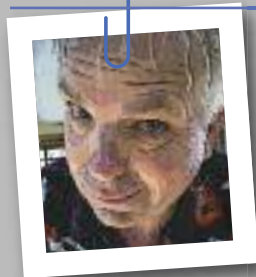


## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



# "Dude, Look how far we've come!"

Before I moved to North Carolina, my friend Rick and I would go hiking a few times a week in the mountains around San Diego. We'd hit the trails before dawn, climb to a peak, pause for snacks and photos, and then head back down.

On most hikes, we couldn't see the entire trail that we'd climbed to the peak. But, hiking to "The Chairs" in Clevenger Canyon was different. From the vantage point of two chairs cemented to the top of a boulder, we could look back down the valley and see our car parked miles away. That's when one of us would exclaim, "Dude. Look how far we've come!"

There's something satisfying in looking back at how far you've come, acknowledging the progress, and celebrating the achievement. And, the further you've come, the greater the celebration.

That's what's happening with this one hundredth edition of *Youth Leaders Only*. I've been on the trail with interlinc since their very first days. I'd receive a vinyl album of new Contemporary Christian Music (which, back then, was a fairly new moniker) and a couple of "Xeroxed" pages of a Bible study and the thematic listing of the album. That was it. One album. One study. One thematic.

Along came cassette tapes—they'd send a half dozen, and a bunch of papers of Bible studies and thematic listings stapled together. After a bit, you'd get ten cassettes, and the papers were assembled into a booklet.

CDs were a huge step up. Plus, interlinc added MORE albums to the mix, and you could choose to get either Hot or Mild versions of *Youth Leaders Only*.

The resource materials became a full-fledged magazine, with articles around a common theme. Chordcharts were added so we could have our youth bands learn the songs from YLO. And, re:Tunes were added—discussion starters that engage teenagers with popular mainstream music, and give them a Biblical view of the songs. Movie-based resources were added to the mix.

Most recently, YLO has gone digital. Today, you don't have to wait for your box of goodies—you can instantly download everything!

Plus, the entire Thematic Index of all the songs that have ever been in YLO is available as a searchable database online!

"Dude. Look how far we've come!"

Yep, there is something very satisfying about looking back at the distance you've covered—the greater the distance, the more proud you can be of your accomplishment. Thirty years. A bazillion media-based youth ministry resources delivered to thousands and thousands of youth leaders. Massive impact for our Lord.

Here's to the next one hundred issues of *Youth Leaders Only*!

Godspeed!

Ken McCoy  
Editor

PS. Here is a photo that I took from The Chairs. The arrow marks where we parked. We headed up the hill to the left of that arrow, wound our way to the top of the mountains, then over to those chairs. (That's my sister-in-law on the left, Rick on the right. I finally found a picture that shows Rick's good side.)

