



## SCHOCKEY'S CHRISTMAS LETTER

WITH SEASONS GREETINGS AND THE JOY IN SERVING OUR LORD

December of 2009

### LOST & FOUND

**LOST:** Peaceful, simple, and calm lives of our Mexican friends living in Juarez. Replaced by violence, fear and death. (Close to 3000 murders this year.)

**LOST:** Friends, (one shot at a gas station getting gas, one while dropping his son off at school) family members of our students, (a cousin shot down in front of his house, two sons of one student killed a block away from home, kidnapped dad, failed kidnap of wife), and many local young men to the violent drug wars of two drug cartels. Along with that is a higher crime rate in the local barrios (neighborhoods). Fear and death rule. No one wants to step up and be a witness, no matter how bad the crime. If they do, there is a good chance they and their family would be dead next. Therefore, robbing, kidnapping, and extorting money has become a big problem in most neighborhoods.

**LOST:** Three vehicles in one month! In September, on our way back from a conference in California, the transmission on our car went out. Marie stayed at a rest stop close to the AZ/NM border while Nolan hitched a ride to Deming, NM and then another ride to El Paso. He slept a few hours and hooked the trailer Colin loaned us to the Dodge 15 passenger van and headed out. One hour out of town, three hours short of Marie, the transmission went out in that van. We were able to borrow a van and get Marie from the rest stop 24 hours after breaking down. Just after getting the vehicles out of the shop, we were in the minivan headed to the Copper Canon with one of our student's families to see a family we had placed there. Our minivan started smoking about 40 minutes out of Juarez. We pulled over to get our visas and saw that the main seal had gone out. We had to turn back and go the next day in one of the partially fixed vehicles.

**LOST:** Short term mission teams. Most mission teams are bypassing us to go into Mexico or other countries due to the killings. One can't blame them. I am not sure I would send my teen unless I was going and knew the in-country missionaries very well and the Lord gave me peace about it. That is the situation right now. We are still having small teams of 5 to 10 so we can stay low key. So far no mission groups have been bothered or targeted. The difficulty for us and other ministries is that we are still helping

the rehab centers, orphanages, abused victim homes, old folks homes, disabled, widows, single moms, and other outreaches. The groups that used to come brought enough donations and blessings to help feed and care for these people and ministries long after they left. Since that is no longer the case, many are suffering.

**FOUND:** Open hearts and desire for hope. Each time we go to the plaza downtown or city parks we have 10 to 15 people come to know Jesus. When people are dying around you, you feel afraid knowing you could be next, and you know your days may be numbered. You look for hope. The harvest is ripe and the laborers are few.

**FOUND:** A deeper walk and understanding that our time on this earth is short. Erick, a student, experienced this when he was picked up by police on his way to class. He was waiting for another student and had to relieve himself. With no bathroom close, he went by a post and bush. The police saw him, stopped and asked where he was going and what was on his back. He showed them his backpack which had the computer we give students to study with. They assumed he had stolen it and loaded him in their truck with another guy who had been caught stealing a car battery. They took them out to the desert. The police took the other guy's shoes and jacket and told him to run. (We don't know what happened to that man...) They asked Erick for his credentials, and then refused each one as not credible. They asked him for money which he said he did not have "for them". They said, "we saw \$10 in your wallet." He said, "yes, but it's not for you." If he was a Bible student as he said he was, they wanted to know where his Bible was and he told them it was in the computer. They told him to prove it, so he set it up, pushed the button, and the battery was dead! They had seen his notebook full of scripture as proof. His calmness and lack of fear confounded them. Finally, they said he could go. He reached for his computer and they said he couldn't have it, but when the boss went to touch it, he jerked back his hand as if it had been burned and told Erick to get it and get out of there. Erick went to get his bike and they said he couldn't have it, but again changed their minds. He arrived 15 minutes late to class with his bike, computer, money and life. Praise God!

**FOUND:** Our own reality T.V. When driving to a student's home one day with his family, we heard a sound like a car backfiring. To the left,

a car was coming toward us, jumped a concrete median and several parts of the car scattered in the road. As it crossed in front of us, we saw the bullet holes. It hit the sidewalk to our right and crashed into a building. When we looked back our student, Lorenzo, could see a man bloodied and slumped over and a woman bent over. Lorenzo was saying, "hurry, let's go", because we weren't sure that whoever was shooting was done. Our first thought was of a scene in a movie. Great effects, but it didn't seem real. We are desensitized by so much death on T.V., movies, news, and locally, that the reality doesn't set in at first. Then it kicked in: a man just died, and possibly a lady.... maybe even some kids. Did they know Jesus, or were they headed to hell? That was the reality. Lost souls!

**FOUND:** Homeless people, travelers from South America, and elderly at the downtown plaza, a home for elderly, a home for the mentally ill, drug rehabs, and orphanages. These are the places we take our students to do outreach and ministry.

**FOUND:** 8X18 storage trailer. We hired a towing company to move it so that no one would get hurt. After it was loaded the man said nothing but threw a large strap over the top of the container nailing Nolan in the head with a large metal hook. It left a gash and a headache. We asked the boss for a discount so Nolan could see a doctor and have it stitched, if needed. He replied, "we don't even know anything happened and my worker said there wasn't even any blood!" Wow! So much for no one getting hurt!

### WANTED

Prayer for continued protection, the places we go and the things we do. It is obvious that the Lord is protecting us and we thank you for your prayers. Each day we don't know if the other is ok until we meet at home in El Paso .

**WANTED:** Garage or carport with tool room for supplies and tools.



**WANTED** : Chairs and benches for Ricardo's and Juan's churches, and tables and chairs or picnic type tables with benches from Sam's for the Servant Senders base.

