

UPDATE ON TIMMY CONNOR

October 27th, 2009

GREETINGS!

This is late coming out because we wanted to finish the trip up to Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia and be able to report on the results of that. AND the week after that visit we all came down with the H1N1 virus (we think) and are still shaking that off, so it's held things up a bit.

Before we get too far, we want to take the time to thank God for His many blessings to us since we wrote last; they've been something, and I'll detail them for you as this Update unfolds.

SHRINERS HOSPITAL

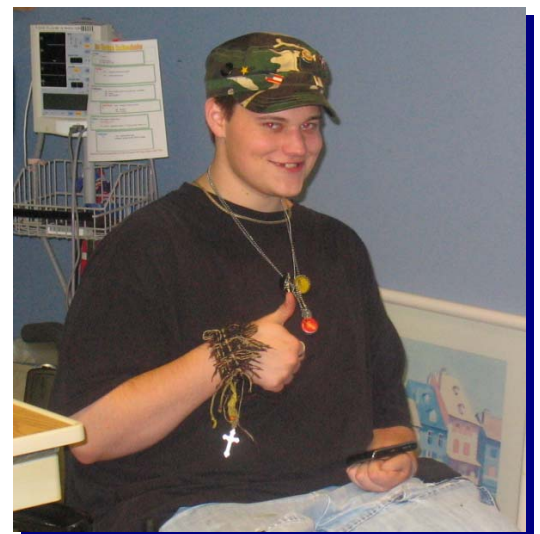
In case you didn't know, the Shriners invited us (Timmy and Tim the Dad) to go to their Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, even to the extent of paying for the plane fare, and providing lodging for me while Timmy was undergoing the testing they had for him. It was a pretty impressive trip. We got our reservations set up well ahead of time, so it was possible to get seats immediately behind one of the bulkheads, which meant we had more legroom than we would normally have had. The unexpected part of that was that the seat arms were fixed, so Tim and two flight attendants (who will likely never be the same again) got to lift a 215 pound kid over the arms of the seat and plunk him down in it. Timmy was a lot better this time than he was when Jonathan and I lifted him up into our pickup truck – this time he didn't pray out loud at all, and kept his whimpering to a minimum – it was great! Of course, I'm not real small myself, and with both me and Timmy shoe-horned into seats that were designed for an undernourished dyspeptic, the poor guy by the window was about 8 inches thinner by the time we got off the plane in Philadelphia.

Timmy's roommate in the hospital was a 19 year old from Tennessee, who is apparently permanently black-listed in his home town because he (and his dad) are Florida Gator fans.



He and Timmy had a good time together.

Research staff at the hospital redid the sensation testing that had last been done in March. The rehab people also worked through a number of tests and approaches with Timmy, including two that you might find interesting. First, they he was fitted with a couple of full length leg braces and helped to walk – using the parallel bars and a lot of help from the therapist – about 30 feet. It was pretty exhausting and would require a lot of practice to continue. They also had him bicycle about a mile and half (sitting) on a Stim Bike, which uses electrodes on the proper muscles required for a pedaling motion. That was the first active exercises **those** muscles have gotten in about nine months! What was the final result? The hospital asked that he come back for a recheck in about six months. My guess is that they feel the therapy and activities he's doing at Lifetime and at home are providing what he needs, and he should continue in those.



The hospital obviously caters to children with spinal cord and brain injuries, and Timmy was actually one of the less-injured ones there (I only saw a couple of other manual wheelchairs, the rest

were powered. There was half a floor devoted to a giant game room for the kids (I've included a picture looking down from the floor above), where I observed the first Wheelchair Baseball game I've ever seen. A couple of relatives provided the pitching and catching, and the kids batted with everything from a whiffle bat to a ping-pong paddle to an arm brace. I can tell you this: until you've watched an 11-year-old in a 350 pound motorized wheelchair trying to slide sideways into home plate, you ain't seen nuthin'. You couldn't have paid me enough to play catcher in that game. Timmy also provided a half hour magic show for about 25 kids and parents one night, and the response was pretty enthusiastic. He's getting good at the close-up magic, and we want to thank Greg Solomon for introducing Timmy to it and for his encouragement.

