

# Refior News Bulletin

June 8, 1997

## Greetings from the Refiors:

I often say, "a lot has happened since the last **Bulletin**," and I certainly can say that again. Much to our delight and pleasure we have had a number of opportunities to be with our kids over the last four months. In early February Pam and I traveled to Cedarville College where I served as a judge for a regional intercollegiate debate tournament. Laura's boyfriend, Brian White, has been a member of the Cedarville College debate team during his college career. Then in mid-February Pam and I had responsibilities regarding the Pleasant View Bible Church Valentine's Banquet. We put on a skit of a series of vignettes showing different stages of dating and married life. More than twenty-five years ago when we simply had no money to exchange Christmas gifts, I gave Pam a song for Christmas. The very last line of that song is, "holding hands when we are ninety, you're the perfect wife for me." I now have a picture from that skit under the glass of my desk with Pam wearing a gray wig and dressed up as an older lady, and me also playing the role of an older man, and we are holding hands. Indeed, Pam is the perfect wife for me, and if the Lord should tarry, I certainly would look forward to holding her hand when we are ninety, still wonderfully in love as we are today.

In mid-March Nikki, Jon and little Luke came to Warsaw to visit for a couple of days right before Pam, Laura and I left for a vacation in **JAMAICA**. Unfortunately I became sicker than I have been for many years. We laugh now at the church directory photograph that was taken during that time. I do look like death warmed over. I was still extremely sick when we departed for Jamaica. At 3:30 a.m., Saturday morning, we loaded up the car, said our goodbyes to Nikki, Jon and Luke who were still there, and took off for O'Hare. Because of my sickness I was not a real fun person to travel with I am sure. When we arrived in Jamaica it was warm and sunny. It took us two hours to get through customs and to get our rental car. Renting a car in Jamaica is different than you would expect. The car was a bona fide junker. Its gas tank was empty, had a flat tire, was filthy inside and out, and had several noteworthy dents. After getting gas in the car and the tire filled with air, we embarked to find our resort. We learned **AFTER** we had our rental car that driving in Jamaica is so dangerous that the government had passed a law that no government agency can collect or distribute information on traffic accidents, injuries or deaths in Jamaica, so that there can be no bad publicity about that. They drive on the opposite side of the road and they drive **CRAZY!** We did not have any difficulty in finding our resort. It turned out that we had a suite, or condominium arrangement, complete with a large porch overlooking the ocean and a large living room with all glass toward the ocean, two bedrooms, a kitchen, and two bathrooms. Because of satellite transmission, the television was even connected to some USA channels, and much to my surprise (and delight) I was able to watch my Iowa Hawkeyes play Kentucky in the NCAA tournament. (Iowa played a great game and it was close, but Kentucky prevailed in the end). I was taking larger dosages of my antibiotics than the doctor prescribed in order to try to knock out the

sickness. By Tuesday I was starting to feel better and the girls were happy that I was getting to be more like "myself." The typical day started with me getting up very early and going out onto the porch with a pot of coffee, my Bible and my prayer notebook. There was the luxury of spending a couple hours with the Lord in that exotic, peaceful and beautiful setting. Then while the girls were still taking advantage of sleeping in, I would go down to the beach and put one of the plastic lounge chairs right into the water and lay there and allow the waves to go under me while I just relaxed and pondered and rested. It turned out to be a tremendous blessing that we had the rental car (even in its condition) because we had the flexibility to go whenever and wherever we wanted. We made several trips to other cities and to spots of interest. For example, we drove to Negril which was on the western end of the island. We had a flat tire that needed fixed during that trip. We had our eyes opened to the differences of culture. The beaches there were fantastic ! The countryside of Jamaica actually reminded us of pictures we had seen of Haiti. There were hundreds and hundreds of little shacks with no electricity or water. There were goats running around everywhere. Cows were tethered to ropes and were sometimes running loose. The winding roads were a combination of animal pathway, pedestrian walkway, and a "highway" for cars. We probably averaged about fifteen to twenty miles per hour in "the country." Another day we traveled to **Dunn's River Falls** which was certainly a new experience and it was utterly fantastic. Perhaps you've seen pictures of this steep and long multiple water falls with water cascading over hundreds of large rocks and lines of people making their way from the bottom up to the top of the falls. We had a blast.

