

together for His glory

Larry and Brenda Bauer, PRT

Larry: Wow! Dressed in white and escorted down the aisle came my partner-to-be, Brenda Kay Adkins. On September 10, 1977, we affirmed our covenant relationship before God and vowed to bond together “for the glory of God.”

Our partnership actually began years before. As He worked in my heart in the Iowa cornfield, He did the same in the heart of a special girl in the West Virginia hills. Well before we ever met, each of us committed ourselves to the Great Commission and to training for that task.

At Rutgers University, we hit the campus together and saw the Spirit bring student after student into our home. I led Bible studies for the men, Brenda did the same for women, and we each met with individuals.

Brenda: Larry and I prayed together for the campus and students, led Bible studies, and had students in our home, but we also partnered in big, character-stretching events; Larry would speak while I took care of the food.

While our sons were young, they were necessarily my main focus, but Larry also stayed deeply involved with the family. A senior who’d been in our ministry for three years told us he’d decided to ask Jesus into his life “because of the way I’ve observed you relating to your sons, Larry.”

Larry: Like many Nav staff, we’ve used our home a great deal for ministry. Meals, group Bible studies with homemade snacks, man-to-man times, large-group meetings on Friday nights with refreshments and games afterwards, and having people live with us. We saw a lot of good come out of this. But it also brought our partnership to a crisis. In the 1980s, God pricked my conscience that rather than trusting Him, I was trusting the way I did ministry. Also, this dependence on home as the center of our student work laid a heavy burden on Brenda. When ministry, church, family, and our own relationship reached overload, she hit burnout.

God used this to put my faith back into Him for the ministry. Brenda and I worked together to change how we did things. She had never learned to say “NO,” but now she began setting new boundaries, and we discovered that—surprise, surprise—God continued to build the ministry.

Brenda: We still use those lessons. Because I went through burnout, I recognize the symptoms quickly in others and can help them learn to minister with margin.

Now we have a new focus. As empty-nesters, we travel together to shepherd staff. We oversee their sabbaticals, do relational healings, give workshops on listening/healing prayer, lead Shepherds Network seminars, minister to shepherding couples and individuals, and speak at conferences.

We still have people in our home for meals, premarital coaching, and other needs. Sometimes people come for an Oasis experience, spending extended time with the Lord or with us. For anywhere from a day to a week, we let them unwind from the ministry here in sunny California. They can go swimming, surfing, hiking. Not bad!

Larry: In many ways, I can see that we were fashioned for this, and those previous years were “fashioning years.” God has used everything. Over time, we’ve learned how to honor our differences and even see them as strengths. Individually, we’re limited. Together, the two of us make one good shepherd. And together, we have Someone greater than ourselves to turn to as we live and minister. We’re trusting the Lord to complete in us what He started more than 35 years ago when we vowed to bond together “for the glory of God.”



Larry & Brenda Bauer vowed to bond together for the glory of God.

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partnering nationally

by Rusty Stephens and Lindy Black

The complements of our gifts, personalities, and strengths lend to a fuller-orbed leadership of the Field Team.

Rusty: Our partnership got its start because the National Leadership Team (NLT) believed Lindy was an excellent leader. They considered having her on the NLT. Then they agreed her strengths could most fully bless the whole U.S. work if she joined me on the Field Leaders Team.

From there, a key factor in having Lindy co-lead rather than work “for” me was that I deeply respected her. What I saw in her life, ministry, and leadership convinced me that the more fully and directly her leadership touched the field, the better this would be for everyone. We have chosen to defer to one another’s strengths in our leading together.

Lindy: Rusty’s strengths are what I call strategic leadership. He quickly sees the simple, essential things that must be done—where we need to go, and what’s critical to get us there. My strengths are more in my thinking process and my emotional or “people” intelligence. Those aren’t necessarily male or female traits. But somehow, when you take the diverse gifts of a partnership and factor into this a masculine leader and a feminine leader, you add depth and richness to the expression of those gifts.