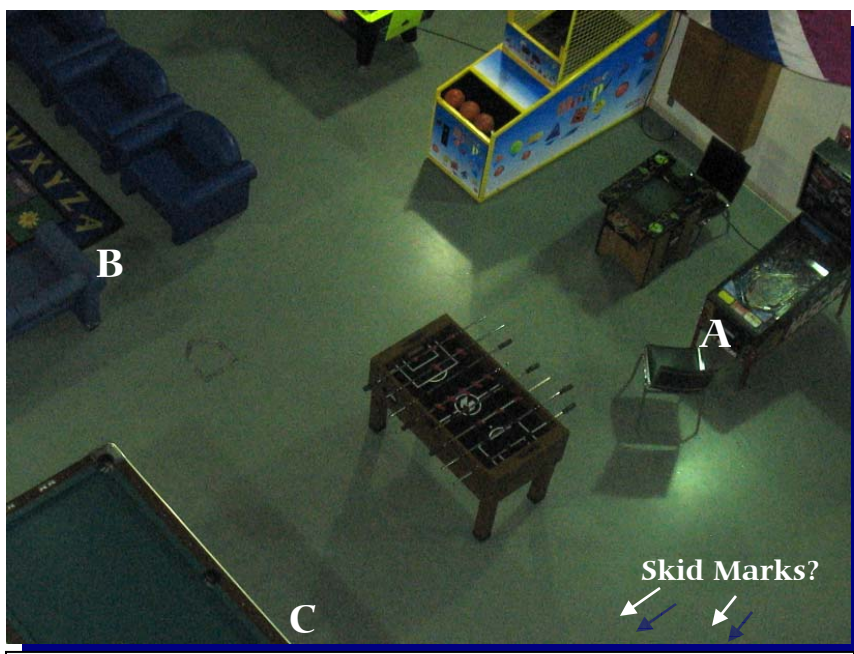
By the way, Philadelphia is quite a city, although we didn't get to see much of it because of the short time we were there. Dick Johnson told us to be sure to stop by Geno's and get a Philly Cheese Steak sub, so we had the cabby drive us by there on the way back to the airport. Alas, we discovered too late that you can't wait an hour to eat the doggone things, as the cheese hardens up and produces a product of considerable gastronomic interest. The cheese fries, after cooling off, strongly resembled a yellow scalp with French fried hair sticking out; and while the subs were toothsome, they would have been a lot better if we'd eaten them hot. A memorable meal, though. Thanks Dick!

SPORTSABILITY AT CARNEY ISLAND

Believe it or not, there's a group sponsoring multiple events around the state providing sports activities for people with disabilities, fittingly called SportsAbility.



We've been looking forward to the one scheduled for Marion County this year, and ended up spending the day at Carney Island on Lake Weir. I've attached some pictures, as they provided boat rides, archery, horseback riding, shooting, ski-boarding(!), kayaking, and a number of other activities. There must have



This is looking down into part of the game room at Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia. The Wheelchair Baseball game took place with first, second, and third bases at items marked A, B, and C(!).



been over 1000 people attending, and it was quite a day. Timmy tried his hand at shooting, archery, and the boat ride; but Tim the Dad vetoed the water skiing and kayaking (what a wet blanket!). The kid also got a lot of exercise wheeling around through the grass and sand!



As a side note, we decided to donate the Hoyer Lift (that was kindly donated to us) to the Therapeutic Riding Center north of Ocala. Timmy has gotten so good at moving himself around that we really haven't needed it, and the folks at the riding center handle dozens of people with injuries ranging from moderate to severe. We ended up going up and doing a workshop on how to use it with the volunteer staff, and it looks

like they will benefit from having it available on the site. Our Scout troop will be finishing a service project for the Center later in November as part of the Disabilities Merit Badge; it looks like we'll be painting and repairing one of their buildings.

