

THE STEVENS FAMILY 2009 NEWSLETTER

February 2010



Greetings Again Family and Friends There are more stories to tell about our 2009 events than can possibly occupy only a couple of pages, besides, photos are a more popular way to tell a story and a variety are offered.

SEVERAL FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS include a



visit by Sandy's brother and sister-in-law, two trips to Carlsbad to visit Scott and a trip to Huntington Lake for the annual sailing and camping vacation. Zachary and Papa (Ralph) played golf at two of the many Carlsbad golf courses where Zachary consistently scored better.

Naturally, Zachary is looking forward to playing the famous Torrey Pines golf course soon. Sandy, Kelle and Zachary had marginally satisfying comments about camping even though they were inside the camper van rather than on the ground in a tent as Scott and Ralph were. Possibly some of the displeasure was because they were not told how to turn on the heater and the first night was near freezing. Bard Johnson and Wes Harrison were once again our wonderful hosts and provided sailboat rides to everyone. Sleeping under the stars after a day of hiking,



sailing and outdoor cooking around the camp fire can be addictive. Zachary expressed interest in having a friend on the next trip but didn't commit to the tent camping lifestyle just yet. Kelle's family were the only long-distance travelers when they visited New York by taking advantage of credit card travel miles from our 2008 mid-western family trip. (All travel, lodging, tours, food, rental, shows, parking etc were paid by her credit card that helped to provide free round trip airline tickets.)



SCOTT has a new title of "Senior Software Quality Assurance Specialist" at Hewlett Packard in Rancho Bernardo, California, but unfortunately, without a pay increase, --*for the third straight year and including a 5% wage reduction.* BAH!



Sandy's golfing buddy (a mannequin).

He's not letting that depressing factor ruin his plans to visit London in June 2010 and see the Wimbledon tennis tournament, a goal he has had for several years. He's hoping to stay with friends in London which will be enjoyable and add to the Wimbledon trip experience. He enjoyed our family visits to Carlsbad as well as his several trips to San Jose to join in family birthdays, holidays (two weeks at Christmas time), sport events (soccer) and school functions such as Zachary's piano recitals and robotics team competitions. At Christmas he drove a rental Nissan Hybrid Altima (36MPG).



Perhaps last trip to Legoland?

Perhaps he was checking out a possible replacement car for his 10 year old Prius. Dad hasn't figured out a good way to travel one direction with him to ease the 7-8 hour

car trip and hopes the high speed rail system will pass the political hurdles and eventually get built. Scott enjoys riding his motorcycle whenever possible and is testing the legal limits of noise pollution by revising the exhaust system to be more throaty---“like a Harley”. He enjoyed hosting his uncle and aunt, Tom and Jan Trammell, from Illinois and his former work associate Pamela Swan from England. Tom contributed to Zachary’s robotics team by presenting facts about his working career of moving people and items in the airline industry. Scott graciously offered financial support for a planned family cruise to Alaska for his parents 50th anniversary in 2011 and is diligently reviewing travel literature. Physically, he is doing OK with continued exercising and workouts but the shoulder rehabilitation is slow and difficult. On the plus side, he won an HP “Mini-Computer” (with Windows 7) during the final minutes of a business meeting that he attended. He also enjoyed camping, hiking and sailing at Huntington Lake and hopes to repeat in 2010. Sleeping in a tent and on the ground isn’t all that bad, even if dad makes some occasional strange sounds during the night.



Views 10 minutes from Scott’s house.

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KELLE is still Compensation Manager at Quantum Corp. and continues to work extra hours to help the company stay in business. QTM market price dropped to \$0.03 during the year but has managed to recover. She is arranging the logistics of Zachary’s many activities and takes part in his education as often as possible. Helping in his computer class has probably aided him in getting selected into the “invitation only” Robotics Team where the nine members excelled in local and



Hitch hiking at the New York Stock Exchange

regional 2009 competitions with hopes of winning the State event in January and attending the Nationals in Atlanta in May 2010. Kelle, Brian and Zachary took advantage of last year’s credit card travel program and visited New York City that included the Statue of Liberty, The Empire State Building and The Sports Museum of America. Two of Zachary’s favorite events in NY were seeing Phantom of the Opera on Broadway and attending the Sharks vs New Jersey Devils hockey game. After visiting other hockey venues, Brian expressed that the Sharks home ice arena



Top of Empire State Building

(HP Pavilion) is one of the best. Kelle’s scrapbooking efforts continue to document their lives with elaborate graphical pages. She’s also consolidating media data by converting many VHS tapes and photos to DVDs using internet services of iMemories.com. Using DVDs is a convenient and fun way to review her life events but one can only wonder what the next memory storage technology will be. She supported Zachary’s soccer team by being the team “Mom” that included making the team sign and the end-of-year DVD including 155 photos and three soccer songs. Each of the ten boys received a copy. Kelle moved Zachary’s



A banner for each boy

piano education up a notch by enrolling him in an all Russian music studio but the unfriendly nature of their teaching (although technically high quality) was not suitable and she withdrew him late in the year. Kelle graciously arranged her busy schedule to attend Scott and dad’s birthdays in Carlsbad (July 18th and 22nd) followed by a two night camping, sailing and hiking trip to Huntington Lake. Kelle, Sandy and Zachary had all the comforts that the small camper van could offer but next time she will bring extra padding for the uncomfortable fold-out couch and will learn how to turn on the gas furnace for heat on frigid nights.

