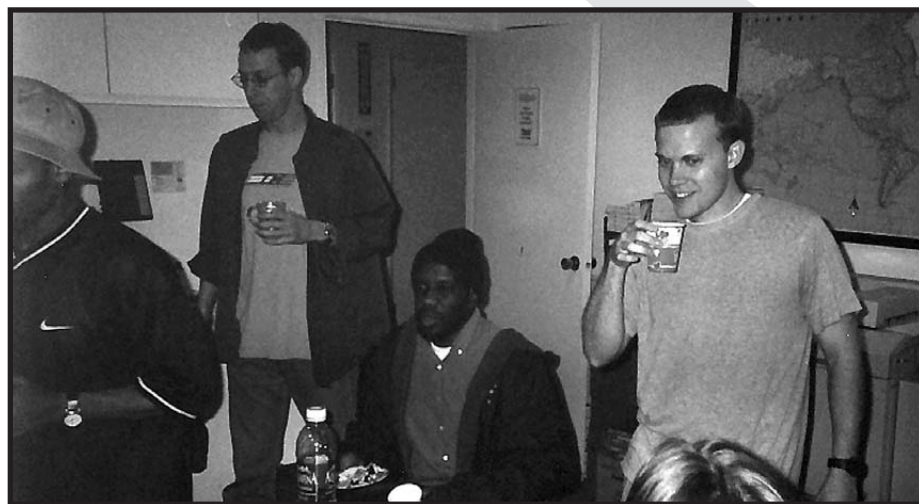
**2002**  
SoCal CCAS Monthly meeting at Foursquare Missions Press. Heather and Kevin Yong, Geoff Strout, Buzz Dixon, Clint Johnson, Robert Flores, Wayne Cash, Jose Guillen, Linda B., Wendell Washer, Steve Firchow and Geoff Strout



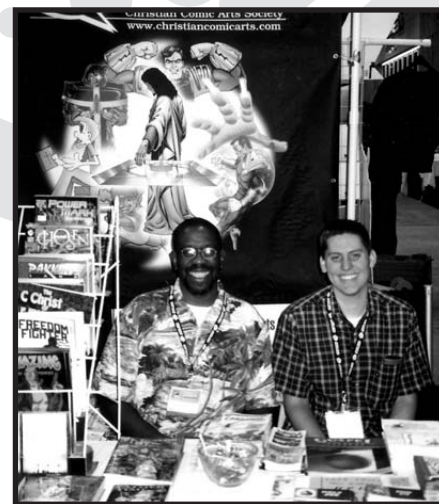
**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Harold Buchholz



**2004 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Clint Johnson, Jose Guillen and Janae Miley



**2002**  
SoCal CCAS Monthly Meeting at Foursquare Missions Press. Wayne Cash, Steve Firchow, Ralph Miley and Geoff Strout



**2004 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley and Robert Flores at the CCAS table

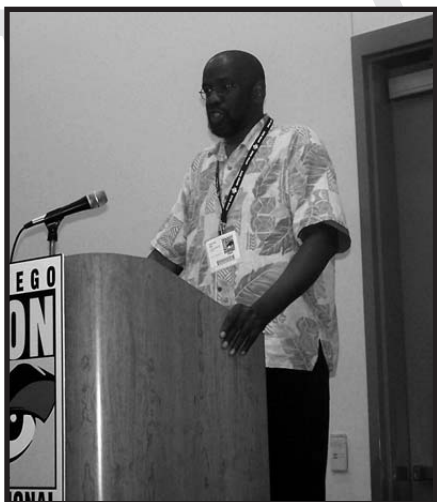




**2005 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Buzz Dixon, Leo Partible, B.J. Oropeza and Brett Burner on the Spiritual Themes Panel*



**2002 FALLCON**  
*Carl Borg and his Christian comics table.*



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Ralph Miley preaching at the Christian Comics Sunday Panel*



**2006 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Clint Johnson and Steve Lyles*



**2006 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*Don Ensign, showing a page of his artwork at the Christian Comics Sunday Panel*



