

Greetings from Ukraine,

STUNNED SILENCE, UTTER SHOCK AND COMPLETE DISBELIEF were just a few of the feelings Jay Don and I experienced on the evening of Jan. 13, 2007!!!

Our four children and their spouses had arranged a SURPRISE 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for us without us knowing a thing about it!! Seems the plans had been in the works for over a year to pull this off, and pull it off they did!!!

We had been led to believe we were going to spend the afternoon with Larry and Rose Waddell and Larry and Martha Hoff and then all go to a dinner theater that evening. However, when we arrived at the "dinner theater" Jay Don and I happened to be the ones on stage!!!!

Our Delta church family of over 20 years, friends from the community, friends from Vancouver, Wa., ALL four of our children, their spouses and the 4 grandchildren were all at the door shouting "Surprise!!" I don't think either of us actually realized what was happening until our eyes spotted our son, Ashley and his wife, who were suppose to be in Texas, standing right there in the mix. We both just lost it at that point. It was so mind boggling to believe this was happening.

The hall was beautifully decorated, in purple of course, and the evening was a dream come true.

So many sweet humbling things said, a money tree and many cards and e-mails given, flowers sent all the way from Texas, poems read and a precious DVD of our lives, made by our son Brandon, was shown. All our friends had brought food for a great pot luck and then we had 2 big cakes, one for our birthday's and one for our wedding anniversary. It was such a fun, awesome evening but very sobering when you sit and watch a DVD of your life just flash before you. You begin to wonder where have the 60 years gone???? You think have I served God the way He wants me to and followed Him to the best of my ability??? Your mind just races with these kind of thoughts and you really don't want to admit it but you have to recognize you are on the "down hill" side of this earthly life. It was a very emotional evening for us and one of our most cherished memories. THANK YOU to our sweet children, their spouses and all who had a part in such an AWESOME SURPRISE evening.





To make a perfect evening just a bit better, all our children presented us with the lovely gift of having a Professional photograph taken while we were all together. It was to be done Sunday afternoon. There was lots of snow in Brandon and Mary's backyard so that was the chosen place. The photographer was excellent and did a great job. I had been wanting a "professional" photo ever since Hannah was born but it just had not happened so this was the perfect gift!!! Now I can show off my whole family in one picture!! God is soooooooo good.



Our Winter trip home was especially wonderful this time as we had arranged to leave Ukraine a bit early so we could share Thanksgiving at Jay Don's mom and dad's home with all our children and grandchildren planning to be there also. There were 12 adults, a two year old, a 9 month old, a 8 month old and a 5 month old so needless to say it was a bit wild!!! Jay Don's mom just kept saying over and over, "I can't believe you two did all of this!!" Between our son, Ashley and our son-in-law, Tobias who did most of the cooking, we had a delicious Thanksgiving meal.



After Thanksgiving we were privileged to travel with EEM (Eastern European Missions) for a week. We traveled to Memphis, Nashville and Little Rock where Jay Don was on the program for three of their fund raising dinners. It was a great time and we saw many dear friends at all three locations.

The rest of December, until Christmas, was spent in fund raising for UBI student scholarships and visiting supporters.

We left Texas in time to spend Christmas in Vancouver, Wa. with Rhett, Julia and baby Brandon. Brandon, Mary, Hannah, Sadie, Amber and Gabriel were all able to come down from Canada so we had a wonderful family Christmas missing only Ashley, Alexis and Tobias. (Funny I had begged and begged Ashley and Alexis to try to come up for Christmas NEVER dreaming they already had plans to be here in Jan.!!!)



