

NEWSLETTER: June 26, 2012



Dear Friends,

We are back in Loreto – arrived last Wednesday...

In our **May 31 Report** we mentioned that our ministries are somewhat unique and wonderful, but we also mentioned that there is physical and emotional stress in what we do, as well as spiritual battles... This Newsletter will give you an explanation of what has transpired over this past month...

We also mentioned in our May 31 Report that your support and your prayers are critical... And so we again want to thank you for your prayers – especially – because **on May 28, upon our return to Loreto following that weekend of Health Fairs in the Santa Rosalía prison, Don suffered an attack...** He stopped breathing, fainted and his heart beat could not be found. So, Dr. Male who was with us, started to give Don CPR, and he came too quickly... He was then rushed by ambulance to the hospital, examined and he was then given 2 liters of electrolytes intravenously, as well as some other medicines, and then released 3 hours later – being told that he should feel *'normal'* within a couple of hours... However that was not the case exactly, so **on May 31 our friend Bill Neail and his son Kyle flew to Loreto and took us to San Diego,** where Don saw a Cardiologist, and then for the following three weeks had numerous medical tests... And thankfully, Don does not have any heart conditions to be worried about – he is 95% *'normal'*! The one thing that was discovered in all of this is that Don does have Sleep Apnea, and so he now has a new CPAP machine to help him breathe properly while sleeping.

So what really happened on May 28? This is what the doctors have basically said: “We have found that there are no problems with Don’s heart; rather after considering all that Don does on a regular basis, as well as what he was doing just before this particular weekend, and what all he was doing in the Prison that weekend...; and then in this context, taking into consideration all of his symptoms...; he suffered a total physical collapse – not a heart attack, but a ‘shut-down’ if you will..., as a result of the combining of several factors: (1) physical exhaustion, (2) dehydration, (3) stress - [physical, emotional, and spiritual], (4) food poisoning, and (5) sleep apnea. Don will need a CPAP machine to use when he sleeps, and he should take everything at a little slower pace – especially for the next month. Otherwise..., he should be able to continue doing all that he has been doing, without any problems.”

Someone asked, “On May 28, when you had this ‘shut-down’, did you feel like that might have been the end of your life? If so, what was that like? And did you feel any “regrets”?” And someone else asked, **“What was it like to face death – if that is what you felt...”** However before I explain to you what I said to these people, let me tell you what Lorraine has said was my condition at that particular moment: She said, “it was like he had *'gone away'*; he wasn’t there; his body had gone *'grey'* – all life seemed to have left him...” Now to answer these questions: My first feeling was one of peace, and then I remember quickly resigning myself to the possibility that this could be the end of my life, and then I felt more peace – knowing my relationship with God was secure in Jesus Christ, and reminding myself that I’ve always lived my life obeying God whatever He had asked me to do and that I have always tried to be a peace-maker whenever possible. So, “No, I did not feel any regret!” – Only peace that then gave way to joy as I briefly anticipated an eternal future with God doing whatever He would ask me to do in another world... And then I woke up! And felt the love of all those around me... That’s what I remember, and how I felt...

Someone else asked: “So how will this change what you do in Loreto?” Answer: (1) I will try to be wiser (more realistic) in what I try to accomplish each month, week, day... In the past I have often probably set my goals too high and I’ve not given myself enough time to accomplish

certain tasks, as an example. It's difficult having a "Type-A" personality. (2) I must be more careful, to not only drink enough water each day, but in addition to also be sure that I am also replacing my electrolytes. (3) I will try to say 'no' to food that tastes bad, realizing that this can be done politely, and therefore not be overly worried about the possibility of offending others. (4) I will use the CPAP (sleep apnea) machine I now have... And, (5) with regards to the stress factors: I will try to engage others more in all that we do... However all of these precautions will not inhibit me in the continuation of all that we do or have been doing – just help me to be wiser in the process. ***So we want to assure everyone that we will be continuing to do all of the ministry activities and responsibilities that God has given us.***

Another question has also been asked: "Have you felt that God has been particularly close to you both in all of this? If so, how...?" Answer: Let us just tell you of some additional things that are woven into the above events, and we believe you will also conclude as we have, that we belong to an awesome God...

Monday, May 28: We left Santa Rosalía, (about 3 hours from Loreto), and it was our plan to go straight home after dropping Dr. Tamez off at the airport in Mulegé. It was about another two hours drive further to Loreto...

Doctor Male, Gabriel and their family having left Santa Rosalía before us, drove up behind us, about 45 minutes from Loreto – so we drove on to Loreto to have lunch together, before they would continue on to La Paz...

