

GLOBAL SCHOOL OF SPORTS MINISTRY

NEWS BRIEF

AUGUST 2020

NEW NORMAL

"AND THOSE WHO KNOW YOUR NAME PUT THEIR TRUST IN YOU, FOR YOU, O LORD, HAVE NOT FORSAKEN THOSE WHO SEEK YOU." PSALMS 9:10

Wow, what a season we have all been navigating through! This year has been personally challenging for me. As many of you know I have faced some health challenges that seemed to come one after another. I was first hospitalized in January for acute diverticulitis, and now finding a new way of eating to prevent future flare-ups. Then, shortly after, I found out I have a new spot of Melanoma, a form of malignant skin cancer on my ear that would require surgery. Because I have had more than one I have been labeled as metastatic. That was a really hard word to hear. Now I am facing my new normal of having skin checks every 3 months for the next 2 years. Then followed by the Covid outbreak I found myself, like many others, asking God why is all of this happening? And then I was reminded of this verse in Psalms.... **"those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you."** God's words encouraged me that no matter what, because I put my trust in Him, He will always be with me and never forsake me.

HE HAS A PURPOSE FOR EVERYTHING AND WITH EVERY HARDSHIP, BLESSING FOLLOWS.

So after much hardship, in April we found out we were expecting a special little miracle. **Mike and I are so happy to share that we are expecting a little girl, Charly Wren, in early December.** Wow, God is so good! After so much prayer, God blessed us with this precious little one. Our older girls are soooooo excited about this new addition to our family. They are going to be such amazing sisters and such a help to mama!



**"FOR THIS CHILD WE HAVE PRAYED"
1 SAMUEL 1:27.**

**I SHARE ALL OF THIS TO
REMIND YOU:**

- 1) YOU ARE NOT ALONE**
- 2) GOD WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU OR FORSAKE YOU**
- 3) THAT THROUGH EVERY HARDSHIP, BLESSING FOLLOWS TO THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL AND PUT THEIR TRUST IN JESUS!**

So take courage, keep choosing Jesus! I am seeing this in our students and staff as they navigate this difficult time. Hearing their stories about how they are still answering the call **"To GO and make disciples of all nations"** despite the circumstances is so encouraging.

Next month, Sequoi will be sharing some of these stories and also introducing a new program that I just know God is going to use to encourage and support our students in a new innovative way! Can't wait for you to hear what God is doing around the world!



DAVID LEADING A SUNDAY SERVICE IN KITEZA LUGAZI

This brings me to a special part of this News Brief, the second installment of **RUSS'S REFLECTIONS** I love hearing my Dad's experiences and the circumstances God has walked him through that turned into the greatest blessings on the other side. It was because of his faithfulness and the choice to persevere no matter what. He will also be sharing stories of other unsung heroes that I know will encourage and challenge you in your faith. So, over the next several updates we will include an installment of **"Russ's Reflections"** that we pray will ignite a fire in you to pick up your cross daily and follow Him without hesitation. If there is one thing that God has taught me over my 41 years is that following after Him and leaping out on faith is the hardest thing you will ever do, but man....the reward of following Jesus everyday despite how scary decisions may be - the outcome is life altering! **I challenge you in this series to really reflect on how God is challenging you to step out in faith and to find the strength that you will only find in Him to act in immediate obedience and JUMP!**

We are so thankful for each of you and what a huge impact your love, prayers and financial support are having on the Kingdom. **We couldn't follow after God's calling to "GO" without you as part of our GSSM team.** We are still continuing our initiative of providing extra support to our staff, partners and students on the ground during this difficult time through our Coronavirus Emergency Fund. Our goal is to help those in greatest need so that they can continue ministering to others. Please see our response card or go online to www.globalssm.org and click the tab DONATE to give as you are led.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT AS THE LORD DIRECTS YOU. MUCH LOVE TO YOU!

