

SMALL CLOUD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PRESENTS . . . **CANDLE LIGHTS**

"With God all things are possible." Mark 10:27

June—August 2004

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INTRODUCTION

Well, it's catchup time! As you have probably noticed, our newsletters have been coming out later and later; therefore we decided to mail this issue with last quarter's and get caught up once and for all! At least we will be on track for the beginning of the new school year!

Graduation ceremonies took place on Thursday, June 10th. Damares Pacheco was promoted to the seventh grade, and Jazzmin Pluto graduated from the eighth. We are very proud of both of these students, who worked very hard at their studies.

Jazzmin has a very inspiring story to tell. Be sure to read about her accomplishments and what God has done in her life.

With school out for the summer, Shawn and Margie Seely took a car trip to Vancouver, Canada. Christian and Sandy Nelson looked forward to getting a lot done during the summer—attending a four-day church conference, taking a youth group to Yosemite National Park for a week, making improvements around the school, and generally getting everything in order.

June 24th. Christian went to work with his father-in-law (Art Schendel), who is a general contractor. About 9:00 in the morning, Sandy received a call from her dad saying that Christian had gotten hurt on the job and had been taken by ambulance to the UCD Medical Center in Sacramento. Art recommended that she pick up her mom and head for the hospital at once! He would supply the details when they arrived.

Gretchen Schendel received the call and immediately prepared to accompany Sandy to the hospital. Not knowing what had happened, they prepared themselves for the worst case scenario. Did Christian have head injuries? Would he be crippled for life? All they could do was pray.

Arriving at the hospital, Sandy and Gretchen found Art in the waiting room. With tears in his eyes he explained what had happened. A very large refrigerator (about 300-400 pounds) had a defect, and he and Christian were attempting to repair it. In order to do so, they had the appliance tipped up slightly on one side. Christian, lying on the floor, tried to find access to the defective area and opened the refrigerator door. Seeing he couldn't reach the area in this way, he closed the door.

Then it happened! Looking up, Christian saw that the refrigerator was beginning to fall. He reached up, trying
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"14 POUNDS OF PRAYERS!"

by Jazzmin Pluto, age 14



Hello, everyone. Thank you for coming. For those of you that do not know me, my name is Jazzmin Pluto. Wow! What a year it has been! Where do I start?

I just have to say that God has blessed me tremendously. When I first started coming to Small Cloud, I thought I would never make it. Soon I found out that, with God, everything is possible. God has made such a difference in my life. I am now closer to God and I have true faith in Him.

The one thing I asked God for was to be healthy again. A couple of years ago I was diagnosed with a rare sickness called nephritic syndrome. The sickness was very hard on me and it caused me to be in the hospital for days at a time. It also made me very thin, and my body did not want to take in food. Still, today, I have some troubles with my health. I was only 98 pounds when I started here at Small Cloud; now I weigh 112, and that is 14 pounds of prayers that have been answered! God truly blessed me.

However, this speech is not for me. It is for my wonderful teachers—Mrs. Seely and Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. God gave a special gift to you and your children. The teachers and staff at Small Cloud are wonderful, caring, and loving Christian people. They have helped me through good times and some not-so-good ones. Through them I have come closer to my Lord. I thank you, my teachers, for your instruction and your love.

My final thought: Remember that God works in mysterious ways and He loves us all. Just imagine what God's love can do for you. Therefore, if you pray, He will answer. So listen!

Editor's note: This is Jazzmin's eighth-grade graduation speech, given on June 10, 2004, before family, friends, and staff. We, too, are very grateful to God for what He has done in Jazzmin's life and pray that she will continue to follow His guidance.

INTRODUCTION (con't from page 1)

to hold it; but it was impossible. Realizing it was going to fall on him, he attempted to push himself out of the way. He partially succeeded, but the refrigerator crashed down on his right hip.

