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### **ACKERMAN COUPLE MEETS DIVINE APPOINTMENT**

TUPELO, Miss.—Donald and Patsy Sibley of Ackerman know they were in the right place at the right time last week.

Patsy was originally scheduled to have a cyst removed by obstetrician-gynecologist John Shields, M.D., at North Mississippi Medical Center-West Point. She was also overdue for a colonoscopy, so Dr. Shields and internal medicine physician Andrew Wartak, M.D., scheduled both procedures together. Dr. Wartak wasn't available on Mondays, when Dr. Shields had originally planned, so Patsy's outpatient procedures were scheduled for Tuesday, May 11.

While Patsy was in surgery, Donald waited in her hospital room. After recovering, Patsy ate lunch and Donald helped get her dressed to leave. But before they could go, Donald told Patsy he felt sick and then retreated to the bathroom. "My nurse came by to check on me and asked how I was doing," Patsy said. "I said, 'I'm alright but my husband is sick.'"

He was pale and sweating profusely. The nurse quickly realized Donald was suffering from more than simple nausea and grabbed the wheelchair that had been intended for Patsy. "She took me to the Emergency Room," Donald said. "I couldn't have walked, I was feeling so weak."

Emergency physician Marcus Crittenden, M.D., and the staff scurried into action, but Donald remembers only bits and pieces from the Emergency Room. He called their son Alan, a bluegrass musician who was in a recording studio in south Mississippi, and left him a message to come take care of Patsy.

"I remember the lights fading in and out, and waking up with a woman pounding on my chest," Donald said. "I remember the lights fading out again and waking up knowing I'd been shocked because I could still feel the tingling."

Meanwhile, Patsy was still feeling the effects of her anesthesia. Registered nurse Tamara Ivy told her Donald was having heart trouble—that it was serious and she needed to call their family. "God used Tamara to help me," Patsy said. "She helped me find the names and numbers on my cell phone so I could call everyone."

As soon as she was able, Patsy joined Donald in the Emergency Room. "I knew that they had called a Code Blue and that they had to shock his heart," she said. "When I asked Dr. Crittenden, he held up seven fingers, meaning they had to revive him seven times."

Donald was airlifted to North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo, where a team of cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons took over. Son Alan and his wife, Amanda, took Patsy home to Ackerman while son Don of Starkville drove on to Tupelo.

The following day, Robert Derveloy, M.D., performed heart bypass surgery on five coronary arteries. After a few days in the Intensive Care Unit and another three in a private room, Donald was discharged with a scar on his chest and quite the story to tell.

If his heart attack had happened at work or at home, the outcome most likely wouldn't have been the same. A forest ranger with the Mississippi Forestry Commission for more than 30 years, Donald usually drives a bulldozer in Choctaw County. "Donnie's boss said if he had been in the woods working with them, they would have never gotten him out in time," she said. "We're sure if he had been at home, he would have died."

"Everyone has told us how lucky I am," Donald said. "If I was going to have a heart attack, I had it in the right place."

But Donald and Patsy, who will soon celebrate 40 years of marriage, believe the timing was more than sheer luck. "God was merciful to us," Patsy said. "The people at the West Point hospital were wonderful. I could see the light of the Lord in them. I felt peaceful there."