**2005 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
*The Alias/Community Comics group: Bud Rogers, Sherwin Schwartzrock, Darren Brady and Ben Avery*



**2005 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON - Group at Horton Plaza.** Front: Ben Avery, Bud Rogers, Demarcio Johnson, Linda B., Clint Johnson, Steve Lyles, Don Ensign, Heather Yong, Kendra H., Middle: Geoff Strout, Robert Flores, Eric Jansen, Janae Miley, Royden Lepp, Josh Ray, Amy Ray. Back: Richard Haselrig, Christine Kerrick, Ralph Miley, Wendell Washer, Sherwin Schwartzrock, Kevin Yong, Patrick Scott.



## CLINT JOHNSON'S MEMOIRS

About 12 years ago, my good friend Steven Lyles and I were headed to the San Diego Comic-Con. I had been a few times prior, but this year was different. I was not specifically looking to get picked up by a comic book publisher as an artist or even meet my favorite industry talent; it was in my spirit that I would meet other Christians involved in the Comic book industry. If you've ever been to the SDCC, it's an understatement to suggest that it would challenge your senses. In the midst of thousands of fanboys, geeks and pros, it's difficult to locate anyone without a map or a towering cartoon monolith leading the way. As God would have it, emerging from the densely populated wave of human livestock, someone handed me a flyer that stated "Christian Comics Meeting tonight." I alert Steve, we find the hotel and SHAZAM! a room full of the unlikely creators, scholars, geeks, fanboys and enthusiasts. There were wall-to-wall folks with an interest in the Christian comic book arena. Wow. At that moment, it was confirmation that I was not alone. In the time that passed, monthly CCAS meetings would be held at the home of CCAS founder Don Ensign, and later, Ralph Miley's residence and even later still, the jobsite of Eric Jansen. As the years went by, we always had a strong showing at our meetings and at the San Diego Comic Con.

I forged life-long relationships with people like Jose Guillen and Steven Lyles with CCAS as the backdrop. Cool cats like Steve Firchow, Wendell Washer, Linda and Kendra all added flavor to the mix. Getting to know young aces like Kevin Yong, Robert Flores, Geoff Strout and Jerrell Connor, in addition to veterans like Nate Butler and Buzz Dixon, played a role in my Christian Comics outlook.

I particularly remember being involved in *Proverbs & Parables* and *New Visions*. *New Visions*, especially, was great for relationship-building. The original plan was to pair up writers and artists to produce short stories. This gave me room to stretch out with long-time, long-distance buddy Rev. Tim Gagnon on *Faith Walker: Smoke and Mirrors*.

One of the most exciting projects that CCAS has birthed is our website. I remember when Geoff Strout shared the idea of an interactive social environment online. It has turned out to be one of the most important staples to the CCAS community. Recently in my involvement in CCAS, I took the co-chair position of the CCAS Marketing Committee. This proved to be insightful and a lot of fun with Scott Shuford.

My biggest personal event had to be the in the fall of 2007 when Ralph Miley, Wayne Cash and I flew to Chicago to meet with an established publisher to further the cause of Christian Comics. We were floored to know that CCAS could draw the interest of outsiders to assist in strengthening the Christian Comics movement.

To date, I think one of the most remarkable customs that we practiced is that we held bible studies and prayed together and for each other. I thank God for the Christian Comic Arts Society.