**WANTED** : To sell or trade our 96 International flat nose 66 passenger bus, automatic, air brakes for \$5000 or trade for a Dodge 15 passenger van. Bus runs great, has the seats. It is in good shape, but not safe for us to use in Mexico.

**WANTED** : Prayers for wisdom on advising our students when they ask such things as: "Nolan, I took my van to a mechanic and he stole my alternator, transmission, and starter and sold them. He was trying to get my tires, but I got them back on and pushed the van back home. He has robbed others of parts saying he is sending them out to be fixed. Should I press charges or just cut my losses and look for parts to fix it?" While he was getting his van, the mechanic was gone and many others who had been robbed by the mechanic were there also, stealing tools and wrecking the place. Pressing charges could put him and his family at risk of death if this mechanic/thief is part of the cartel or a gang.

### **NOLAN**

Has had a fulfilling year and is grateful for the ministry the Lord has given us and the fruit we are seeing three years into the program. His weeks are full of teaching the Bible in an eight hour class on Mondays, and by example the rest of the week. How is his Spanish, some of you may ask? Well, his speaking is still limited to food! It is still a mystery to me and others how he and the students work several days a week together with him speaking English and the students Spanish. Yet they seem to understand each other and the projects get done! He continues to be the jokester we all know and love. The students and their kids do not see his age, they only see this big multi-talented kid, who loves the Lord and serves God and that they would like to be like him some day. They love learning and studying the Bible and he loves teaching it. Usually within that week they experience what they just learned and come back the next week with a testimony of how God used them or worked in their lives. A comment from Juan recently really blessed Nolan. Juan is one of our graduates who is pastoring a church. His family used to spend every weekend at his mother's, drinking the weekend away together. After a brother saw a video one evening at Juan's church on drug

and alcohol abuse and how it affects families, he stated that the movie was about him. The next weekend he stood up in front of his family and apologized to his children, wife and family and got saved. That started a Sunday afternoon Bible study. Sharing last week, Juan stated that since there is no one unsaved in this weekend group of 50 or so, they are now going out and doing evangelism as a group. WOW!

The difficulty in his year, aside from the students and the attacks on their families, was the death of his mom, Ruth Ellen Schockey. We had just returned from three weeks in Costa Rica with Curtis, Chelly and our four granddaughters. We were home one day and left the next day for a wedding in Albuquerque, NM and then on to a mission conference in California. On the way, Nolan's sister called and said that his mom was being airlifted to Colorado Springs with a bleed in her head. We stopped at the wedding, took a picture, hugged the bride and headed to Colorado. Tests revealed that she had bled on both sides of the brain and would not recover. Four days later she went to be with the Lord. Nolan spent days with his sister and brothers sorting through the lives of his parents, logging in many hours copying pictures and deciding what to do with a lifetime of memories and treasures. Please keep Nolan and his family in prayer as this is not an easy task.

He is getting his dad's tractor. He hopes to move and level some ground to build a carport and garage for his tools and a place to sort donated items before taking them across the border. Please continue to pray for him, his knees, his health and safety. The students are constantly worried about us and our safety. We tell them the Bible assures us that we are in the hands of God and no one can touch us unless God allows it and if He does, it is part of His plan. We accept that plan. It doesn't hurt to add that we pray that anyone who tries to mess with us will get a glimpse of the angels God has placed around us to protect us.

### **MARIE**

Has had a full year of wonderful blessing and difficult trials. I continue to love being a missionary and being called to the Mexican people who, for the most part, are loving, caring, generous, and open. Teaching has brought much joy, growth and pain. Joy, in teaching and seeing results; growth, in watching the students and their wives step up to serve and not be content with what they know but to seek more. They constantly challenge me in my walk as they seek ways to serve the Lord

in the midst of their difficulties, pain and loss. Recently, when Samuel and Ludy's two sons were murdered just before Christmas, they decided to get out of town for Christmas and went south to stay with family. In the midst of their suffering, they used that time to visit people and share Christ's love in that little community. Pain: in walking through death, attacks, threats and dealing with people who are living in fear for good reason.

This has been a year of letting go for me. I've had to learn to move on emotionally from those we have removed from the program for various reasons, allowing God to continue the work he started. I've had to learn to let go of keeping order in my house since donations, supplies, and tools seem to take over and order is not possible. I've had to learn to let go of what cannot be done in a day or a week due to things out of my control and to be ok with continuing the work on another day..... such as this letter! Probably the most difficult thing since losing Caleb has been letting go of another son and the desire to see him grow up, love God, serve God, and marry a godly woman who wants to serve the Lord with him, and eventually have children who they will teach to love that same Lord. It was, after all, my dream and I must let go and allow God to work as only He can do, without my interference. Please continue to pray for my safety and ability to "let go and let God" work in my life.

### **CURTIS**

Curtis and his wife, Chelly, and four sweet daughters are enjoying Costa Rica, learning Spanish, teaching God's word, counseling and growing in grace and patience. We had three great weeks with them in December and had major withdrawals when we got home.

### **COLIN**

Colin is working in Colorado Springs as an electrician with Nolan's old company. He just bought a house and plays a lot of video games. He lives with Jacque, his girlfriend, and has a dog. We're pretty sure he has post traumatic stress which affects his sleep and health. We are happy to have contact with him and thankful to have so many of you joining us in prayer for him.

*Thank you all for your encouragement, prayers and support. As we enter a new year, find things to be grateful for and be more forgiving, life is short, make it count. In His service, Nolan & Marie*

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