

Refior News Bulletin

April 14, 1996

It's a grandson !!

At 7:54 p.m. on April 6, 1996, our precious Nikki gave birth to Luke Lambeth at Home Hospital in Lafayette, Indiana. Luke entered this world at 7 lbs., 7 oz., 21 inches, and with blue eyes and auburn red hair....and boy is he a dandy !

Just the day before (April 5th) was the declared due date. In fact, the doctor had given Nikki an examination just that day before and had said that it would probably be a number of days before the baby would be born. The doctor did not discover during that examination that at that time Nikki had already lost her amniotic fluid. Nikki went into labor about 2:30 a.m. on April 6th. She called us at 5:30 a.m. to say that she was in labor. We stated that we would get around and come. At that time Nikki's report sounded as if it would probably be a good number of hours yet before birth.

It was so wonderful that Laura was in Warsaw for the Easter break from Cedarville College. We therefore went down in two cars so that Laura could leave from Lafayette to go directly back to college on Sunday afternoon. I was making regular telephone calls from my car to Nikki and Jonathan to check the progress. Nikki's contractions accelerated enough that we made a rather dramatic increase in our speed as we caravanned down to their house in Otterbein. We arrived just in time to greet them, take a couple of pictures, and load back up to travel to the hospital. By that time Nikki's contractions were hard and painful. [I am enclosing Nikki's own report of the birth of her son so I will jump forward a bit.]

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It was an unusually special opportunity for Pam to actually be in the room with Nikki and Jonathan during the birth of Luke. When we were informed that Nikki was close to actual delivery, we moved from the waiting room to stand right outside of the door where Nikki was giving birth. I quietly unlatched the door and cracked it open in order to hear better what was going on (there was a cloth screen inside the door so no one could actually see in when the door was open). We heard the final dramatic efforts, the declaration that, "You have a boy" and the sounds of joy coming from that special place. During those final minutes Laura was standing with me in my arm. We were much in prayer for Nikki and the baby. A few minutes later Pam came bounding out. Her eyes were gleaming and wet and her smile was as broad as her face. She let out a joyful squeal as she took off, going airborne toward me. Her arms wrapped around my neck and her legs wrapped around my waist and we spun around in happy celebration of the birth of our grandson. Laura was as excited and moved as anyone with the birth of her nephew. "Grandpa," "Grandma," and "Aunt Laura," all sound tremendous, don't they? [And, of course, "Mommy" for Nikki, and "Daddy" for Jonathan].

During the weeks leading up to Luke's birth I reminisced many, many times about the blessed time when Pam and I were awaiting the births of Nikki and then Laura. I reviewed many pictures of when the girls were infants and babies and toddlers. Such reflection was a time of immense pleasure. I do not take it for granted. I praise the Lord daily. I can honestly say that neither Nikki nor Laura ever made a wrong choice about something important growing up, and neither of the girls ever did anything that dishonored their parents. Both of them have had a consistent and growing walk with the Lord. Because of such goodness of the Lord, these times are extra special, and such reflection upon the years that have raced by, was sweet indeed.

Finally they were ready for us to actually go into the birthing room. Lots of pictures were taken. The first thing I wanted to check out was my precious Nikki to see how "Momma" was doing. Nikki was beaming. Although she looked very much like she had been through a tremendous ordeal (and indeed she had), she was radiant and beautiful. I bent over to give her a kiss and tell her how proud I was of her. Her happy, glassy eyes met mine and she declared quietly with a proud smile, "Daddy, that's my son!"

I was proud of Jon for the way that he had tenderly cared for Nikki during labor. He was one proud papa after Luke was born. I enjoyed seeing Jon bursting with happiness, thankfulness to the Lord, joy, excitement, and wonder. Nikki and Jon will be fantastic, God-honoring parents.