—Clint D. Johnson 

## PAST AND PRESENT AO MEMBERS

Scott Anderson	Randall Larson
Charles Apellaniz	Bruce Lawrence
James Babcock	Ken Leach
John Barrett	Billy Leavell
Jason Bauman	Gerry Lee
Nat Belin	Alan Lewis
Mike Bennett	Hamdan Lillah
Larry Blake	Diana Lindeman
Al Bohl	Veli Lopenen
Carl Borg	Margot Inasley
Rick Bradford	George Macas, Jr.
Geoff Brenneman	Steve Macdonald
Harold Buchholz	Roland Mann
Josh Burns	Margot
Frank Bush	Rob Marsh
Brandon Butler	Christopher Melchert
John Butler	Ralph Miley
Steve Butler	Harry Miller
Terry Cannon	Nathan Miller
Craig Carrington	Michael Monasmith
Michelle Carter	Mike Moore
Wayne Cash (SoCal group)	Mike Moyers
John Celestri	Joel Nelson
Henry Chmielefski	Martin Oakley
Jeff Cline	Ross Palvac
John Cline	Devin Parker
Daryl Coats	Mark Paul
Jonathan Cooke	Duane Perry
Joseph Crossett	Gary Peterson
Joseph Culp	John Pierce
Chuck Davis	Jim Pinkoski
David Davis	Mark Poe
Ted Delorme	David Porta
Rodney DeWald	Michael Rand
Dave DeWall	Dale Rarrick
Dodd Dixon	Aaron Reed
Jason Dube	Lon Roberts
Rick Duncan	Eric Robertson
G. Raymond Eddy	Bryan Robles
Nat Edmunds III	Bud Rogers
Don Ensign	Annie Salzman
Jim Erskine	Fred Sanders
Luisa Felix	Richard Sawyer
Dean Finnegan	Sherwin Schwartzrock
Warren Fitzpatrick	Joseph Serpico
Robert Flores	Steven M. Shipley
Michael Fraley	Steven M. Shipley, Jr.
James Freeman	Galen Smith
Mike Freshwater	John Calvin Smith
Matt Fuller	Walter Staples
Victor Gates	Jimmy Stewart
Brent Giles	Lawrence Stewart
Tim Girdler	J. Strausbaugh
Gregory Greene	Todd Tennant
Jose Guillen (SoCal group)	Troy Tennard
Tim Hagstrom	Lawrence Tisch
Jesse Hamm	Gina Todd
Myron Harrod	Matt Tolbert
Ernest Hiramia	Michael Varbanov
Justine Hiramia-Marchaud	Fred Wachtman
John Hilderbrand	Bryan Ward
David Hockman	Peter Wallace
Kendra H. (SoCal group)	Billy Wamsley
Tony Houde	Erica Well
Frank Humphris	Freazie White, Jr.
Eric Jansen	Bob Wierdsma
Don Kelly	Andy Williams
Pete King	Michael Willis
Torence King	Monte Wilson
Holly Knevelbaard	Nate Wooten
Steven Landis	Bruce Yeo
Kelly Langston-Smith	Kevin Yong

# CCAS GROUP PROJECTS THROUGH THE YEARS



*Valiant Newsletter*  
1984-1986



*Alpha-Omega Apa-zine*  
1985-Present



*Valiant Efforts*  
1988-1991



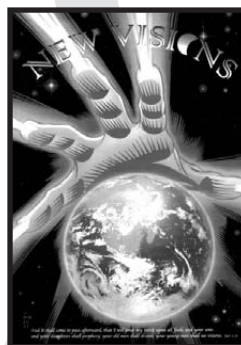
*Proverbs and Parables*  
1998



*New Creation Newsletter*  
1996-1998



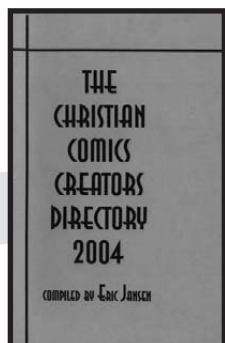
*New Crew*  
2000



*New Visions*  
2001



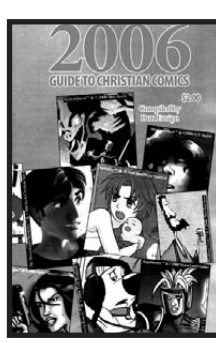
*Alpha-Omega #100*  
2001



*The Christian Comics Directory*,  
2004



*A Christmas Treasury*  
2004



*The Guide To Christian Comics*  
2004-2008



*Street Comix Tracts*  
(CCAS and FMP)  
2007-Present





**2005 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley and Robert Flores at the CCAS table



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Kevin Yong and Eric Jansen, promoting their new book,  
*Tales of Hemlock*