IN HIM<><
Alyssa Carr Mahone
Executive Director
Alyssa Carr Mahone

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“Reflections”

In the first of a series of stories that will be sent to you as a supplement to GSSM's regular updates, I pray that your heart will be touched and inspired as you read about some incredible events that may even cause a few tears to tumble down your cheeks one moment and the next finding you attempting to hold back a desire to jump out of your chair and shout, “Praise the Lord!”

The array of stories that I (Russ Carr) will be sharing with you are all true and ones that the Lord has allowed me to witness and/or experience. So hold on, buckle your seat belt and we will get off on our first adventure. It's all about heroes.

Did You Ever Want To Be A Hero or Heroine?

Perhaps as a child you wanted to be like Superman, Spiderman or Wonder Woman or any number of others that captured your imagination. The Bible, of course, is full of heroes. In today's world we are also presented with a number of special people who have earned that badge that plainly says it all: **Hero**.

Recently the news on television carried an incredible act of heroism when a young football player came upon a building that was literally being consumed by fire. This young athlete looked up and raced to the edge of the inferno as the screams of a mother holding a child in her arms, and in an attempt to save her little one, threw the child off of the two story balcony in hopes that someone would catch the baby. The young football player dove for the child and made the catch of his life saving the infant. Then, as this young hero looked up to look for the mother, he was horrified to watch her being consumed by the fire and die.

Two brave people. One giving up her life to try and save her baby; the other catching the child and preventing it from serious injury or death.

Rewind to another tragic event in Uganda

Just a few years ago, KONY's rebels in Northern Uganda near the city of Gulu and close to the Sudan border, were abducting children in outlying villages to build their army. Their goal was to overthrow the Ugandan government in power and return control of the country to the north, the home of the disposed dictator, Adi Amin.

The rebels abduction plan was simple and brutal. Rebels would surround a small village at night, awaken the villagers and force them at gunpoint to the center of the village. Once there the rebel soldiers would separate the people into two groups. Adults on one side and facing them, their children on the other side. Children were then ordered to line-up opposite their parents. Once this was done the child in line was given a gun and

ordered to kill their parent opposite them. If a child failed to do so a rebel soldier would put a pistol to the child's head and told them to shoot or they would die. If the child could not bring himself to shoot... Bang! The child dropped and died with a bullet to the head. The rebel soldiers then killed the parent if the child could not do so. Next in line was a mother of a young boy. The frightened youngster was terrified. His mother told him, actually ordered him, to kill her. It was the only way she knew how to save her son's life. Tearfully and with some help from the rebel soldiers standing next to him, he shot and killed his mother.

Months later the boy escaped from Kony's army and when our staff was counseling a number of traumatized children and adults, the story of this heroic woman was told amidst a flood of tears of sorrow and anguish. A life given to save another.

The rebels, incidentally, after killing the adults and some of the children, would set fire to the village and poison the well so that there would not be a place for anyone to return should they somehow escape from Kony's army.

We will end our first series of "Reflections" with a story of a third hero, who just happens to be my father.

My real father's name was Carl Russell Hammond. My last name was changed to my stepfather's family name, Carr, after my parents divorced and my mother remarried.

The birthplace of my real father was in a small town in Pennsylvania called Bolivar located somewhat near Johnstown. He was educated in a private school in Virginia and attended college at Virginia Military Institute (VMI). While at VMI my father played football for the Keydets during a time VMI's schedule included a number of the larger schools like the University of Georgia, University of Tennessee, etc. He was named to the All-American team of his day and was Co-Captain of VMI's football squad. He was a lineman and considered big in those days at 5' 10", 230 lbs.

Upon finishing his education at VMI he accepted a position with an international banking firm with headquarters in Boston.

On his way home from work one evening he encountered a disaster in the making. A two story home was totally engulfed in flames. The fire department had not yet arrived and neighbors gathered to try and put out the fire but only had a small garden hose. My father stopped to see if he could help. As he approached the home on fire he encountered a woman screaming for someone to help save her child. Her baby was trapped in his crib on the second floor crying loudly. Smoke and fire were pouring out the bedroom window. Some neighbors had tried to go up the stairs to save the child but were turned back by a wall of flames that totally engulfed the stairwell.