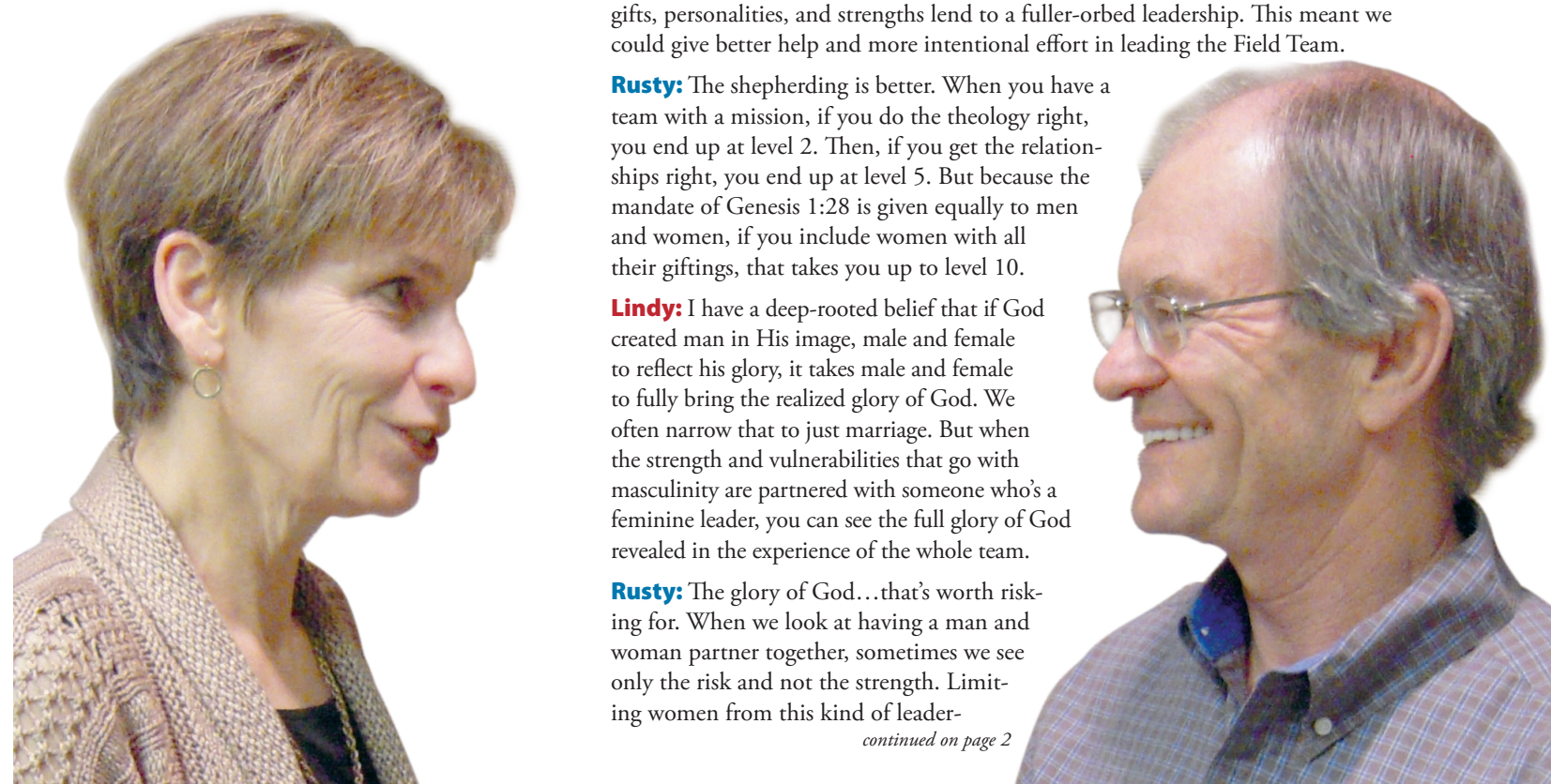
We’ve heard feedback from many team members that the complements of our gifts, personalities, and strengths lend to a fuller-orbed leadership. This meant we could give better help and more intentional effort in leading the Field Team.