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Spiritual Themes panel audience



**2006 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Eric Jansen, Geoff Strout, Don Ensign and Robert Flores at the CCAS  
leadership meeting



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Kevin and Heather Yong at the CCAS Dinner



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Three Christian tables in a row: HeadPress Publishing (Robert Leudke),  
CCAS (Kevin Yong and Eric Jansen) and CK Images (Christine Kerrick)



**2006 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Eric Jansen and Robert Flores at the CCAS table



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Audience at the Christian Comics Sunday Panel sponsored by the CCAS



**2007 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Buzz Dixon, Robin Parrish and Eric Jansen on the panel for the Christian Comics Sunday Panel



**2006 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Ralph Miley at the CCAS table



**2008 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON**  
Robert and Jennifer at the CCAS table



**2007 SD COMIC-CON - Group shot.** (L to R) Front: Janae Miley, Linda B., Marjane Johnson, Demarcio Johnson, Clint Johnson. Middle: Eric Jansen, Robert Luedke, Buzz Dixon, Austin Strout, Geoff's Other Brother, Geoff Strout. Back: Robert Flores, Ralph Miley, Josh Burns, Kendra H., Christine Kerrick and others



## CCAS BIBLE VERSES

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. —1 Thessalonians 2:4

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ —1 Corinthians 3:11

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. —Romans 1:16

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" —1 Corinthians 9:16

Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." —Matthew 22:37

Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded. —2 Chronicles 15:7

And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. —Luke 7:23

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. —Colossians 3:23-24

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. —Ecclesiastes 9:10

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. —1 Thessalonians 5:16

For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. —1 Corinthians 14:33

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. —Zechariah 4:6b

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. —Colossians 3:17

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward

of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. —Colossians 3:23-24

But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. —1 Thessalonians 2:4

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. —1 Corinthians 1:19

For them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. —1 Samuel 2:30c

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. —1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. —Philippians 1:6

Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. —2 Corinthians 4:1-7

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. —Ephesians 2:10

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. —Matthew 28:18-20

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! —Psalm 133:1

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in

weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. —1 Corinthians 2:1-5

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.  
—Philippians 4:13

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. —Deuteronomy 31:6

And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. —Psalm 90:17

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.  
—Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. —Ephesians 4:11-16

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.  
—2 Corinthians 5:17

And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: —Deuteronomy 30:9

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. —1 Corinthians 10:31

According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. —Philippians 1:20-21

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much

required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. —Luke 12:48b

There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you.  
—Deuteronomy 11:25

And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.  
—Deuteronomy 12:7

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. —Ecclesiastes 9:10

Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men. —Proverbs 22:29

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. —Revelation 22:12

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. —Galatians 1:10

For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.  
—2 Corinthians 13:8

Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. —Proverbs 16:3

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. —Ephesians 4:1-3

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. —James 4:10

There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand. —Proverbs 19:21

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. —1 Corinthians 2:2

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.  
—Romans 15:5-7



# CCAS TIMELINE CHART

## 1960's

Don Ensign, a Christian, is interested in comic books and in using the medium for the furtherance of the gospel.

## 1964

Don Ensign creates the Protector (later Golden Protector) as a Christian superhero. In 1965, it is published in a fanzine called *Heroes Illustrated* (#1, Spring 1965, published by Dick Pryor of Castro Valley, CA).

## 1970's

Don Ensign discovers Jack Chick tracts and the Spire Christian comics by Al Hartley.

## 1972

Don Ensign, while at Campus Crusade, takes other responsibilities off of Johnny Meitz, so he can work on *The Greatest Treasure* tract.

## 1976 (and later)

Don Ensign discovers the revolutionary Christian art ideas of Francis Schaeffer and Hans Rookmaaker.

## 1977

Don Ensign self-publishes a Christian Comic, *Tales of Antedeluvia* #1, and gives copies away at this year's San Diego Comic Con.



