

# Refior News Bulletin

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## LAURA'S KARIS IS BORN !!!

BORN JANUARY 17<sup>th</sup> – ALL ARE HAPPY AND WELL... 7lb, 13oz...20  $\frac{2}{3}$  inches tall...brown hair . . . dark eyes...and absolutely beautiful!

The happy Refiors send warm greetings. This past year has been eventful and wonderful year. Our last Bulletin was sent out shortly after Nikki's third son, STEPHEN, was born on March 20, 2002. With Laura's daughters arrival, Pam and I now have four terrific grandchildren (Luke – almost 7, David 3  $\frac{1}{2}$ , Stephen – almost 1, and Karis – approaching 2 months).

Before giving a report about the past year, allow me to share about Laura, Brian and Karis. They were desiring and praying for years about getting pregnant. In fact from the time, Laura was a little girl, an intense heart's desire of hers was to someday be a "Mommy." Pam and I knew that Laura and Brian would be great parents when the Lord would allow them that privilege. After a time of multiple disappointments, there came that exciting call from Laura that "WE'RE PREGNANT!"

Because of the period of waiting Laura responded to her pregnancy with total joy and no complaint – she even thanked the Lord for her morning sickness, and the discomforts that were later a part of her pregnancy. We enjoyed Laura's thrill at wearing maternity clothes for the first time. It was cute to see how proud and happy Laura was with her little "pouch" when she started showing. Brian was totally aligned with his mother-to-be with each joy and each exciting development. We enjoyed some visits that permitted us to watch their joy in person. Another day of high excitement and joy came when Laura and Brian called to say that "It's a GIRL!" Our first granddaughter! Later we even received copies of the ultrasound pictures. Moving way ahead in the pregnancy, we made our travel plans for Pam to fly to Virginia a week or so before the due date, with the intent that as soon as labor started I would scramble to try to arrive in time. I had been present for all three of Nikki's sons, and I desperately wanted to be there at the time of the birth of Karis. Those plans changed when a doctor's visit ended with the doctor's conclusion that Karis would probably be born a week earlier than expected. So Pam got a new ticket and left for Virginia. When Laura started light labor I was called and I got my ticket to fly out there. I ended up being there a couple days early, but those were such precious and important days, I will always thank the Lord that I could be there participating in such warm and wonderful times. Pam and I went to the hospital with Laura and Brian. After Laura was settled in her room we all were allowed to be with her through the earlier part of her labor. Brian's parents also joined us. Hours wore on and Laura's pains became continually more intense, until finally she got the epidural and pain relief. Several hours later the "Big Push" came. Pam and Brian were in the delivery room, while Brian's folks (Ron and Carol White) and I were outside the door listening to the process. When we heard Karis' first cry (a loud one!), we all thanked the Lord. Then we had such a sweet and wonderful and warm time. I will always remember the joy exuding from Laura's face as she held her own daughter close. It was fun

to be there when Karis arrived home and to see Brian and Laura's first days as happy and loving parents.

Shortly after I returned to Warsaw, Pam called to inform me that something was seriously wrong physically with Karis. They had been directed to immediately take Karis to the neonatal specialized hospital in Norfolk. Thanks be to God, the specialists there quickly determined and addressed the problems. Karis has done beautifully well since that scare – so well, in fact, that she is all cheeks and rolls and folds, and after a month has grown from 7lb. 13oz., to 11lb. 8 ½oz.! Pam was in Virginia for a week after Karis' birth, and has already been back to Laura's since then for a week when Brian had to be away for work. I am writing this while I'm in Nashville, Tennessee for a week of depositions, and I am so happy that Laura and Karis will be flying out to see us this coming Friday.

Before I give a rapid list of what we have been up to over the past year I will give some current reports about "our gang."

