

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column Volume 256 That Little Accident

Well, here it is, almost one month after that crazy night on Route 20 near the corner of Illinois 73. For various reasons, stemming from legal, exhaustion, my own healing and deadlines, this is the first time many of you dear readers will learn of my brother's near fatal traffic accident. Unimaginable.

Just a small note, the section of Route 20 between Freeport and Galena is now heading towards the top of the list for most dangerous roads in America! Nothing is worth being stupid and causing injuries and fatalities on this stretch of road. Slow down, be patient and pass in the zones or take a backroad and further enjoy the scenery here in God's Country. Your Friday night trip to Galena will be much more enjoyable if you are not being flown to a trauma hospital!

This is FARM country, not an interstate. Enjoy what you are coming here to enjoy – a slower pace of life..OK...Off the pulpit, sister!

On Friday, Sept 2nd, the kids and I had dinner with my brother and his BFF at our local haunt, The Rafters. This is usually atypical for a Friday night, but all the planets lined up and we decided to grab a bite together. And, it was almost our last.

After the meal, I turned onto Stagecoach road and proceeded back into Lena. My brother, Roger, who is already a quadriplegic, decided to take Route 20 West and go home to Lena on Illinois 73. He never got to make that right turn into town.

At approximately 9:00pm in the heavy Friday of Labor Day weekend traffic, a distracted driver crossed the center line and hit my brother's van head on. This action spun him into the guard rail and then launched him into a semi-truck head on.

Proving God has a sense of humor and somehow weaves the tapestry pretty tight in small towns, the volleyball coaches and their teams were headed northbound at the 20/73 stoplight and witnessed the accident. Both Coaches ran to my brother and found him, miraculously, alive and conscious. One called 911 and one called me. She held her cell phone to my brother's ear so I could speak to him until I got to the scene. Wonders never cease. I will not print their names until I ask their permission to do so, but please know that there were many angels flying around that night and two of them were there immediately and making the right phone calls! Thank you Ladies from the bottom of our hearts!

I was only one mile away from the scene and quickly arrived. Now, I have medical training and I am accustomed (sorry to be so direct) to blood and guts. However, there is something surreal when you come onto a scene where a family member is in a vehicle that is smashed beyond easy recognition. But, the training takes over and one does what one needs to do. However, when the victim is already a quadriplegic, many more specific cautions need to be taken.

The professionals of Leamon's Ambulance crew, especially Jed Shultz, were conscientious, calming and thorough. Don Boebel was also amazing. True Professionals are that entire group!

My brother had to be extracted with the Jaws of Life. His suffered many, many broken bones, and even more lacerations. This would have been much worse had the Lena Fire Department (who are all volunteers btw, so give what you can to their fundraisers, etc.) not been on the scene to maneuver in and around what was left of his van. Brad Strong is their fearless leader and all of his guys were incredible. They were caring and on purpose.

I know there were several members of various police departments on the scene, but I can tell you that Brad Curtis of Lena and Tom Madigan had things under control and worked with us tirelessly. Thank you to all the other officers as well.

All other persons involved in the crash had minor injuries or none at all. Thank God!

And special, special thanks to Donny Fox and Brother Joe Green who unbelievably got the lift working just enough manually so Roger could be taken out of the van via backboard. You guys performed a miracle!

After Roger was extradited, he was airlifted to Rockford where we spent hours in ER and days in ICU. I am happy to report that he is doing well and will continue to improve. His attitude is amazing.

From crash experts to police officers, to insurance agents and pastors, every person that has looked at what's left of the van believes he had guardian angels holding him tight and he bashed and crashed with such force that it broke the axle of the semi-truck. All of them believe are astounded he is still alive.

Yes, we have a totaled van, a totaled lift and a totaled wheelchair. And, we don't know how we are going to recover from all of this. It's like completely starting over.

But, what we do know is that his life was spared. God is on the throne and he has a plan. He has a plan for Roger and he has a plan for you, too. As we became aware in the Rehab center, the suicide rate for new spinal cord injury folks is about 50 percent. Roger has spent 39 years in his wheelchair and has lived a pretty active life.

Now, being his sister, I live in the quagmire of wanting him to live his best life and also wanting to simultaneously smack the crap out of him. Yes, he can be QUITE irritating/pushy but that is also the single characteristic that keeps his spirit strong and his life on purpose.

But, I believe that purpose was tweaked during the accident. Quite frankly, from what we learned from the powers that be at Van Matre and also from the Christopher Reeve Foundation, he needs to tell his story. He needs to share what has kept him moving ahead. Enjoying a life riddling with obstacles.

We are all grateful his is still breathing, But, why was he spared? I am suspect that its time he writes his book, for a couple reasons. Firstly, to inspire others in his condition that one can be confined to a wheelchair and still live a great life. Secondly, to challenge those of us walking around without all those physical challenges to stop making excuses and start living out our purpose. Or maybe it's just to keep him typing at the computer and out of my hair for a while.

With all humor aside, thank you to everyone for their prayers. You have lifted our family when tragedy was again near. This will be a long road for us, but I am sure there are great things to come of it.

We are so blessed with outstanding family and friends from all over the world that have taken time to share their hearts with us. We love you all.

Hug your loved ones a little tighter today and for goodness sake, please stop anyone around you from driving distracted!

Enjoy! Hope to see you soon and as always, please contact us via one of the following methods. Natural Healing Express: Phone 815 990 8732, email: skscham@aol.com 204 W Main St, Lena, IL 61048.

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