## 1979

Don Ensign's friend, Terry Walsh, suggests that Don try and locate other Christian comic cartoonists who shared a passion for Christian comics.



## 1980-1982

Don Ensign and fellow Campus Crusade for Christ writer, Paul Johnston, create a comic strip. Out of this is birthed an idea that could reach multiple Christian artists, writers and fans.

## 1982

Don Ensign picks up a flyer for the Comic Arts Society. He begins attending the bi-weekly meetings in a comic shop in Santa Monica, CA.

## 1983

The Christian Comic Arts Society is formed by Don Ensign and Paul Johnston. Ideas for a newsletter are discussed.

## 1984-1986

*Valiant* Newsletter is published by CCAS. It is composed of articles on Jack Kirby's Fourth World Series, Art and the Bible, the Occult in Comics, and features on Bruce Day and Stan Lynde.



## 1984

Don Ensign places an advertisement in the *Comic Buyer's*

Guide, offering the free *Valiant* newsletter. About 200 responses are generated from this one ad. Among those who responded include: Ralph Miley, John Pierce, Harry Miller, Billy Leavell, G. Raymond Eddy, Charles Whitley and Nate Butler.

## 1984

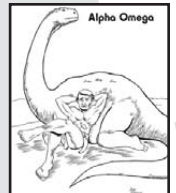
Don Ensign and Ralph Miley first talk on the phone and discuss the current comic book industry, likes and dislikes, fan stuff and Christianity.

## 1984

While still publishing the *Valiant* newsletter, Paul Johnston suggests publishing an apa-zine to help connect Christian artists across the nation.

## 1985

*Alpha-Omega*, the first apa-zine devoted to Christian comics, is published. (#1, September). Among the contributors are: Don Ensign, Ralph Miley, Billy Leavell, John Pierce and Harry Miller. Art and articles are featured inside.



## 1986

Don Ensign and Ralph Miley meet face-to-face at Ralph's home in Santa Fe Springs, CA (August 30th). Ideas for a collaboration project are discussed.

## 1986

Local monthly meetings begin to take shape in Don's home of Temple City. Others start attending, such as Charles Whitley. Meetings consist of a Bible study, fellowship and comic book discussions. Out of these meetings came the idea for *Valiant Efforts*, a Christian comic book.



## 1986-1991

Four issues of *Valiant Efforts* are published. Vol. 1 #1 was published May, 1988 and Vol. 1 #2 was published September, 1989. Vol. 2 #1 was published May, 1991 and Vol. 2 #2 was published July, 1991. All these issues had completely different contents. The first two issues were published on white paper at the Narramore printshop and the other two issues were published on newsprint by an outside printer. Artists include Don Ensign, Ralph Miley, Jack Martin and Steve Firchow. Other non-Christians, such as John Tigne and Scott Clark, also work on the project.

## 1990 to mid-1990s

Local monthly CCAS meetings are moved from place to place: Santa Fe Springs, Temple City and South Pasadena. New members include: Clint Johnson, Kevin Yong, Eric Jansen, Steve Lyles, Wayne Cash, Jose Guillen and Fred Sanders.

## 1992

The first Christian Comics panel at San Diego Comic-Con, entitled "Christian Comics: The New Underground." This panel is organized and moderated by Nate Butler. Panelists include: Stan Lynde, Nestor



Redondo, Ralph Miley, and Don Ensign.

### 1995

San Diego Comic-Con Christian dinner meeting (with pizza) organized by Nate Butler. About a dozen people attend, including the late Nestor Redondo.

### 1995

Idea for a newsletter is suggested by Ralph Miley.

### 1995

Don Ensign gets the first CCAS website up and running.

### 1996

Ralph Miley, inspired by *The Big Book of Martyrs* book published by Paragon Press, begins discussing a similar compilation book based on Bible passages. Together with Don Ensign and Kevin Yong, he begins organizing 60 artists for this book, which eventually becomes the landmark book *Proverbs and Parables*.