On the way, we decided to have lunch at Angel's restaurant, (a dear Christian brother). And Angel was the first to recognize not only that Don had finished his lunch, but that he had also stopped breathing, and was turning blue-grey... Dr. Male jumped into action – trying to get Don to breathe and offering CPR...; while Angel called for an ambulance... And just at that moment Pastor Ramon from our church in Loreto, arrived unannounced to Angel's restaurant with his family, for lunch. He and his wife Kelly immediately offered prayers – powerful intercessory prayers!

The ambulance arrived quickly, and after examining Don and doing an EKG, took Don and Lorraine to the hospital. The ambulance that came was one that was equipped with an echocardiogram machine, oxygen, etc. – all which they used and more. (Unfortunately not all the ambulances in Loreto are well equipped; but God sent this one...)

Pastor Ramon and Kelly (and their children), Dr. Male and Gabriel (and their family), all followed us to the hospital – where Dr. Male explained everything that had happened, and Pastor Ramon translated for us so that there would not be anything missed...

At the hospital, they took my vital signs, did EKGs, etc., and they said that everything was 'normal', and that my heart was 'normal'. They concluded that maybe my body had shut down because of dehydration – (but I had been drinking normally)... They also said that my stomach was badly inflamed, likely from something I had eaten on Sunday night at the restaurant in Santa Rosalía... So they gave me some medication for my stomach, and an antibiotic. And then they said that within a couple of hours I should be back to feeling 'normal', but I should probably eat a bland diet for the next month, and try to reduce my activities and my stress for the next month as well. Wonderful news...

Now we could have been at home alone when all of this happened... But God had things arranged in a better way – He instead provided loving helpful people, all around us!

And as if that wasn't enough..., upon my release from the hospital, when I was told that I would need to drink a couple more bottles of electrolytes, Lorraine bends down and picks up 50 pesos in the parking lot that someone had dropped – enough money to buy what was needed, and more...

Tuesday: As mentioned, I was told when I left the hospital that I should feel 'normal' in a couple of hours. But I didn't feel 'normal' by Tuesday morning, so I sent an email to our dear Christian friend and doctor, Dr. Jill Cattel. Jill called back a little later that same day, after she had made arrangements for me to see a Cardiologist, and after she had called Bill Neail to arrange an emergency flight for us in his plane, from Loreto to San Diego.

Again the Lord was arranging and providing everything for us, in advance of us even thinking about some of these details...

Wednesday: We relaxed a little at home in Loreto and did what we needed to do to be able to leave on Thursday for San Diego...

Thursday: We flew with Bill Neail and his son Kyle (co-pilot), to San Diego and stayed Friday night with Bill and Leslee.

Friday, June 1: Went to the Cardiologist's office and had another (1) Electrocardiogram, and then I had my initial consultation...

Starting on Monday, June 4: I had: (2) laboratory blood tests, (which unfortunately had not been done in Loreto), (3) an Echocardiogram, (4) a Nuclear Stress Test, and then (5) Sleep Apnea testing. (In early May, when we were in San Diego for Mexican Medical Ministries 50th Anniversary Celebration, because there is an history of heart problems in my family, I had several other medical tests done so these did not need to be done again. These tests included: (6) laboratory blood tests to determine if I have a cholesterol or other cardiovascular problems, (7) Coronary Calcium Scan, (8) Chest X-rays, (9) Ultrasound of the Carotid Artery, (10) Ultrasound to determine if I might have "Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms" (AAA), and (11) I believe they also did an Ultrasound on some of my veins.) So I believe I have now been thoroughly checked out...

June 4 – 18: This process of test, result...; test, result...; took two weeks – because for each test the doctors had to receive approval from the insurance company, before they could proceed. Then once I received the CPAP machine, they had adjustments to make before I could be released... And really to have all of this done in two weeks was very good! And, thankfully I only had to pay an initial \$10 co-pay; and when they determined that I needed the CPAP machine, I only had to pay \$206. (These payments of course are in addition to our monthly insurance premiums which are only \$282 – and this covers both Don [\$141/mo.] and Lorraine [\$141/mo.].) So we believe we really are being well cared for, for not a lot of expense. We really have nothing to complain about. In fact we have a lot to be very thankful for!

During these three weeks while in San Diego, we had the opportunity to do some things that were very special for us, with people who are also very special to us – and these same people helped us tremendously in various ways during our time of need. Our reasons for mentioning them, and what they have done for us, is not because they want or need to be recognized, but rather it is really to encourage you, (our readers and supporters), as to how the Lord both supplies our needs and brings people close together – especially in times like we have experienced recently. What a wonderful family we have in the body of Christ! And, 'Yes!' – God has been particularly close to us during this time; and He has proved that to us through these people we wish to mention.