Because Nikki's amniotic fluid was absent there was concern about strep-B infection. When they did a culture they determined that Nikki in fact DID have strep-B. Luke also was carrying a fever. They stated that it would be best for Nikki not to be released until Monday. The weekend was filled with happy times of being with Nikki and Jonathan and Luke. Pam's parents, E.J. and Shirley Petro, came down Sunday

afternoon. Jonathan's parents, Forest and Debbie Lambeth, were there for the entire time. Things did not go right with Luke. In fact, by Monday things were really getting worse. I would not have stated this to anyone at the time, but when I saw Luke so utterly lifeless Monday night I was afraid that we were going to lose him. I'm thankful that Dr. Bell came on the scene Monday evening. She determined that there was a need for immediate action. Home Hospital is one of the leading neo-natal centers (ICU for newborns) around. That was a great blessing. Luke was transferred down to the neo-natal unit Monday evening and that is where he stayed until Thursday night. During that time he had an I.V. and he had all of these tubes and wires attached to him, so he was "on a tether" during all of those days. Visits into Luke required "scrubbing down" the way surgeons do. All of us, especially Nikki and Jon, were on somewhat of an emotional rollercoaster from Saturday through the next Friday. Thursday night Luke made it through the night being off of the I.V., etc. The culture finally came back showing that Luke did NOT have strep-B. His jaundice was being taken care of and his temperature was stabilized, leaving the one problem, namely, that the muscles for keeping food down in the stomach were not functioning properly. The solution prescribed was to alternate how he was being fed and for Luke to be held in an upright position for 45 minutes to an hour after each feeding.

I was down in Lafayette until Wednesday afternoon when I returned to the office. Friday morning I received the good news that the doctor had just released Luke to go home. That was so wonderful to hear that Luke FINALLY would be going home. Nikki, Jon, Luke, and Pam left Home Hospital Friday afternoon. I was able to get away from the office a little after 4:00 to drive down and greet little Luke on his first day ever to be **HOME**. Pam had supper ready right as I arrived and we had a nice meal together. We enjoyed the event for a short while after supper. Then Pam and I cleared out so that Nikki, Jon, and Luke could privately enjoy the sweet event of being their own family of three, in their own home, for the first time. I also enjoyed the reunion with my precious wife. We had a room in a nice motel there in Lafayette. Because Pam and I have had an empty nest for some time, we have enjoyed the flexibility in our schedules and the greatly increased opportunities we have had to spend time together and be together. Because we are madly in love with each other and enjoy each other's company so much, it really causes us to miss one another when we are away. So in addition to all of the other great things about Luke going home from the hospital, there was the tremendous extra blessing of being able to be with my beautiful bride again.

Saturday morning Pam and I took our time getting around. We also wanted to let Jon, Nikki, and Luke enjoy their very first morning together at home as a family of three. We picked up lunch for all of us on the way out to the Lambeth house. Saturday was fun as we made over Luke and took turns holding him and enjoying him. And it also was a special time to interact with Nikki and Jon. It is fun for Pam and me to see and observe Nikki and Jon as loving, capable parents. Pam made us a lovely meal for supper. After we played as much euchre as Luke would allow, I drifted over on the

couch and fell fast asleep. I was of no help for the late evening or night details.

By the time I returned from my quiet time Sunday morning, Jon has already left for Sunday school and church. We had previously set it up that Pam and I would stay with Nikki (Nikki and Luke are restricted from going out until Monday), and that we would have our own church service right there at the Lambeth house. We had a nice time together through the morning. Luke was doing great. He tried out successfully his new battery-operated swing. We took a few more pictures too (of course), and then we had our church service. We all participated. I preached two sermons; one from Judges and another from Romans, and we sang some hymns and had a couple of prayer times. It really was rather delightful. Luke required attention several times and so we put the service on hold during those breaks and then we picked it back up for the next part until Luke needed something additional the next time. It was great.

Shortly after we finished our worship service Jonathan arrived home from Faith Baptist Church. The proud father gave a report of the many opportunities he had to show off pictures of Luke and Nikki and to announce to many and answer questions of many others about his new son and the mother in his house. Jon had a good time at church.

I am still getting used to hearing the name "Mommy" and to having it refer to my own daughter, rather than to my wife. However, those are easy and happy adjustments. Shortly after lunch Pam and I, as two lovers on a little date, went for a little walk around Otterbein. The sun was shining and the lightly crisp air felt good. That was nice. Then I packed up, said goodbye to all, and headed back for Warsaw. I am dictating this *Bulletin* while I am driving back to Warsaw. I am looking forward to being able to attend the evening service at Pleasant View Bible Church. I miss the church family and I miss being at our own church services.