Rusty: The shepherding is better. When you have a team with a mission, if you do the theology right, you end up at level 2. Then, if you get the relationships right, you end up at level 5. But because the mandate of Genesis 1:28 is given equally to men and women, if you include women with all their giftings, that takes you up to level 10.

Lindy: I have a deep-rooted belief that if God created man in His image, male and female to reflect his glory, it takes male and female to fully bring the realized glory of God. We often narrow that to just marriage. But when the strength and vulnerabilities that go with masculinity are partnered with someone who’s a feminine leader, you can see the full glory of God revealed in the experience of the whole team.

Rusty: The glory of God...that’s worth risking for. When we look at having a man and woman partner together, sometimes we see only the risk and not the strength. Limiting women from this kind of leader-

continued on page 2



no lone rangers

by Brad Hillman, PRT Director

Our call to raise up spiritual generations of laborers is too important and sizeable to do it as lone rangers. Our impact is increased as we partner with others. Partnering utilizes different strengths, skills and gifts. It adds a spiritual dimension of being the body of Christ, which is not just a term meaning a group of people, but literally being the hands and feet of Jesus—a much more powerful expression of the Trinity than our own individual representation of God.

Partnering requires humility and deference, not power and control. All of us are instructed to clothe ourselves in humility, because God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5). Our flesh, the world, and the enemy all promote self and control. Partnering requires fruit of God's Spirit, and the result is healthier ministry.

Ask God who He would have you partner more with. It may be others already on your team, or it could be another Navigator in your city. Who knows? It might be someone from another ministry altogether.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2013

Personal Contribution Assessment

May 13-15
July 15-17
October 7-10

Listening & Healing Prayer Seminar

May 20-21

Sabbatical Orientation Workshop

July 29 – August 1

For more information call
(719) 594-2555.



partnering nationally

(continued from page 1)

ship is safe in one aspect, yes. But it's dangerous in another, because it means there are enormous areas of strength we're not capitalizing on.

Lindy: People ask us how we handle working so closely together as a man and woman. How does my husband, Vic, feel about it? And how about Lani, Rusty's wife?

Rusty: At a going-away dinner recently, I was sitting between Lani and Lindy. As part of the program, Lindy talked about our partnership, and when she finished, she was a little teary. I might've been, too.

Lindy: You were.

Rusty: So, we just looked at each other. And then Lani said, "Oh, come on. You can hug." That's just something Lindy and I don't do, as part of setting wise boundaries. So I conjured up the wimpiest, most chaste kind of hug, and everyone laughed. It was great.

Lindy: I see in Rusty's eyes that he's my brother and he respects me. That frees me to honor and respect him, which frees him to honor and respect me even more, and so on. There's an escalating effect that provides a strong protection. The principle of having things "in the light" also protects us, and Vic and Lani are part of that. If men and women are going to work together the way Rusty and I do, they have to have really good marriages.

I also have a handful of women who ask questions about my relationship with Rusty. Just touching base, making sure there isn't even a hint of anything wrong. That's a good thing. And it's especially important if one of the partners is single. A single woman needs people who love her enough to ask good questions, hard questions that help her consider if there's anything in her appearance or behavior that could be a problem. Men need that, too.

Rusty: I've seen that single women in leadership trust me, simply because of how they've watched me treat Lindy. I believe they deserve extra protection. When in doubt, show respect. Flirting or treating her like one of the guys doesn't give her what she needs and deserves as a sister in Christ.

Lindy: I'm a different person than I was three years ago. When you've been believed in, entrusted with a platform and a voice the way Rusty has done for me, it changes your life. My husband is my greatest champion, but God has used Rusty to do different things. I'll never be the same again.

As Rusty's on the downswing of his responsibilities here, and I'm on the upswing with this transition, I can tell I have a whole different level of confidence in dealing with people. I have a broader kingdom view of what it means to lead well. I'm a steward of what I've learned from the time with Rusty.