The month of Jan. was spent in fund raising, seeing supporters, Jay Don going back to Memphis for the annual UBI board meeting and lovin' on grandchildren!!!! The last weekend we were "home" we flew out to Calgary for a great weekend with the church there. Calgary is very supportive of UBI and the Ukrainian work. They have sent dozens of boxes of humanitarian help plus Gary and Barb Zorn visiting last Fall. `You just can't imagine how all the humanitarian boxes help open up doors for us. Thank you to Vancouver, Wa., Pheasant Run, Mesa, Arizona, Calgary and all the individuals who have sent boxes. Thanks to people like the Zorns, Ron Bailey, Gene and Marilee Cash, and Don and Kay Koontz who have undergone the expense and hardship of travel to actually come here and see the work. It certainly makes a HUGE difference for those who can come over, as to how you see the work here. (Hint, hint to any who might be thinking of coming~~~~~come on!!)

Time came at last to start the journey home. We left Dallas Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> for Madrid, Spain. We arrived about 8:00 the next morning. When we walked out of Terminal 4 to catch our ride to our hotel, we noticed an unbelievable sight. The whole middle section of a several story car park was totally blown up. Seems as though a group of terrorists had blown this up on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> unbeknownst to me or my family members!!!! However, my "dear" husband did know this but chose not to share this information with me because he thought it might scare me!! It didn't scare me at all but gave me the chills seeing such devastation and knowing that the crazed terrorists care nothing for human life and will stop at nothing to carry out their beliefs. It was just VERY hard to actually see

this devastation in "real life"! It just re-emphasizes so strongly what Jay Don was trying to say in his presentation this year~~~~~these terrorists will blow up anything and kill anybody who stand in the way of their agenda without giving it a second thought. We must take these "crazies" serious and spread the true Gospel as fast as we can. (Perhaps, President Bush is not as crazy as many like to paint him out to be~~~~~would we like to fight the terrorists on "their soil" or on ours in North America??? Seeing this bombed out car park sure made me realize I don't want to come home and see this kind of thing in Vancouver, Portland, Dallas, or anywhere in North America.



The first day we were in Madrid was Jay Don's "official" 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. We were exhausted from the flight but found out the Royal Palace was open only for a few more hours that afternoon and closed the next day, so off we "staggered" to see the Royal Palace. We got in on the last tour of the day. The Palace was HUGE and filled with unbelievable elegant furnishings. The "Royals" sure indulged themselves in every way! We were able to

see about 20 rooms on the tour. We got back to our room and HAD to sleep a bit before going out for the BIG birthday celebration. We had made reservations for dinner at an "Opera Café" that did not even start until 10:00PM!! Opera Café is a lovely restaurant where you have a delicious meal and while you are eating the "servers" sing opera. I can not describe how awesome it was to have these powerful operatic voices burst into song right in front of you. They were fantastic. I had shared with our server it was Jay Don's 60<sup>th</sup> and at the end of the evening here comes all 4 "servers" singing in opera style "Happy Birthday" in Spanish. It sent chills up our spines and Jay Don just burst into tears which made me cry. (Actually hitting 60 just hit him!!!) Just try to imagine four Andrea Bocelli's singing Happy Birthday directly to you!!! It was a very moving experience and a great way to celebrate a great man turning 60!!



We had another day of sight seeing in Madrid and really enjoyed our time there. It's a very beautiful and clean city as most Western European cities are with about 3-4 million people. About the size of Kiev but the airport was one of the biggest most modern things I have ever seen.

Tuesday we finally arrived back to Donetsk about 10:00PM to blowing snow and minus 15!! (yes, that is very cold) We were totally worn out but so glad to be back to our own little "cubby hole" and put up the suit cases for a while!!! It has been snowing ever since we got back. The staff says we brought it with us!!

Jay Don started immediately the next day with student interviews and seeing all the remodeling going on over at the school. There are lots of changes taking place and that is all very exciting. Classes start Monday morning and we are looking so forward to seeing everyone and getting Spring Semester, '07 going. It was a good break but a long one and now we have to get back to our work.

Already we have been asked to help with a kidney transplant (mother and son) and several student needs so as we have said many times but gladly say again, THANK YOU, for all the help you give to the work in Ukraine. We couldn't do our job if it were not for you and your blessings.

May God richly bless you for being so very generous.

Much love in Him,

Jay Don and Mary Lee