Jill Cattel-Poole, our USA family doctor, lives in Poway – a city that is just north of San Diego. Her husband Landry is also a pilot and they have both been to Loreto several times over the years to help us with our evangelistic Health Fairs. In fact they now do similar evangelistic Health Fairs in various parts of southern California... As mentioned above, on May 29 Jill was quick to organize everything needed for us – an

immediate appointment for me with a Cardiologist, and a quick flight from Loreto to San Diego for us. Jill was also very compassionate and helpful, (probably more so than what most doctors would have been), providing us with ongoing reports throughout our time in San Diego. They also paid for the couple of nights we stayed in a hotel while seeing the Cardiologist, they took us out for dinner and to a movie, and they helped with some of the flight costs to/from Loreto. What dear people! And we really enjoyed the time we had talking about their activities for the Lord, the raising of their children, etc. It was a real precious time for us!

Bill Neail, lives in Rancho Bernardo, (near Poway and San Diego), and is a pilot who has flown his plane many times to Loreto, bringing doctors, etc. to our Health Fairs. And on May 31st as mentioned, Bill took time off of his work to fly his plane to Loreto to bring us to San Diego... It was wonderful to get to know Bill's wife Leslee, while we were seeing our doctors, etc. – because Leslee manages their business while Bill goes on these trips – really enabling him to go. Well, we were able to stay in their home for several nights, to even use one of their cars for a few days, to have several meals with them, and to go to church with them... We had a great time with them! They even gave us coupons to go to the zoo. And one night while we were staying with them, (in fact before Bill flew to Loreto to bring us to San Diego), they had arranged to have a couple of their closest friends over for dinner – one person was a well-respected cardiac nurse and the other was also in the medical profession – both very knowledgeable in our areas of concern, and they were able to give us information and advice... (Isn't it wonderful the way God brings us together!)

Jon Helland, lives in Escondido, (near Rancho Bernardo, Poway, and San Diego), and is a pilot who has flown his plane many times to Loreto, bringing doctors, etc. to our Health Fairs. His wife Bobbie is a teacher and performing artist in a community theatre – and we were able to go to one of her plays wherein she played the lead, 'Queen Lear' – based on William Shakespeare's play, "Lear". And Bobbie did an outstanding performance! – and this Play was only on during the three weeks we were in San Diego. We also had the opportunity to have a meal with them, and go to their home for coffee... And Jon flew his plane to Loreto, (with Landry as co-pilot; and Bill Neail as a passenger this time...), taking us home on June 20th.

Suzy Lahitte, lives in Lemon Grove, (closer to San Diego), and is a pilot who has flown her plane many times to Loreto, bringing doctors, etc. to our Health Fairs. It was wonderful to be able to stay in her home for over two weeks, to be able to use one of her vehicles while there, and to share several meals together. Also, Suzy had just returned from central Asia where she had been on a short term missions team – in fact, this was her second time going on a team to this previous Russian-dominated communist country. Well, we were able to go to her church (one of San Diego's largest...), to hear this team's Report; as well as go to her church on their 'Missions Sunday'... And now Suzy is moving towards returning to live in this same part of central Asia – so we were there at a strategic time to encourage her...

As you review the above, you can see that the timing of everything was beyond human orchestration; the provisions were beyond every expectation; and God can only be given the credit. We indeed have an awesome God! He has been very close to us during these past few weeks. We however want you to know that we do not feel 'special'; rather we believe that God will bless in a similar way, anyone who honors Him in their lives. God has sent us to Mexico to live for Him here; to be active in the various ministries we are involved in. And 'yes, that has had its cost' – we have left family, friends, etc. in Canada and the USA; but God has provided for us and blessed us in remarkable ways! And He has used many of you in this process – and He has also blessed you as you have been obedient to His direction. Again, what a wonderful family we have in the body of Christ! And, 'Yes!' God has been particularly close to us during this time; and He can

be just as close to you when you face similar circumstances. We trust our testimony is an encouragement to you...

Another question: When will you be coming up to Canada next? As we have been on two occasions in San Diego during the past few weeks we will only be there for a couple of days on our way to and from Canada; but we plan to be in Canada during the first couple weeks of August – actually we'll be in Kelowna from August 3-8, and in the Vancouver area from August 9-14. If you live in either of these areas and would like to see us this summer, please send us an email and we will be sure to get together!

Thank you again for your love for us, and for your concerns, as expressed in the many emails we've recently received recently, and for your prayers – also as expressed in the many emails we have received.

We have sent this Newsletter to you by regular mail, because we do not have your current email address. We have really appreciated your interest in our ministries, and we would like to keep you updated, so **if you could send us your new email address that would be much appreciated....** Our email address is loreto.ministries@gmail.com.

Thank you so much again for your interest in us and these ministries, and for your prayers...

Warmly,

Don & Lorraine



Don & Lorraine Karsgaard

Serving in and around Loreto, BCS, Mexico with:
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