- **Pam and Paul ("Rafe").** We are wonderfully in love and happy. The Lord has blessed us beyond measure. We are in excellent health and have been traveling quite a bit. We enjoy the ministry of the Word and ministries of Christ's Covenant Church, while enjoying our "flock" from Pleasant View Bible Church. We treasure the friendship God has given to us. We enjoy regularly being with Pam's mom, **Shirley Petro**, who is doing well.
- **Nikki and her family.** **Jon's** teaching at Faith Christian High School in Lafayette, Indiana is an important and effective ministry. Nikki and Jon are active and ministering at Faith Baptist Church. Grandson **Luke** will soon be seven years old. He is tall. He is a believer and is such a fine boy. He enjoyed swimming, diving, soccer, and the adult-size roller coasters. He was energetic in his part in the musicale. **David** is a tall three-year-old. He is articulate and sweet. He excels at swimming and loves to play computer-learning games. When we had our family rendezvous at Kings Island it fell on his birthday and he thought that was one fine birthday party. Grandson **Stephen** is approaching his first birthday. He is happy and good-natured. He is just now learning to walk. He is talking some, e.g. "Mommy," "Daddy," "Dandy" (our little dog), and "Grrrrrr . . ." (for Grandma or Grandpa). He does get jealous when he sees his mommy holding little Karis.
- **Laura and her family.** You read above about precious **Karis**. **Brian** is the assistant high school principal and Bible teacher at Greenbrier Christian Academy in Chesapeake, Virginia., and has significant ministries to the students. Brian and Laura are active and ministering at Tabernacle Church of Norfolk. They have a wonderful group of friends. Brian is pursuing his Masters Degree at Liberty University.

Back to the year's news. Our grandson Stephen was born on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and Pam returned home on our Anniversary March 28<sup>th</sup>. Some of the events over the past year included – Luke turned 6 on April 6<sup>th</sup> – complete with a Scooby Doo birthday cake . . . beginning involvement with an exciting new men's ministry "Men For Christ" [re-named "Men Following Christ"] . . . Pam's trip to Virginia in late April . . . a decision to begin attending Christ's Covenant Church in May . . . Nikki's and Jon's move from Otterbein and into the home they had purchased in Lafayette (close to their

church and the Christian school where Jon teaches), and the moving process, over Mother's Day weekend . . . the new thrust to minister to and reach men with monthly meetings of Men For Christ (and my joy of working shoulder-to-shoulder with Rod Mayer and Don Clemens) . . . the May 17, 2002 news that Laura was pregnant . . . Luke's kindergarten graduation . . . In June a BIG DEVELOPMENT occurred when a client, Turfgrass, Inc. offered me a full-time position with the company – and concluded that was God's will – and I accepted that position – for about three months – after which I resumed my private law practice . . . a trip Pam and I took in June up to Wisconsin for the high school graduation of my great niece Rachel Petitt – we took our grandson Luke, and that trip included a visit to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago . . . a week's visit by our grandson David “at grandma and grandpa's house” . . . Brian's and Laura's visit in late June, with Nikki's family then joining us, even to watch David completing his swim lessons, and then Laura staying a few days longer before Pam drove her back to Virginia while Brian finished his summer term at Liberty University (working on his Master's Degree) . . . a surprise visit by our dear friends Dave and Donna Brown . . . Rod Mayer's company, Petra Surgical Solutions, Inc. moving into part of the first floor offices of our building in July . . . trips to Michigan, Texas, Ohio and Kentucky as a part of my work with Turfgrass . . . Laura completing her nursery, with Pam helping . . . a visit from my Dad and Betty . . . In August having all three grandsons here while Nikki and Jon had a little honeymoon . . . a reduction in my office support staff . . . a “honeymoon” with Pam at Mission Point on Mackinac Island, Michigan . . . a “honeymoon” with Pam in Cincinnati, including a river boat dinner ride . . . a trip in August to Laura's in Chesapeake, Virginia, including some great seafood, the beach and body surfing . . . the fun football season all fall as an Iowa Hawkeye's football fan – the Hawks were undefeated in the Big Ten . . . going to Lafayette to watch Luke's intramural soccer games . . . the unexpected and terrible death of Pam's dog “Candy” in September . . . Pam's trip to Florida in September – meeting up with Laura (pregnant, but not to the most uncomfortable stage yet) for a special time of Mom-and-Daughter, and then my joining them in Florida for a fun, warm family time . . . In October, a tiny little black puppy cockapoo “Dandy” (1 lb. 9 oz.) joining our family . . . An outstanding and loving family conclave on Kings Island, Ohio, with pregnant Laura and Brian, Nikki and her family and Pam and me – one of the most fun family times ever, and Laura then going back to Warsaw with us . . . a power “Setting Captives Free” seminar sponsored by Grace College and Men For Christ, and Pam's as M.C. for the ladies event, “Passionate Purity” . . . a fun visit by Jim and Marlene Hinkle at the beginning of November . . . a trip with Pam to Chicago for the board meeting of The Evangelical Alliance Mission . . . the important election with the Republicans re-taking control of the Senate after suffering the same having been shamefully stolen from them through political hijinks (rather than an election process) . . . Nikki being one of the leaders in their church's children's musicale (having helped Pam and me with many musicals years before – full circle!), and Luke's little part . . . having everyone home for Thanksgiving, and Dad and Betty also joining us . . . Laura's baby shower at our house . . . Iowa being selected during the “BCS Selection Show” to play Southern Cal in the Orange Bowl [we had already purchased plane tickets to L.A. to go to the Rose Bowl – based on assurances that Iowa would be going to the Rose Bowl] and our scrambling around to get Orange Bowl tickets, and other arrangements . . . to Nikki's in mid-December for an early “Christmas” since they would be in Missouri at Jon's folks on Christmas . . . Pam's and my trip to Orlando, Florida for my continuing legal education seminar, staying at the fantastic Animal Kingdom Lodge, and then learning while at Epcot Center about the serious heart problems (and ultimate six bypass) of my dear buddy Al Buhler . . . driving from Florida to Chesapeake, Virginia to be with Laura and Brian for an “early Christmas,” leaving to start home to arrive in time for Christmas Day in Warsaw with Pam's mom, Shirley Petro, with a stop in Kokomo