Because we had a kitchen we were able to buy some groceries and eat a lot of our meals right there in the room. However, we made special plans to eat at an outstanding restaurant about once per day. That was a lot of fun. One day we went out on a glass bottom boat to a coral reef and had a super time snorkeling together. Of course we spent a lot of time on the beach itself. I spent a lot of my "beach time" working on a book I am writing. We also enjoyed shopping at a variety of different shops. It seemed like everywhere there were Jamaicans selling their hand-made goods. I was particularly intrigued by the wood carvers (more on that below). On our last day in Jamaica, Laura had a Jamaica woman put in a couple of their special braids with beads in her hair.

We checked out and loaded everything into our junker rental car and we were off to the airport after a delightful week-long vacation. There was no problem in turning in the rental car. I met Pam and Laura in the airport in order to make our way through the hundreds of people crowded into the Montego Bay airport. As we got closer to the check-in area we could see a sign declaring that **OUR FLIGHT HAD BEEN CANCELED !** Not delayed. No statement of alternative flights. Just canceled ! There were hundreds of people in our same predicament. The airline was simply saying that they would put us on that same flight the next afternoon, and bounce the people from that flight. I talked to everybody at all of the airlines trying to get us back. Laura was particularly disappointed since she was missing Brian so much. (They had talked by phone a couple of times during the week). Despite having failed on four attempts to get some alternative transportation, I went up to the one counter again and I noticed that the woman who had earlier said there was no possibility of an alternate flight was working on a ticket for someone else who was on our same flight. I then eavesdropped and stood on my tiptoes to see what was happening. There had

just been a few openings on a flight to Kingston, to then go to Miami and stay overnight and then fly to O'Hare early the next morning. That arrangement would mean that we still could rendezvous in Chicago with Brian who was traveling back from Wisconsin with the Cedarville College debate team. We jumped at the chance and it was like we were released from prison when we had our replacement tickets and we were allowed to get out of that crowded airport and onto a plane for Kingston. It added some extra hassle to the trip, but really it was okay. When we finally made it to O'Hare we found our car, drove to the rendezvous point, picked up Brian, and we were on our way back to Warsaw. It was great to get home. That was one of the best vacations we ever had. It was great from a fun and bonding standpoint, from a spiritual standpoint, from a genuine relaxation standpoint, and as far as actually getting some things done on a project.

You probably were wondering how the Iowa Hawkeyes did in wrestling, right? The NCAA national championships were held in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The Iowa Hawkeyes won their third straight NCAA championship and they had five individual national champions and scored more team points than any previous team in history. Iowa has won fifteen national championships under Coach Dan Gable!

Later in March Pam and I traveled down to Lafayette to watch Jon participate in their church's Passion Play. It was extremely well done, with a powerful message. [WARNING: This **Bulletin** may contain bragging by a grandfather]. Luke is so precocious physically and intellectually. He started walking well at ten months, and soon he was running and kicking a ball, etc. He figures things out so quickly it is almost scary. During the Passion Play (actually we were at the dress rehearsal), we had fun as Luke was running up and down the aisles with high delight. He is one happy boy!

Also in March we celebrated our **27th wedding anniversary**. [ADDITIONAL WARNING: It may sound like bragging, but it really, really, truly is the truth!] Pam and I have enjoyed such a delightful, loving, hilarious, exciting, passionate and mutually-satisfying and beneficial relationship, that I say without qualification, that I have not encountered any couple with a happier marriage.] I hope that some of the readers will immediately respond, "No way, MY marriage is happier than any I know." Pam continues her walking and fellowship with Lois Rogers, and she meets weekly with three wonderful ladies from church in an accountability group.

Nikki and her family went to Missouri to visit the Lambeth family on Easter. After church E.J. and Shirley, Pam and I traveled down to Kokomo with Pam's parents to have Easter dinner with Pam's grandmother, Eunice Henricks. That was a delightful time.

