



Kidding Chronicle



10230 State Rd.

Fall 2020

Nashville, MI 49073

Didn't see that coming

March of 2020 blindsided all of us. I know we sure didn't see what was coming. As the Covid-19 hit, schools, churches and businesses started closing their doors. In a very short time, the phone started to ring and emails were coming in with people telling us that they would have to cancel the meetings they had scheduled. Some of these had been on the calendar for over a year. Every camp and vacation Bible school canceled and for the first time in 47 years, we found ourselves without meetings.

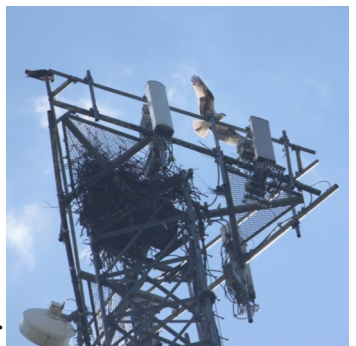
The first thought was to do as everyone else was doing. We could do things using Zoom and perhaps develop some videos that churches could use to reach kids online. We set up a fairly nice place in the basement of the office building. Once again, we were hit with another unexpected. The recording went well but, like most videos, it needed to be edited. We also wanted to add some music, a title and our contact information at the end. That's when we found out that our "old" computer wouldn't run the updated editing software.

Fear not, God had a blessing in store. Sheldon received a phone call from a friend of the ministry saying, "God told me that you need a new computer". Within a few days, a new computer arrived. It is an amazing machine and it is doing a super job. HOWEVER, being it was "new" it wouldn't hook up to our monitors. Again, in just a few days everything was working. Well, almost everything.

The first video was finished. It was just at the five minute mark in length. It took over six hours to upload it. At first we blamed the slow connection on the fact that everyone was working from home. Kids were all at home, mom and dads were at home and Michigan was on a total lockdown. That would explain the poor internet connection. WRONG!

When the connection wasn't any better at three in the morning than at three in the afternoon, Sheldon started making calls. By this time it is the middle of April. The provider assured us that the problem was on their end and they would be replacing a piece of failed equipment ASAP.

Nothing changed. By the first of May, we are finally told that the failed equipment could not be replaced due to the fact that a **bird** had it's nest on the tower. Yes, a bird! An Osprey to be exact. Come to find out that the bird has been there for at least the past five years. But as long as the equipment was working, no effort was made to relocate the nest. By now the bird was on the nest and no repairs could be made for six weeks AFTER the bird leaves. Guess what, here we are into November and we are still without full internet.



To top that off, the closest branch of our bank had closed because of Covid and the next closest is an hour away. So after six weeks at home and inside, we finally made our way to a bank that had a drive through open. They suggested that we use online banking to make deposits. Now that's a plan. Our internet couldn't handle it so we tried using our cell phone. That worked until we ran out of data before the deposit was complete. Yes, an unlimited data plan would solve that problem but without meetings, we were (are) reluctant to commit to a higher bill. So now you know why you haven't heard much from us. But you know what?

GOD IS FAITHFUL! He has kept us healthy and has provided all that we really need. Thank you for your prayers, gifts and encouragement.

So What Have We Been Doing?

We held Camp Papa Nana at our property even though other camps had closed.

We made repairs to the building and grounds that were long overdue.

We hosted about 22 teens for a work week when their other mission trips were canceled.

We did some Goliath's spear presentations here.

We held a building dedication for the new pole building.

We filled in at a local church for two months.

We had three missionaries stay with us.

We got to spend more time with our kids and grandkids.

We mowed our own grass for the first time all summer in the 47 years that we have been married. We have always been gone doing Bible schools and camps. It was kind of nice to actually be home for once during the summer.

And, Sheldon was finally able to have surgery done on his knee.

Building Dedication

On August 16th, we held a building dedication and open house for the finished pole building. We would have loved to have been able to invite all of you to it but because of the restrictions put on us for the number of people allowed in a gathering, we were not able to make it totally open to the public. However, we did have a great turnout with 54 people. We also made arrangements with our cell phone provider to get us enough data so that we were able to stream it on Facebook live. You can still watch it on our Facebook page. Sorry, you won't be able to enjoy the food that way though.

The building had four intended uses;

- ◆ A place to house the motorhome. Yes, it is inside and protected now.
- ◆ A place to stand up Goliath's spear. Yes, it stood there most of the summer.
- ◆ A place to store the life size Nativity and life of Christ display. Yes, it is all in there.
- ◆ A place to store the lawnmower, etc. Yes, it is there as well.



Where are we now?

A good portion of our income has always been through doing meetings. That income totally disappeared. Some individuals who have supported us for years, found themselves unable to continue due to their situations. However, a couple supporters realized the need and actually increased their support, at least temporarily. We realized just how important it has been for us to be debt free and to run the ministry on what we have and not on credit. We can live on less than most people because we don't have debt hanging over our heads. All in all, God has met our needs.

That said, we are entering what is normally our slowest time of year, December and January, but without the money that we would normally have. That could make us very concerned other than the fact that if God can get us through the past few months, He certainly can get us through the next ones. We have found that God will lay things on the hearts of His people at just the right time. Our job is to trust Him and not get anxious about tomorrow. A phone call from a long time friend of the ministry was so encouraging when he said, "Our support of you is not dependent on how many meetings you do." Isn't that just like God? His love for us is not based on how much we do for Him. His love is based on who He is and who we are to Him. We are His children and He knows our needs and He WILL provide. Take courage in that. You are in His care.

As we come to the end of 2020, it is our prayer that all of us will find the new year one of hope and not despair. One of faith and not fear. God is on His throne and all is well.