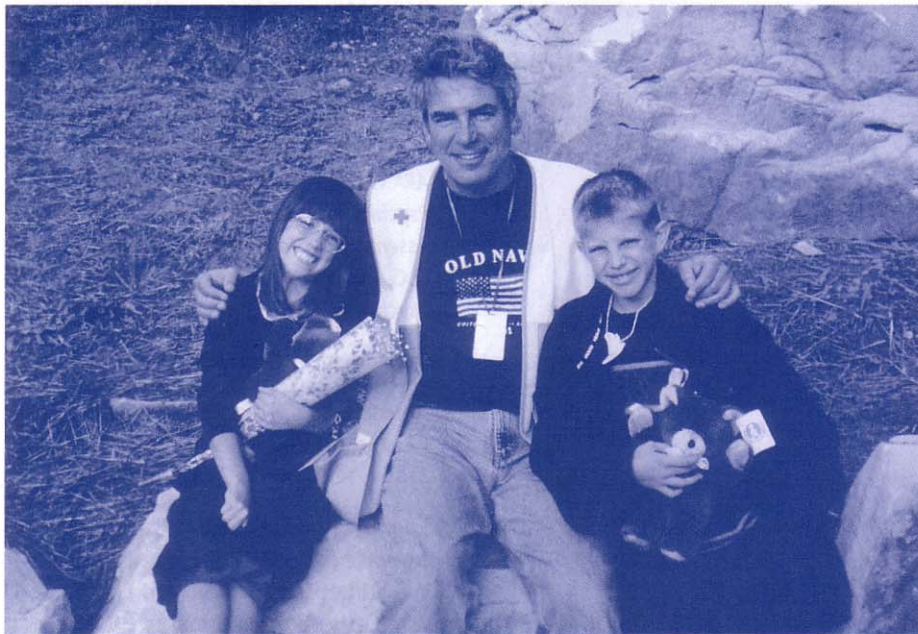


A Little Girl's Heart: Reflections on September 11



Dr. Kashurba with Courtney and Justin Nacke. Their favorite uncle, Louis Nacke, was one of the heroes of Flight 93, which crashed in Somerset, PA on September 11.

Glenn Kashurba, M.D.

On a wet, grey day, a 5-year-old was kneeling in her dress at the crash site. She had suddenly become intensely interested in playing with the gravel. Her mother knelt down next to her. Gently stroking her hair, she asked, "What are you doing?"

"I'm making a heart. Daddy always likes when I make him hearts."

Mother silently began to cry again.

She kept on working and furrowed a rather sturdy heart in the gravel. Temporarily satisfied, she stopped and began to look around.

She spied the flowers that were entwined within the long expanse of fluorescent orange mesh fence that separated our

viewing area from September meadows that stretched 200 yards down a slope to the crater and charred trees.

She industriously collected flowers and returned to her creation. The stones were soon overlain with blossoms. She was satisfied.

Later, her nearly-adult brothers knelt in the gravel with her, arms entwined on shoulders, weeping. The legacy of a heroic father.

I have tried to extract many useful lessons from my experiences working with the families of Flight 93 when they visited the crash site near my home in Somerset, PA.

Flight 93 crashed 30 seconds away from my children's school. During the first week, my main function was providing information to help other parents, teachers and clinicians help their children. Access to *Your Child, Your*

Adolescent, Facts for Families and the AACAP web site was extraordinarily valuable in that first week.

During the second week, I volunteered to work with the surviving families who had come in from around the world. This was not psychotherapy. This was disaster counseling. No charts, no psychosocial histories, no roster of patients, no office, no appointment times, no agenda.

There was little organization. Just wade into the sea of people in the family center during the buffet breakfast time and look for the kids. Try to figure out how each was related and build some rapport.

Stuff the Red Cross Disaster Team vest full of tissues, bottled water, snack crackers, and candy. Help everyone get onto the motor coach buses. Try to anticipate questions about what they will see. Translate to angry teenagers, scared school-agers, and confused preschoolers.

Help the elderly up the freshly paved road surrounded by the FBI, National Transportation Safety Board, Red Cross, and Salvation Army. Stop and stare at the crater. Cry in the gravel. Leave cherished mementos at the makeshift, straw memorial. A note, a baseball glove, a flight attendant's uniform, a teddy bear

Back onto the buses, through Shanksville to the memorial service. Disembark amidst the Secret Service and walk through corridors of state troopers who would come to attention and salute.

Hand out tissues and water and Hershey's chocolates during the service. Guide kids into the loving arms of First Lady Laura Bush, Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney, and then-Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge and his wife, Michelle.

Back onto the buses for the trip back to the resort. Dodge the media when we disembark.

Hopefully helping some small measure of peace to begin to appear.

I thought of many ways to draw incredibly insightful psychiatric conclusions from this work. However, I settled on just being a witness for this article. Sometimes that can be our greatest function. ■

Dr. Kashurba will continue to witness in his book Courage After the Crash, which is scheduled for publication this fall. He is a member of AACAP's Work Group on Consumer Issues and Residential Treatment Committee and is Co-Chair of the Rural Psychiatry Committee.

IACAPAP Announces 2002 Meeting

The International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (IACAPAP) will hold its 15th International Congress in **New Delhi, India** from October 29-November 2, 2002.

The theme of the meeting is Tradition and Innovation in Child & Adolescent Mental Health. Sub-themes include: developmental and behavioral psychoneuroscience, disabilities and mental health, environment

and culture; interventions and therapies; and policy from national and international perspectives. For further information, contact the Secretariat, Savita Malhotra, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Psychiatry, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh 160 012, India; telephone: 011.91.172.747.585 ext. 521; E-mail: savita@ch1.dot.net.in; Website: www.childindia.org.

Miracle Day Nets \$33,000 for Lewis Fund

The AACAP Elaine Schlosser Lewis Fund recently received a \$33,163 contribution from CIBC World Market's Miracle Day.

The AACAP Elaine Schlosser Lewis Fund recently received a \$33,163 contribution from CIBC World Market's Miracle Day. Miracle Day is held annually on the first Wednesday of December. On that day, CIBC World Market donates all commissions it receives to selected children's charities throughout the world.

The Elaine Schlosser Lewis Fund is proud to have been selected, for the second year in row, as one of the 750 beneficiaries of the extraordinary generosity of CIBC World Market employees and clients. The Miracle Day contribution will allow the Elaine Schlosser Lewis Fund to foster the research necessary to move the ADD/ADHD fields ahead and boost our public information initiative to disseminate the latest research findings. Through education and research, our goal is to ensure that children affected by ADD/ADHD receive the treatment and support they need to lead healthy, productive lives.