

The Lowedown

A monthly newsletter from the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe

October 2007

Expanding and Contracting

Growing up, I was always a huge baseball fan. There was a time, in fact, when I knew all the numbers and statistics for the players on my favorite team, the Los Angeles Dodgers.

One of the things that fascinated me was the history of baseball *expansion*.

Did you know for example, that the New York Yankees were once the Baltimore Orioles? That's right. In 1903, the Baltimore Orioles moved to New York and became the Highlanders. In 1913, they changed their name to the Yankees.

The Braves weren't always in Atlanta. They started in Boston, moved to Milwaukee and have finally settled in Atlanta.

For most of last century, the American League and National League each had eight teams. But in the early 60's, baseball began *expanding* to the 30 teams that we now have.

The biggest wave of *expansion* occurred in the 1960's, when 8 teams were added over the course of 8 years. Some of those teams didn't last long. The Washington Senators for example, came into the American League in 1961 but only a year later, moved to Minnesota and became the Minnesota Twins.

Seattle first joined the Major League Baseball fraternity when the Seattle Pilots came into the league in 1969. However, after only one year, they moved to Milwaukee and became the Milwaukee Brewers.

In 2001, baseball commissioner Bud Selig announced the unthinkable. Instead of *expanding*, he announced that baseball would be *contracting*—that plans were on the table to eliminate 2 teams.

It was a financial move, but the teams that were most likely to be eliminated were the Minnesota Twins

and the Montreal Expos.

As you can imagine, many people were upset and litigation ensued which ultimately blocked the *contraction* effort. For the time being, *contraction* seems to be a dead issue, but economics may bring it to the surface again in the near future.

Here in Davis, we've been undergoing our own *expansion* and *contraction* scenarios.

For the last couple of years, Jen and I have been talking and dreaming about our home. We are very grateful for this home that the Lord provided 7 years ago, especially in this housing market.

Our house might best be described as a "starter" home, if you were to read a realtor listing. It has been a fixer-upper for sure. Over the last seven years, we've put a lot of "sweat equity" into our home.

However, with our kids getting bigger and with all of the students we have over and with our office being located in our house, we've felt the pinch of space over the last few years.

We thought about moving but the truth is, we like our house and we like where we live. We live right next to the school where our kids attend and that has been great for us in getting to know other parents. We see our location as being a great space for ministry, not just with our students but with parents of kids who attend the school right behind our house.

So after mulling it over for the past few years, we finally decided to *expand* our home. With the help of a student who is in design, we came up with a good floor plan and after 2 months, our plans were finally approved by the city.

For the last 2 months, I've been overseeing the building process—getting bids and hiring subcontractors. I've also done a fair amount of work

here and there myself. Tearing out drywall and stucco and installing new windows and doors, etc.

We're not finished yet, but we're almost ready to put up the sheet rock. We hope that in a few months, we'll be done with the remodel and life can get back to normal, whatever that is.

We've also experienced some *contraction* in our lives.

After last year, several of our staff left to take on new assignments. It's wonderful to see our staff taking on new responsibilities and helping our region to *expand* its influence. But for us, our team is much smaller this year.

That's not necessarily a bad thing. But it has caused us to rethink how we do ministry.

We know one thing: we don't want our smaller staff team to diminish in any way the *expansion* plans we have for our ministries. We want to continue to grow in our influence on campus at UC Davis and Sac State. We want to see more laborers raised up and more students reached.

Figuring out how to do that with less full-time workers is really a big challenge to us. But we know that God is able to accomplish his purposes with much or with less.

Would you pray for us this year as we are adjusting to a smaller team yet with the same responsibilities? Pray too for Jen as she has expanded her role on campus now that the boys are in school all day.

Please pray for us to walk daily with the Lord and to lead our team and our students with wisdom, character and integrity. Pray for boldness and creativity as we seek to reach students in this generation.

Thanks for your part in helping us to expand God's kingdom among students in the Sacramento area.