I almost forgot – do you think Timmy should go ahead and get a tattoo of a zipper placed at the top of his surgery scar? I drew it there so you could get the full effect... Whaddya think?



STILL LEARNING TO TRUST THE LORD

If you've been reading these updates, you know that God has provided our family special grace to get us through the trauma and heartache of Tim's injuries. Even the situation itself is an answer to our family's prayer to be used by Him to bring revival to His people, and we're content to be used that way. But Barb and I still have our biggest problems in trusting Him for ongoing provision, even though He's been absolutely faithful in providing for us. All of us have those areas of our lives where we don't trust Him or wait on Him, and ours is in the area of finances. We've gotten serious about approaching Him to 1) help us with this weak spot, and 2) provide for our needs. We want to share with you how He has been faithful to us. Over the past month, since we've been approaching Him about teaching us to believe Him to provide financially, here's what's happened:

- We've personally heard from at least 40 people who are continuing to pray for Timmy and for us
- We've had folks who have specifically been praying that our business would prosper
- In a workshop we offered, enough money came in to cover a significant business expense we were facing
- Several business opportunities are beginning to look more promising, and we are continuing to seek God's blessing in those

- We received from my mother and brother a “care package” with several months worth of support products for Timmy that are normally significant expenses. Part of that package included about 10 bars of soap... do you think that means anything?
- We’ve had our other expenses for the Philadelphia trip covered by the church
- We’ve received a check for \$1000 for ongoing expenses – which included the order to “do some fun stuff with it”
- Money for fuel for the cars has come in
- We received the money to purchase the golf cart that Timmy has been ‘trying out’; it makes it possible for him to move around the property
- He’s answered specific prayer when we have had what looked like significant issues with one of our vehicles, and made the problem “go away” without further incident

So you see, God continues to intervene personally and day by day with us, and we think you should hear about these things and see what He is providing. Thank you too for your willingness to be used by Him and to remain so faithful in your prayers.

IN GOD WE TRUST?

Have you ever wondered why the folks who founded the country chose the motto “In God We Trust”? They could have done it to sound noble, much like some businesses do today when they choose cutesy sayings and mission statements. But if you think about what they had just come through, it puts a different light on things and makes it much more serious. In 1789, when the Constitution was put into place to guide the law and administration of the country, they had just finished a war with the most powerful nation on earth. They had fought with a foreign army on their own soil, and enemy ships blocking colonial harbors. They had faced impossible odds, but from the first, had pledged “their sacred honors” resting in the Lord Sabaoth to protect them. Of course, the outcome is known, but the details of the battles have been lost in the mists of time and doubt. But make no mistake, there was no doubt in their minds as to Whom had delivered the country. Do you think we have the faith today to put our country back into the hands of God? Do we know Him well enough to understand the power that He has, and to believe Him when He promises:



...and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14

There are a lot of us in this country who see what is happening in Washington and around the country, and instead of following the details of that promise written above, wring our hands and angrily demand justice and try to swing the minds of those in power. We shouldn’t renege on our responsibilities for civic duty, but even more we should be like those who preceded us, and humbling ourselves cry out to the God Who delivered us before. Do we believe He can deliver us from the calamities that continue to sweep the country?



A SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING

You have read before one of the passages of Scripture that the Lord has particularly brought to our attention as a family:

“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High; and call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.” Psalm 50:14-15.