Art, standing a few feet away, and talking to the manufacturer of the refrigerator on a cell phone, saw what was happening, but could not intervene. In his mind Christian was under that refrigerator; yet, miraculously, he wasn't! We can only guess that the refrigerator must have bounced when it hit Christian's hip and then landed with a crash on the granite floor. The appliance missed his head! It missed his chest! He could have been killed instantly, but he wasn't. The pain was unbearably intense, but his life had been spared. X-rays showed several fractures of the pelvis, as well as a fractured sacrum. Strong pain medications were administered.

Lying flat on his back in the hospital, Christian needed help for every movement from the waist down.



"Could you lift my leg and move it in toward the center," he would ask.

"Would you read just the pillow under the other leg?"

Sandy was kept very busy tending to his needs. Not only did she spend the day with him, but she spent every night there too. Sleeping on a couple of chairs wasn't too comfortable, but she was just happy the nurses allowed her to stay in his room! A few times someone else would stay with Christian for a while so Sandy could run home for a shower and clean clothes.

Strong faith in God carried both of them through a very difficult two weeks. How thankful they were for the prayers, cards, visits, flowers—even a cookie bouquet—from many wonderful friends. One good friend even set up a website for Christian!

The doctors were not sure what was best to do. One day Christian would be prepped for surgery (blood thinners discontinued, food withheld, etc.), only to be told that it would be done the next day. The doctor wanted to come in and talk with him first, was the explanation.

At last the doctor did come in. Taking all the time necessary to answer Christian's many questions, he explained the dilemma the doctors were in. By operating they could make the x-rays look

A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

Knock! Knock! Who could that be? "Do you remember me?"

"Not really," replied my husband.

"Mathew!" I exclaimed, coming to the door. "How are you doing?"

It was indeed Mathew, a former Small Cloud student. He and his sister, Angela, had attended during the 2000-2001 school year. We invited Mathew in and had a nice little visit.

It turned out that Mathew is a new daddy! His little daughter was about two weeks old at the time and he had come to say goodbye, since he and his family were moving to Idaho.

Mathew had wanted to see the teachers but hadn't found anyone at the school. When we told him that Christian and Sandy Nelson lived in the house next to the school, he decided to return and surprise Sandy, who was home alone.

I called our daughter and said, "Sandy, someone is coming by to see you." "Who?" she wanted to know.

"I can't tell you," I said. "But I'll let you talk to him."

Without revealing his identity, Mathew spoke to Sandy, who had no clue who she was talking to.

Shortly thereafter, Christian arrived at our home. He, too, was surprised to see Mathew, not having seen him since before the Nelsons got married.

Meanwhile Sandy awaited the arrival of this mystery person. Needless to say, she was very happy to see Mathew again. She especially appreciated the encouragement she received from him when he said: "Just keep on doing what you are doing. Some will listen; some won't." He expressed his thanks for what Small Cloud had done for him.

Several days later Sandy, Christian, and Margie Seely visited Mathew, his wife, Levita, and their new little princess named Faith (see picture above). We wish them God's blessings in their new home. — Gretchen Schendel



better, he said. But whether or not it would make Christian feel better in the long run was debatable. The surgery was a major one and involved risks.

Finally the doctors decided to put off the surgery and see if the fractures would heal on their own. Physical therapy was begun and the painful process of getting Christian mobile again began—first by sitting up, then getting into a wheelchair, then using a walker. Dragging one foot behind him, he was able to put some pressure on the other leg. In just under two weeks he was sent home.

By the third week of July, Christian was walking very well with his walker.

Rapidly he graduated to a cane. And then . . . the cane was gone and he was walking again on his own! God has indeed been very good.

Recently Christian has discontinued his blood thinner and substituted a homeopathic medication. He is doing very well, but we solicit your prayers for his complete recovery. ■

PLEASE PRAY FOR . . .

two of our former students (Brian and Branden Albertson), who are currently stationed in Baghdad, Iraq.