



Kidding Chronicle



10230 E. State Rd.

Winter 2006

Nashville, MI 49073



Titus Andrew Rhodes

The latest addition to our family came Nov. 7, 2006 weighing in at 7lb 12oz and 19 1/2". His parents Kedron and Amelia and his sister, Ilana are all happy to have him. He did go back into the hospital for 3 days for RSV (a virus). He is doing fine now. As you can see in the picture Papa and Nana were in FL when he was born. Oh ya, are we ever proud. Want to see more? <http://jestkidding.gospelcom.net/Titus/titus.html>



Coming Addition

I would like you to meet Michael Hawley from Gering, NE. Michael has decided that he wants to spend the rest of his life with our daughter Karon. She will be going to NE for Christmas and then moving back to MI after the first of the year. They are planning a wedding next April. We are excited for them. Karon waited a long time for Michael and he was waiting for her. It is neat to see how God brought them together.

Good News

In March of 1989 history was made with the release of the computer presentation called Good News. It was a presentation of the gospel that used the very latest computer technology. It incorporated three main elements that got it attention all over the world; animation, graphics and VGA color. OK, that isn't very impressive in today's standards but in 1989 that was hot stuff.

The Good News program was available on computer bulletin boards all around the world. I was at a computer conference in Chicago where it was being run as a demo by one of the major computer dealers at that time. In fact, they were offering everyone that walked by a copy of it. When they offered me a copy I told them that I already had one and to give it to someone who didn't have it yet. Then I told them that I was the one that developed it. That got a huge response. The man handing out the disks started shouting as loud as he could, "Hey everyone, Sheldon Rhodes is right here. He is the one that developed the Good News program." I guess it felt good but it was kind of embarrassing.

Later when CD's just started coming out the program was picked up by a company and included with other Bible related programs. I released it as Freeware so that people would be free to make copies of it and give it to their friends. It got a lot of viewing but never did bring in any money. I trust that someday I will find out how many souls it produced for Heaven.

Left in the Dust

As you are aware, computer technology changes fast and it wasn't long before better animation programs were available, better color came onboard and graphics were standard in every program. The Good News program got left in the dust. There were thoughts of upgrading it but the cost of the software to do it, the hardware needed and the amount of time it would take made it unfeasible.

Good News Revised

Earlier this year I started rewriting the Good News program so that we could update it and put it on the web site. Every time I worked on it I ended up discouraged and frustrated. Nothing was really coming together like it should. The goal was to have it in three different languages by the end of the year. Yet no matter what I did, I wasn't satisfied with the results. That is when a new approach was taken. What would happen if I started over? Start from scratch without any components of the old program.

God's Family

With a clean slate I started writing a new presentation using the same techniques I used when writing puppet scripts. The ideas came easy and within a short time the script for God's Family was finished and I felt good about it. Then came the work of finding a way to get it on the web. If we were to use "real people" the presentation would soon become dated. Clothing styles change. Hair styles change and it would only be a matter of a few years and people would not relate to it like they would today. Thus animation. If you watch a Disney, Warner Brothers or Hanna Barbera cartoon done 20 or 30 years ago it is still fun.



Meet Mike and His Work

That is when I was introduced to Mike Milo by way of his web site. Mike has done work on Disney's *Winnie The Pooh*, was nominated for four Emmy Awards for *Pinky and the Brain* and *Animaniacs* and has been involved with many other productions that you would be aware of. I shared with Mike my vision of having the new gospel presentation God's Family animated for our web site. He was excited about it and wanted to see the storyboard. Fortunately I have lots of experience doing storyboards from our puppet days and was able to do a very detailed one for him.

Web vs. Print

To have it done and done right it is going to cost some money. We are looking at \$10,000. Ya, I know, I about dropped my teeth too. Then one of our board members pointed out a comparison with this vs. having something printed. To have a full color "comic book" done with the same pictures we could easily be looking at \$1.00 each if not more. So about the best we could get would be 10,000 copies. Then comes the problem of how to get those into the hands of 10,000 people. That again would take a lot of time and money especially if we had to put postage on each one. Now let's look at the web site. I ran the stats for Nov. and we had a total of 159,587 hits for page views. That is a daily average of 5,320. These came from people all over the world. So it is very possible that we could have at least 10,000 people per week view God's Family. Then when you figure 52 weeks per year for who knows how many years, the cost of each gospel presentation is less than a penny. Printed materials would have to be reprinted when we ran out. This program will just keep on going. Printed stuff doesn't move. We are talking a movie type cartoon for the web.

Make it Happen

This is one of the biggest projects we have ever taken on. It is also the one that will get the gospel to the most kids (and adults). But it can't happen without you. Perhaps this is the opportunity you have been looking for. Maybe the Lord has really blessed you this year and you would like to make an investment in His kingdom in a very significant way. Maybe you can see where even a small gift will reach lots of kids and you want to be a part of that. Maybe you know someone who owns a business that could help. Would you be willing to tell them about what we are doing or send us their contact information so that we could? I really believe that the money is out there somewhere and that God will lead us to it. All gifts to Jest Kidding are tax-deductible now and will pay Heavenly dividends later.