On April 6 we celebrated with Luke his **FIRST BIRTHDAY**. Can you believe that ?? Pam and I went down on Saturday, and stayed at a nice motel that night. Laura came over from college to join the fun. Extremely early Sunday morning I drove back to Warsaw (two hours) because we did not want to miss teaching another Sunday of our wonderful second graders in Sunday School, and then I rendezvoused with Pam's parents and we drove back down together to celebrate Luke's birthday that afternoon, and then we all traveled back together that evening, and Laura drove back to school.

Earlier this year our precious Laura started developing physical problems. She had a number of symptoms including severe headaches. When she started experiencing temporary blindness and loss of feeling in her arms, quite naturally we became extremely concerned. That started about a three-month process of continuous testing and evaluation (CAT scan, MRI, EEG, multiple specialists, etc.). We thank the Lord that all of those tests were "negative" and the neurologists have concluded that Laura suffers from migraine headaches with some atypical symptoms. For a period of time Laura had to take a type of medicine that would mask some of the symptoms. However, she was teaching in the public school at the time and it was a real burden for her to keep up with her preparation and teaching while on that medicine [nonetheless she did a stellar job and her evaluations were through the roof ... way to go, Laura !]. Just recently the doctors have taken her off of that medication and she now has a different type of medicine which she can take on an as-needed basis when the symptoms begin. Some of you were praying through this period of time and we thank you so very much for your love and prayer support.

On a weekend when Laura and Brian came to visit, the four of us went to South Bend. Pam and Laura went shopping while Brian and I attended the Notre Dame football Blue-Gold scrimmage. That was a lot of fun. It pumped me up for the upcoming football season, *particularly getting me ready to cheer on the Iowa Hawkeyes to a Big Ten championship, and possibly a national championship this year.* Laura and Brian also came home for Mother's Day weekend. On Sunday after church we all went over to Fort Wayne, along with Pam's parents, and met Pam's brother and family for an outstanding dinner at an exquisite restaurant in downtown Fort Wayne. Because it is on the way, Brian and Laura just went on back to Cedarville after our lunch. Everyone got together again in Warsaw over the Memorial Day weekend. I got up in the middle of the night Memorial Day to drive to the airport on my way to Connecticut to attend the wedding of my niece, Tiffany Refior [Wendell's daughter] to James Reeves. From Hartford I went by rental car more than an hour's drive away to a beautiful inn located on a picturesque lake in the Connecticut woods. It was a good opportunity to interact with Tiffany and my nephew John, since I had had so very little contact with them in the past. The wedding ceremony took place overlooking the lake. John played a beautiful piece on his guitar as a part of the ceremony. My Dad and Betty were also at the wedding. I appreciated particularly the opportunity to spend a block of time interacting with my brother, Wendell. Tiffany and Jim seem to be very happy. After the wedding they took off for a two-week honeymoon in Italy. Both Wendell and Margaret expressed mixed emotions, <sup>they were</sup> of happiness about their daughter's wedding and the quality of their new son-in-law, <sup>yet they were somewhat sentimental</sup> combined with sadness of the reality that their daughter had moved on to a new stage of life. My return trip also started in the middle of the night and I was able to be back at my office for work Tuesday morning by about 10:30 a.m.

This past week we had the pleasure of a visit by Nikki and Luke who were here in Warsaw while Jonathan and a carpenter friend were busy putting on a new roof on their house there in Otterbein. We continue to be amazed at how rapidly Luke is changing and developing physically and mentally. Nikki and Jon continue to do an outstanding job of parenting of their little guy !

I am dictating this *Bulletin* while traveling back from Cedarville College to Warsaw. Pam is driving Laura's car and she is right in front of me on the interstate right now.