### 1996-1998

The *New Creation Newsletter* is published and sent out to Christians for the next two years to approximately 60 people.

### 1997

First CCAS table and *Spiritual Themes Panel* at the San Diego Comic Con. Many Christian artists and writers are blessed by the generated fellowship.

### 1998

*Proverbs and Parables*, an anthology featuring over 60 Christian artists, is published.



### 1999

CCAS website moved to another server and redesigned by Carl Borg.

### Early 2000's

CCAS Membership of the Southern California group grows to almost 20. Monthly meetings are being held at Eric Jansen's workplace, Foursquare Missions Press.

### 2000

*New Crew*, a superhero satire comic book created and written by Kevin Yong, is published by Ralph Miley and features many CCAS artists.



### 2001

*New Visions*, a compilation book of Christian stories, is published jointly by Clint Johnson and Ralph Miley and features many CCAS artists.

### 2001

CCAS website moved to another server by Carl Borg.



### 2001

*Alpha-Omega's* 100th issue is published in a special trade paperback format in September. The roster

of *Alpha-Omega* includes over 20 members.



### 2003

*A Christmas Treasury* is published by Eric Jansen and features many CCAS artists.

### 2003-2006

CCAS' Southern California group restructures and gets more organized, eventually leading to stronger ties between itself and the nationwide *Alpha-Omega* membership.



### 2004

The first edition of the *Guide to Christian Comics* is published by CCAS and is compiled by Don Ensign.

### 2005

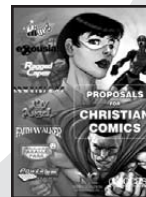
CCAS website is redesigned and maintained by Geoff Strout.

### 2006

10th Anniversary of CCAS presence at San Diego with Christian-themed panel.

### 2007

In collaboration with Foursquare Missions Press (Eric Jansen's employer) and a street ministry in New Jersey, CCAS creates a line of comics designed to reach the lost on the street, called *Street Comix*. *The Lonely Lady* (for prostitutes) and *Homeless Harry* (for the homeless) are the first two published. At least 20,000 copies of each have been printed to date.



### 2007

Don Ensign, along with Ralph Miley, Clint Johnson, Kevin Yong and Wayne Cash form New Creation Publications as a separate art studio from CCAS, but will work with the CCAS to produce many Christian comics and media.

### 2008

*The Lonely Lady* tract is published in Spanish. *Vengeance is Mine*, another tract for the *Street Comix* line, is published in English and Spanish—over 20,000 to date.

### 2008

CCAS first time to exhibit at Wizard World, Los Angeles.

### 2008-2009

The CCAS Board completes new bylaws revision, moves ahead and completes non-profit status for CCAS.





*Dedicated to CCAS members, past, present and future.*

**“T**herefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

— Hebrews 12:1-2

The Christian Comic Arts Society (CCAS) has existed for over twenty years through the APA-zine Alpha-Omega, the Southern California monthly meetings, an outreach ministry at the San Diego Comic-Con (and other conventions), and the CCAS website. Pulling Christians together from all over the comic book industry, CCAS produced the watershed graphic novel, *Proverbs and Parables, New Visions* as well as the annual *Guide To Christian Comics*.

The Christian Comic Arts Society is a volunteer organization whose purpose is to support Christian professionals, hopefuls, and enthusiasts within the comic book and related industries. We accomplish this by the following: (a) The sharing of the Christian gospel, message and faith, primarily within and through the comic book industry and art form; (b) Mentoring, training, friendship and fellowship; (c) The collaboration on and creation of visual storytelling.

**Editors**

Don Ensign  
Robert Flores  
Eric Jansen  
Kevin Yong

**Graphic Design**

Robert Flores

**Research**

Carl Borg  
Don Ensign  
George Macas, Jr.  
John Pierce  
Kevin Yong

Thanks to all the contributors who shared their memoirs for this booklet. I would like to thank my Savior Jesus Christ for allowing me to complete this booklet for His glory! Special thanks to my girlfriend, Jennifer, for her immeasurable support on this project. — Robert Flores



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