Oh, yes...there have been other things going on besides Nikki's pregnancy, the birth of Luke, the crisis of Luke in the neo-natal unit, and his new life at the Jon Lambeth home. (It's just that these things have been the focus, and during the times when Luke was in intensive care, there was not much else going on in the world that seemed to matter). In late January Pam and I made a weekend trip to Cedarville to see our lovely Laura. Her buddy, Jenny Reed, joined us at the motel. The biggest event for Laura throughout 1996 has been her relationship with **Travis Mulanax**. I am under direct instructions not to discuss Laura's love life publicly so I will simply say that Laura has been VERY happy in recent months.

I had a nice opportunity to be the speaker at the Valentine's sweetheart banquet at Calvary Baptist Church in Oswego. On February 13 Nikki had the last part of her written examination for her master's degree. A few days after that she was informed that *she passed!* A short time after that she had her comprehensive oral exam and she passed that, too! So Nikki completed her master's degree in French

literature and she will receive her diploma at graduation next month ! Jonathan also finished the last part of his course work and the written examinations for his Ph.D. in biochemistry. Now he must complete his lab experiments and his doctoral dissertation. Hopefully he can finish that in two to three more years.

Most people have heard about "HOOSIER HYSTERIA." Indiana is one of the few states with only one class of schools, and all schools compete in the same basketball tournament. Pam and I enjoyed this year's Warsaw Community High School basketball team more than any other. This year's team was comprised of not only excellent basketball players, but they were all really fine young men - the type of guys "that you can really like." Pam and I really got into it. We loved following the Tigers. They finished the season with only two losses (a one-point loss and a two-point loss), and ranked seventh in the state. They had a relatively easy time winning the sectional. The regional was a tough one. All four teams were excellent, and one of the other teams was ranked 11th in the state, and it was one of the teams that had beaten Warsaw during the regular season (by one point). According to the dramatic script, those two teams met in the regional championship game. Warsaw was actually down by 15 points in the second half, and then they turned on the championship form. They fought back and fought back and as time expired, Warsaw's superstar, Kevin Ault drilled the game winner. The crowd of 5,500 erupted. That was so much fun. The next stop was the semi-state at the Fort Wayne Coliseum. Laura would be arriving home for her spring break from Cedarville College. Nikki was 8½ months pregnant. But we got tickets for Nikki and Jon, Laura and Travis, and the two of us. Both the afternoon game and the evening championship game were tough games. Warsaw did the job and succeeded from going from the Sweet 16 to the *FINAL FOUR* ! Laura and Travis then changed their plans in order to be able to attend the Final Four at the massive RCA Dome in Indianapolis the following Saturday. It was so delightful to have Laura home (although she seemed to be rather occupied with another visitor...the times we did get to see Laura were wonderful). A friend of ours, Rene Tyson, was able to arrange six tickets for one of the luxury sky boxes at the RCA Dome ! With Nikki being less than two weeks from her due date, it turned out to be ideal. There was food, a restroom, a couch, room to roam around...just about anything a pregnant woman could desire. We all had a really fun time in Indianapolis. I wish we could say that Warsaw won the state championship, but they did not. Kevin Ault scored 31 points in a valiant effort, but they lost. Matt Taylor, the center on Warsaw's basketball team, was awarded the coveted "Trester Award" which goes each year to the young man with the best mental attitude. Kevin Ault was named to the All-Final Four team. He was then named first team All-state by the media and by the coaches. The question remained, who would be Indiana's **MR. BASKETBALL**? I am happy to say that Kevin Ault was selected Indiana's Mr. Basketball and he will wear jersey No. 1 during the annual two-game series of the Indiana All-Stars against the Kentucky All-Stars (one game is in Kentucky and the other game is in Indiana). Pam and I will look forward to going down to that All-Star game in Indianapolis this summer. The Iowa Hawkeyes wrestling team **won the national championship** again this year. No

team in any sport has been as dominant on the national level as Iowa 's wrestling team which has won 14 NCAA team championships in the last 20 years ! Both the men's and the women's basketball teams for Iowa had highly successful seasons. The Iowa ladies won the Big Ten championship and played in the NCAA tournament. The Iowa Hawkeyes men's team finished strong by pounding Purdue in the final game of the season, and then went as far as any Big Ten team did in the NCAA tournament. With the Iowa Hawkeyes expected to win the Big Ten championship in football next fall, things are looking great !