Both that car and the car I am driving (E.J. and Shirley were kind enough to loan us their van) are loaded with all of Laura's stuff to bring back for the summer, including her mattress. The other important part of the trip to Cedarville was to attend the graduation of Laura's boyfriend, Brian. We had the opportunity to meet Brian's parents, sister, Wendy, and brother-in-law, Ron. We all had a very nice time together. We even went *bowling* last evening before going out to eat. I provided the important service of getting such a low score that everyone else at least beat one person in the group. This morning Laura drove off with Brian and his family on their way back to Virginia. Laura will fly back next Saturday, and start her summer job at Refior Law Office the following Monday. So this evening we will have Laura's plants, clothes, and "stuff" back home, but not Laura yet.

Unfortunately I had a little knee injury playing basketball earlier this year and it looks like I will not be able to play until I have an arthroscopic operation. I have decided I can put up with the pain for now, so I do not know if or when I will do that. I miss my basketball! There is something that is new that I have taken up for some sheer enjoyment and relaxation. While in Jamaica I was fascinated to watch the **wood carvers**. For many years I have said "I can do that," and I have stated that some day I intended to take up wood carving. I resolved there in Jamaica that "some day" is **now**. Upon our return from Jamaica I did a search on the Internet concerning wood carving and I easily accumulated the information I needed to order catalogs, books, and how-to video tapes regarding wood carving. I watched several video tapes to learn how to get started and what to do. I then dove right in. I changed one of the rooms of the second floor of the older wing of my law office into a fully-equipped woodworking shop. I decided that I could learn while doing something more complex. So I decided that my very first woodcarving object would be a **rhinoceros**. I found a picture of a rhinoceros in a magazine, obtained a block of wood, and - as the saying goes - I simply removed all parts of that block of wood that were not a rhinoceros. Actually the end product is excellent and I have myself a hobby which I have enjoyed so much that I am sure that it will be a life-long activity hereafter. My second project was a dog. Next I am planning to do a life-size pelican for my mother-in-law. I plan to carve a wood stump, starting with a chain saw, and then moving it inside to work with a chisel and hammer, and then more refined tooling to finish. My project after that will be a wooden rocking horse which I will intend to complete by Christmas to give to my grandson, Luke. I want to study the horses on merry-go-rounds and use that as my model.

My wonderful friend at the office, Millie (a black Labrador) received some bad news recently. When I took her to the vet, she walked onto the digital scale. It started flashing back and forth between 100 pounds and 99. I held my breath hoping that it would stop on 99, and it did. However, the vet still prescribed a diet for Millie. So here is the situation. Millie is supposed to lose twenty pounds, and Paul is supposed to lose fifty pounds. Millie and I have been discussing how we can succeed at doing that without changing our eating habits.

When the national magazine for the **National Lawyer's Association** is published next month, it will include a cartoon which I drew. This will be the second issue in a row that I have had one of my cartoons included. That is sort of fun. Speaking of art work, I just placed in the foyer of the first floor, and in the Lake Room on the second floor, of my law office, the five foot in diameter wooden *seals* which I made. They had

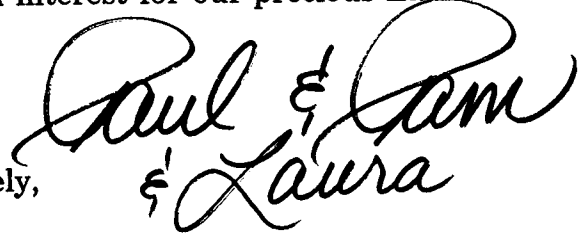
previously been up in the third floor courtroom. I am happy to have those two seals displayed prominently in that fashion. They each contain significant messages.

Pam has been quite sick for two weeks now. With all of the activities it has been pretty difficult for her. The antibiotics simply have not worked.

We just opened our swimming pool so the "Refior Resort" is open for guests. Although the weather in Indiana continues to be more like March, one of these days we will be able to enjoy such summer activities. Pam, Laura and I are looking forward to a vacation in late July to Virginia. There are a host of wonderful people in Virginia we would love to see. Even though it has been nineteen years since we left the Navy in Virginia, we have maintained sweet relationships and love with a number of the folk out there. It just so happens that Laura's boyfriend, Brian, also lives in the tidewater area of Virginia. So that will create very high interest for our precious Laura as we approach the time to go out east.

Please write !

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul & Pam & Laura". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

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