

SonLife Christian Store is ministry for family

By Helen Wale Turner

Business is booming in the Broadway Shopping Center at Lockhart Crossing, and one of the newer businesses to open there is SonLife Christian Store. That everything in the store has a Christian theme is not surprising, but the variety and volume of items might be if you haven't visited yet.

SonLife offers Bibles, of course, as well as Bible covers/carriers, framed scriptures, etc. A line of church supplies includes tithing envelopes, communion cups and wafers, record books, bible studies and more.

Gift items are available for all occasions -- Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's and Father's Day, weddings, Christmas and "just because." Choose from jewelry, books, figurines, plaques, music CDs, wall art, wall crosses, mugs and picture frames. Don't forget a gift bag and a DaySpring greeting card to go along with your chosen gift.

If you're interested in a CD, you can scan it and listen to its songs before purchasing it. They also have a "burn bar" where you can pick and choose the artists and tracks to download from over 20,000 CDs to compile and burn your own custom CD in just a few minutes. Movies on DVDs can be purchased or rented.

The book department has selections of fiction, mystery, love/romance, suspense, biography and other non-fiction. Some of the popular authors whose works they carry include Beth Moore, Joyce Meyers and Charles Stanley. There are many books for children and teens as well.



Kim and Walt Smart offer a variety of Christian items at their two SonLife stores.

The store was opened last October by husband and wife Whit and Kim Smart and daughter Tori Smart. They have a second location in Hammond.

According to Kim, business was good through Christmas and is holding steady. "We're seeing new customers every day," she said. "We're in a good location for customers from Denham Springs,

Central and Watson, and we're really not that far from Walker."

Prior to opening the store, Whit started a computer business and did very well, and Kim sold real

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estate - and still does - but they felt called to do some type of ministry. They always wanted to have more contact with people.

"First and foremost, we feel that's what this business is - a ministry," stated Kim. "Some people come in here looking for items to help them with grief or other struggles in their life. We don't ever rush anyone in and out; we take time to talk to all of our customers to find out exactly what they want. If we don't have what you're looking for, we'll go out of our way to find it - and will be happy to do so."

She added, "A lot of people end up telling us their story. They may not have that in mind when they come in, but because we care and we're listening, they often end up confiding in us."

They have a wide variety of items for children, from Bibles to CDs and DVDs, craft books and toys. There's also a children's station where the kids can watch Veggie Tales while their parents shop.

Hard candy and chocolates with scriptures printed on the wrappers are hot sellers for Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween and Christmas.

SonLife opens at 10 a.m. Mondays through Saturdays and closes at 6 p.m. daily except for Wednesdays, when they close at 5 p.m. for church. Call them at 225-978-0232 or, better yet, stop by for a nice visit. They're at 7755 Magnolia Beach Rd.

FCA, from p19

the #1 anti-drug program in the nation. Athletes sign a written contract at the beginning of the season agreeing to play drug-alcohol-steroid free. They are assigned a peer on the squad and hold each other accountable throughout the season. Over 300,000 student-athletes made this pledge this year in America. A soberingly effective FCA-produced anti-drug video is also shown to athletes at the beginning of the season.

Each November, FCA holds an annual banquet honoring student-athletes (middle school, high school, collegiate) in Livingston, Tangipahoa, and St. Helena parishes, arranging for a high profile Christian athlete or sports figure to serve as the Featured Speaker. The Huddle Coach of the Year is also announced at this event.

Each FCA Huddle meets a minimum of once per month on campus, most more often. As an example, Denham Springs High School holds monthly meetings attended by about 200 students and athletes, plus weekly meetings attended by 35-40, as well as a small daily gathering where students and athletes pray for their school and coaches.

Fields of Faith is an annual fall event that encourages students and athletes to make a stand for Jesus Christ by gathering at selected football stadiums in the three-parish area. There is usually a praise worship band, an inspirational speaker and kids who share their testimonies. By their example, Christian athletes and coaches are a strong influence on the student body and upon the various athletic teams.

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