Lakeland Child Evangelism Ministries had an outstanding annual banquet. LCEM has been blessed with increasing opportunities to place evangelistic films strategically in new languages and at new places around the world. I am praying persistently that we will be able to produce a new dramatic evangelistic film even this year. The Lord continues to also bless the ministries of Pleasant View Bible Church. I believe that we are on the verge of some exciting and fruitful times at PVBC.

Pam and I celebrated our 26th wedding anniversary. I regularly, naturally, and truthfully, extol the virtues of my dear wife, and yet, not nearly enough. What a fine lady ! This year's anniversary celebration was very pleasant. Pam had been down helping Nikki and she returned to Warsaw that afternoon. I left work a little early and stopped at the grocery store and selected some beautiful butterfly pork chops. I grilled the pork chops and we had a very quiet and romantic dinner at home. Then we spent a very delightful evening together at home - just the two of us, enjoying and loving each other.

With Luke being born and then being in the neo-natal unit all of last week, I am returning to Warsaw very mindful of the fact that there remains many things undone. I had a stack of unopened mail and numerous unanswered phone messages. But such is life. Each of you is very busy. I know that you have unexpected events and crises in your life. We can rejoice that God is in control and that He cares for us so very much. With Luke's improvement and release from the hospital I am especially mindful of how God hears and answers prayers, and that indeed **GOD IS GOOD !**

Attached are some photocopies of some initial pictures of our grandson. Also attached is Nikki's report about her delivery. Please come visit and/or call and/or write and/or e-mail us.

Sincerely,



Paul, for all of us.

P.S. To those of you who were aware of the difficulties with Luke, Pam and I thank you with all of our being for your prayers for little Luke.

This is Nikki now. Wow, how do I write all of the feelings and thoughts that have gone through me during this past week? I guess I should start at the beginning.

Last Saturday, April 6, 1996, I got up for one of my usual bathroom trips in the middle of the night. I could tell that there was something different. Actually, there had been something different all evening on Friday. But I wasn't sure then that it was in any way connected with labor. I just thought I was feeling extra pressure from Luke dropping. But at 2:40 a.m. I decided that this just might be labor. I wasn't really sure, so I just stayed downstairs and sat in the recliner for about an hour. Then, having had fairly regular (though light) contractions for about an hour, I decided that this was probably the real thing and went upstairs to tell Jon. Needless to say we were both very excited. We laid in bed trying to sleep for over an hour, but just kept talking. Finally a little after 4:30 a.m. we decided that it had been long enough and regular enough that we needed to call his parents so they could get ready and get on the road. We called them a little before 5:00 a.m. I tried then to call Dad at the office, but he wasn't there yet. I kept trying at the office every 10 minutes or so, and then finally called at home sometime around 5:30. With both of our parents notified, we made sure that we had everything ready for the hospital, and then began getting ready for the day. During this time, Jonathan faithfully recorded the time and duration of each contraction. By 7:30 my contractions were about 4 minutes apart, but were still such that I could walk and talk through them. I called Dr. Wickert, and he advised me to wait until they were too strong to talk through. That was very good advice. By 9:30 the contractions were such that I felt rather knocked out of breath about every other one. Mom, Dad and Laura had called to tell us that they were less than one-half hour away, so we decided to call Dr. Wickert again, and then leave for the hospital as soon as my family arrived at our house. It so happened that Dad pulled up while I was on the phone with Dr. Wickert, and Mom and Laura came shortly thereafter. We loaded up the car (including the cooler of popsicles), and finally headed for the hospital at about 10:00 a.m. (making a quick stop at the post office to drop off a bill on the way).