Well, here's what we're going to do to try to flesh out that "sacrifice of Thanksgiving" and also to honor God for the way He has carried us through. On the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend we're hosting a breakfast all morning – biscuits, sausage and bacon, hash browns, and Narnian Eggs (our own concoction – **they're so good that if you put a dab of 'em on your forehead your tongue will slap your brains out trying to get at 'em**), and maybe even breakfast casserole. And all of you who have been involved in helping our family through your prayers, time, encouragement, and gifts are invited to come on by and help yourself. We'll start serving about 8:00 AM and keep going until noon – or even later if people keep showing up. You can hang around the place, talk, play ping pong or badminton, or just plain visit; but this is to show our gratitude to you for your faithfulness to us throughout this trial. I know that lots of you won't be able to come (Good grief, some of you are in Ukraine and Indonesia, and I figure that's probably a bit too far for a Saturday morning breakfast), but you can join us in spirit, and be assured that we will be thinking of you and asking God to extend His hand of blessing for your willingness to help us. Saturday, November 28th, 2009 at the Connor homestead. Email us if you need directions! timconnor@truevine.net or call us at (352) 629-3793. Let us know if you're coming so we've got the vittles hot and ready!

CLOSE UP MAGIC

As I mentioned earlier, Timmy has been working pretty hard on what they call "close up magic". He's gotten pretty good at it, and was recently invited to do a show for the residents of a local rehab facility. Moving around from table to table and doing

magic with each of the small groups, he ended up being followed around by one lady (about 90 years old) who was

determined to figure out "how he was doing that!". She never did!

Most of his illusions are done with cards and coins, and he's gotten so slick with shuffling cards that I don't want to play canasta with him any more. In the picture to the left the gentleman in the hat is busy shuffling an "invisible deck" which he then tossed back to Timmy, who then proceeded to take a real deck out of the bag and fanned it out to show the "imaginary card" the man had picked as the only one turned backwards in the deck. It was a good day and one that provided a lot of enjoyment both for Timmy,

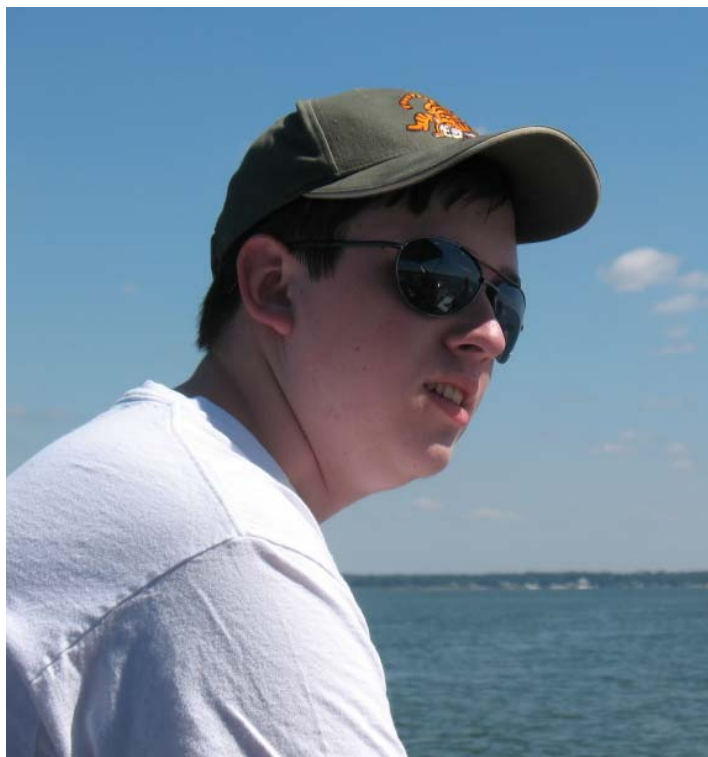
me, and for the people at Hawthorne Village.



THANKS FOR YOUR PERSISTENCE

As a family, we want to be sure to thank you again for your persistence in prayer for us and for Timmy. A lot of really good things are coming out of this whole mess, and your faithfulness has helped bring God's favor on our efforts. We hope you know how much we appreciate you, and ask you to continue in your prayers for us. Thanks!

Tim the Dad



Looking cool on Lake Weir