BRIAN is still with “start-up” Scintera and still works too many hours. He took a business trip to Korea and was impressed with the high tech applications such as TVs in most vehicles and wireless connections throughout the city. He didn’t raise any pumpkins in their backyard in 2009 and also didn’t have much trouble with gophers as in previous years. He spends as much time as possible with Zachary playing golf or attending his school activities including piano recitals, soccer games and robot competitions. The New York trip with Kelle and Zachary was a major highlight of 2009. Brian’s two older children, Brianna (18) and Connor (16) are quickly becoming independent and responsible young adults. Brianna graduated from high school in June and is attending Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. She has also been selected to study in Switzerland for the 2010-2011 school year. Conner continues to participate in the ice and roller hockey teams in high school as well as becoming more advanced in the California Fire Explorers Organization.



ZACHARY attended summer band camp and has selected the trombone as his choice instrument. He enjoys marching and playing the trombone around the house. After another straight A year and attending a summer Robotics camp, he was selected to be a programmer on the award winning Valley Christian School Robotics team. Approximately 15-25 students typically apply for the Robotics Team (WarriorBots) yearly and only nine were accepted based on skills and their availability. Participating in the robot design, construction and programming requires many hours outside of the normal school day. Zachary’s soccer team (*Fire Bullets*) won first place in their division and it follows his first place win with the *Silver Bullets* the previous year. He is looking forward to being as tall as “Ahma” (Sandy) and it won’t be too



Finally a real piano in 2009

many more years before he looks at her at eye level. He enjoyed his third camping and sailing trip but expressed



Zack had his share of goals

interest in having a friend come along on the next trip. He didn’t commit to sleeping on the ground as he prefers the comforts of the camper van, especially after Kelle was finally told how to operate the furnace. Golf was his #1 sport for the year and his 29.5 handicap isn’t bad for a 9 year old. Kelle purchased his second set of clubs (U.S.Kids Golf Tour Series) when the first set became much too small for the fast growing boy. He saw several San Jose Sharks hockey victories as Kelle and family have season tickets. The Sharks were the top team in the NHL in 2009 (although they were unfortunately



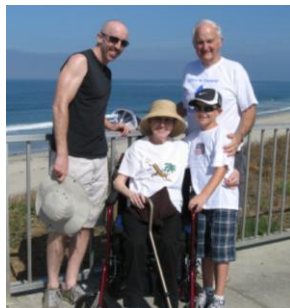
eliminated from the playoffs in the first round. They’re hoping to attend many more post season games in 2010. Kelle, Brian and Zachary had their brief claim to fame when they were televised on the sidelines while attending the President’s Cup golf tournament in San Francisco. All the big names in golf were there. Zachary has previously played the short course at Harding Park and looks forward to playing the big course someday soon.

RALPH finally completed the 20-page photo album of his 55th high school reunion. It was a long two years in the making before color copies were eventually published and mailed to each of the 43 dinner attendees. It was his final reunion effort and



Sandy and Kelle expressed that he give similar dedication and commitment to completing such home projects as a new driveway, landscaping and kitchen. The 2008 visiting aliens have left the neighborhood and the dead streaks in the lawn have become green again. Plantar Fasciitis was an unknown “sore heel” condition that required Ralph to occasionally use a cane until a second podiatrist applied cortisone and molded special (*high priced*) inserts for his shoes. After five months, the condition was better although still painful following longer walks. Naturally, line dancing will continue regardless of the pain. The July trip to Carlsbad and Huntington Lake were major highlights as was gathering with family members during holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries. Ralph continues to be active in a local Senior Center by taking computer classes (Photoshop Elements), stretch exercise and line dancing.

SANDY’s time with Zachary is #1 on her list of things to do. She enjoys cheering for his soccer games, his piano recitals, the robotics team competitions and his straight As in school. The tradition of sampling all the new apples still continues and is a good way to eat healthy. When we transport him to school or other events, Sandy always prepares a brown bag or cooler with snacks and drinks. Baking bread, brownies and cookies are still frequent events as is listening to 3-5 audio books a week that requires trips to different libraries to find new books. She also enjoys lunch and occasional movies with friends and attended “Wicked” in San Francisco with Kelle, Zachary’s Christmas band performance at the newly refurbished California Theater in San Jose and several of Zachary’s piano recitals. Sandy had



Visiting Scott in Carlsbad

major dental work done in late 2009 to replace gums of three teeth with cadaver gums. She wishes good health and peace to everyone.



'52 HS Classmates Audrey, Ralph and Ann Jervis

VISITORS: Audrey Crumpton and Dick Leonard, two of Ralph’s former high school classmates from Illinois visited this year. Dick’s 2009 Prius suffered \$12,000 in damages in Cheyenne, WY but fortunately Dick was not seriously injured.

There are eight York’52 high school classmates living in the San Francisco Bay Area and a mini-reunion will surely happen someday.

Michael Lipsey, Sandy’s niece Gwen’s husband, stayed with us overnight (twice) following strenuous “career improving” examinations. We also visited briefly with the Lipsey family at their home in El Segundo, CA during one of our trips south to visit Scott.



Dick Leonard visit 12/18/09

We wish everyone the very best during the current difficult economy and hope that all will survive with as little damaging consequences as possible.



Visiting with Lipseys in El Segundo

Best wishes,

Ralph and Sandy Stevens

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Reference Web sites:

1. Piano Recital Video. TBD
2. Soccer video (Kelle’s End of Season gift DVD to players) TBD
3. Zachary’s Robotics Team Web Site <http://blogs.warriorlife.net/vcsrobotics/>