at Pam's 101 year old grandmother, Eunice Henricks, for a little Christmas celebration . . . leaving New Years eve for Miami, to take in the Orange Bowl – and while there, great fun on the beach (wonderful ocean front hotel), the incredible experience of the “Hawk Huddle” with a wonderful dinner together with the neat Iowa fans from the Indianapolis Club, followed by 25,000 (!!!) Iowa fans at a pep rally the night before the game, arriving at Pro Player Stadium four hours before the game, as did most other Iowa fans and such a great time. Then the first seventeen seconds of the game when Iowa ran back the opening kick off – the most exciting sports moment as a fan we have ever had (oh yes – unfortunately, Iowa got creamed in the rest of the game) . . . a highlight of that trip was dining and fellowshipping with Bill and Kay Snyder of Fort Lauderdale (Bill and I met previously when we were both speakers at a Word of Life lawyers conference in Schroon Lake, New York) . . . and just a few days after returning from Miami Pam flew to Virginia in preparation for Karis' birth.

So that was “fast-forward” through the past year's events. Please allow me to make some conclusionary comments. This past year had been a terrific year for Pam and me. Our marriage is even more vibrant and wonderful then ever. We are enjoying life more than ever before. We are delighted and grateful for our Heavenly Father's grace in our life and His involvement in our continuing growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The same can be said of our daughters and sons-in-law (which in turn gives us high delight – 3 John 4 “I have no greater joy, than that to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”). We are in the process of developing additional legal work in the Naples, Florida area with the new law firm “Refior and Wisne,” with my dear friend and Florida lawyer Gerry Wisne while maintaining my “Refior Law Office” in Warsaw, Indiana.

Significant activities in our life, in addition to family, continue to include: Lakeland Child Evangelism Ministries, The Evangelical Alliance Mission, Men Following Christ, National Lawyers Association, as well as opportunities Pam and I have for hospitality, accountability, encouragement, counseling, mentoring, and friendship with a number of wonderful people. We are excited about and savor life. We have a high intent to grab the moment every day and to seek to be useful vessels for our Lord day-by-day and for all the days, years or decades ahead before we ultimately go to heaven.

Below is a list of all of our e-mail addresses. May the Lord bless you abundantly.

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