My father entered the house, saw the stairwell completely on fire, turned and ran back to his car, grabbed a blanket, doused it with water and then ran back into the home. Throwing the water-soaked blanket over his head, he went up the stairs hardly able to breathe and the fire lapping at his feet. Upon reaching the second floor and thankful that the stairwell didn't collapse under his weight, he listened for the cries of the child and

then ran down the hallway to the bedroom where the infant was located. He quickly lifted the child out of his crib, put him under the blanket next to his chest and held him tightly as he retraced his steps to the stairwell and then walked carefully down the stairs as the fire burned more intensely and the stairwell would soon collapse if he didn't navigate quickly to the front door. When he walked onto the lawn in front of the house, cheers broke out from the neighbors. The child's mother ran over to my father and retrieved her baby, hugged my dad as tears streamed down her face.

Moments later the fire department arrived and began their work to put out the flames that essentially had destroyed the house.

My father's rescue effort made the Boston papers and the mayor of the city of Boston awarded him a medal of honor and also a key to the city.

Interestingly I never knew anything about this act of heroism until my father passed away and I found the article from the newspaper, the gold medal and other tributes in a box of items that were left to me.

I also learned more of the cause of the divorce between my parents. While my father worked with the International bank in Boston, my father "borrowed" some money from the bank and fully intended to pay it back but officials at the bank called it embezzlement and my father was convicted and sent to prison for 5 years.

Upon release from prison my father moved to California, near San Diego, where his sister set him up with a propane business in the city of Escondido.

My dad joined the Kiwanis Club, was very active in civic activities and became "Santa" for the annual Christmas parade in Escondido. He remarried a wonderful, gentle and caring woman. They lived in a very small, simple home on Washington Street. They attended church but my father did not have a personal relationship with Christ. On one of my trips to visit him, I had the privilege to share the need for a personal relationship with the Lord. As we sat in the kitchen at a small table, my father invited Christ to be his Saviour. Some tears flowed down our cheeks as we rejoiced that we were both children of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

So what does all of this stuff have to do with you? Plenty!

Far more important than doing something that would make you a hero in this world is the opportunity you have of rescuing those who are truly lost and who are desperately in need of the Saviour. You don't have to run into a burning building to save a person. Thousands are held captive by sin and guarded by the demons of Satan. Unless rescued, these individuals will spend eternity in a place most people don't like to talk about anymore...a place called Hell.

It is, therefore, time to be courageous and become a real hero. You have the keys that can activate a prison break and you have in your possession a map to real freedom.

This map will ultimately lead one to a home in the finest neighborhood that was ever created. This beautiful residence comes with a warranty second to none and will be accompanied by a life insurance policy that matches the house warranty...guaranteed for eternity. Best of all the Kingdom where everything is located will be governed by the most wonderful trio ever... the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So don't hesitate, go ahead and become a hero. There are crowns awaiting those who dare to go on a life-saving mission. It can be as simple as giving a Sports New Testament to someone the Lord puts on your heart.

Incidentally, GSSM has a number of Sports New Testaments and they are free...they won't cost you a dime. Just send us an e-mail at rcarr@globalssm.org or call at (434) 929-5015, or send us a letter to Global School of Sports Ministry P.O. Box 119 Monroe, VA 24574 or use whatever communication devices that you may have available and we will send you this simple piece of life-saving equipment as soon as possible.

Of course there are many ways to reach people for Christ. It all starts with prayer. So get on your knees and get prepared to rescue an ocean full of desperate people who are about to drown in a sea of despair. And don't forget the words of St. Thomas of Assisi when he said, "Preach the word! Preach the word! Preach the Word! And if necessary, use words."

Blessings!

Russ Carr

P.S. Our next "Reflections" will introduce you to one more hero who "blew it" and then get prepared for a pair of true stories about two miracles that occurred after crying out to the Lord for help. Those not part of God's family will label them circumstantial but I know better, for I was there.