Rusty: From the time with Lindy, I'll take forward so much. In just this one aspect of women in leadership, I'll be more than ever on the lookout for women God has already entrusted the Navs with at every level. I'll bring into my new job an even greater desire and alertness to identify, connect with, bless, and enable women to develop and contribute. And until men in The Navigators can truly be friends with women, as 1 Timothy 5:2 implies, the partnership will not be what it could be.

Lindy: I'm more convinced than ever that as we lead forward, we have to have mixed-gender teams or we're missing the fullness of God. I'm really sad that Rusty is leaving. But I'm thankful for how different I am because of how God has used Rusty to build into my life as a leader.

Rusty: Along with all these good things, I'll also bring a sadness and lack to the new situation. In other words, without someone like Lindy, I'll be a weaker leader. But I'll be looking to see what God will do with that.

partnering with teams for greater contribution

by Joseph Peer

My wife, Katherine, and I moved to Colorado Springs in May of 2009. We came with two basic goals: to grow as a couple and to be part of helping The Navigators' Military mission send teams of laborers into the world's unreached people groups.

For both of these goals, we worked with the PRT. We also partnered with NavMissions and the Collegiate mission to fulfill the "into the nations" portion of our Navigator calling. We prayed together, shared information and resources, and developed plans that needed each person's strengths.

Over and over, we found that much of what God was teaching us in the Military mission could be used in the Collegiate mission, and vice versa. A natural division of roles let each of us operate in our strengths while guarding each other's weaknesses. My ability to do research and pull together specific actions steps needed the balance of others' strengths in administration and building relationships.

Whether we were developing a new Bible Study, recruiting people to training events, or inviting them to a long-term commitment, we worked together and trusted God together for big things.

At the same time, teaming isn't easy. We also ran into misunderstandings and frustrations. Probably the greatest stumbling block was not fully communicating our expectations. Our commitment to each other meant we had to persevere in building and rebuilding trust, using tools and processes provided by the PRT. Katherine and I agree that our future teaming experiences will be largely shaped by our three years in Colorado.



Joseph & Katherine Peer with children Isaac, Samuel, and Deborah.

Over these years, this partnership has produced some very tangible fruit.

The Collegiate International EDGE (iEDGE) program was created and launched its first two teams this past fall.

Also, for the first time in fifteen years, the Military mission sent a couple as long-term cross-cultural workers. Many other couples will go

in the next two to three years.

We've seen over one hundred people from our Military mission attend cross-cultural ministry training events all over the country.

Navpress joined our partnership for the Military mission's eight-week "Finishing the Task" study. This

study will help ministry leadership teams develop a serious and intentional plan for finishing the Great Commission.

The Navigator Global Enterprise Network put together a network of friendships and resources for those who want to follow the Apostle Paul as "tent-makers." This group created an Entrepreneur Readiness Weekend, where they prepared 23 people to use their business

skills to advance the Gospel overseas.

In developing Militarybeliever.com, our partnership expanded to include the Development Department as well as a number of non-Navigator organizations also reaching out to the U.S. military. This website allows soldiers to find a church, chaplain, or ministry at their assigned base.

While teaming up on all these amazing projects, I realized how essential it was to be secure in my identity in Christ. When I lost sight of this, projects were derailed. I saw the same happen with other leaders when their focus shifted to protecting their own turf. In John 13, verse 3 makes verses 34 and 35 possible.

For Katherine and me, the Lord has accomplished His desires for our growth and contribution these past few years. As we move to a new calling overseas, we're confident that all He taught us will better equip us to interact and work with people from a vastly different culture.

There were so many people partnering with us in these endeavors: Mark and Lou Ann Stebbins, Mike Rodgers, Dave and Terri Legg, Chase Pettus, Allison Daniell, Paul Stanley, Judy Levan, Jim Smith, Randy Torpen, Peggy Skattebo, Julie Langmade, Mike Linder, Caleb Call, Jack Benjamin Brad Jonsword, Mark Thurlow, and many others were great partners these past few years.