

THE STEVENS FAMILY 2010 NEWSLETTER

February 2011



Greetings Again Family and Friends

Highlights for the year included more gatherings of the Stevens family, major travel for Scott, and each person dealing with the changing times in their own way. **2010** had more family gatherings mostly due to Scott visiting more often and staying longer. Scott had a nice vacation in England and a business trip to China. Ralph finally met with several of his high school friends living in the San Francisco Bay Area where he stayed overnight “off the grid” during a two day trip.

SCOTT’S JULY TRIP TO ENGLAND

and the Wimbledon tennis tournament was planned long ago. He saved finances for this trip and had friends living there (thanks to Pamela Swan, Peter Liebsch and Susanne Gering) who helped with his lodging, sightseeing and souvenir selection. Attending the competition of great tennis players such as Roger Federer, Serena Williams, and Andy Murray (in the new covered Centre Court at



Peter, Susanne and Tower Bridge



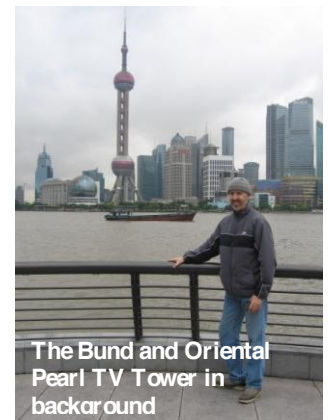
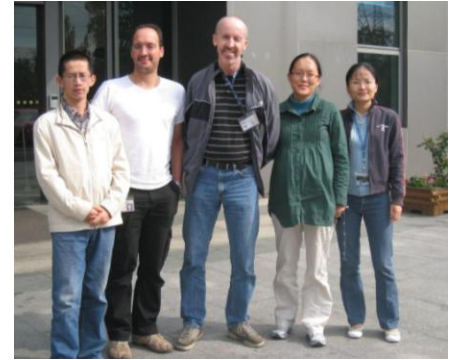
Wimbledon) was a major highlight of the trip. Peter and Susanne have since moved to Melbourne, Australia and that will surely be another destination for Scott to visit (perhaps Australian Open 2012?)

His October trip to SHANGHAI CHINA (first time to Asia) was mostly HP

business where he taught a class of five workers during his 10-day trip. Business travel is typically ALL business, but he managed to do some sightseeing and gift purchases. Now we must all learn to play the very popular “Mahjong” game.

Both of these trips involved travel to and from San Jose that allowed for additional visiting which was much appreciated. The annual sailing, camping and hiking trip with friends at Huntington Lake occurred in August, but only Scott and Ralph attended this year. Kelle and Zachary had made

plans to go, but things didn’t work out at the last minute due to the illness and eventual passing of Kelle’s 11 year old cat “Catta”. Scott’s health issues continued during mid year when he discovered he had “Ulnar Nerve Neuropathy”. Losing feeling and control of a couple fingers on his right hand was apparently not associated with his neck and shoulder injuries of the previous year. Fortunately the condition improved later in the year. Scott refinanced his home (again) and is enjoying saving several hundred dollars a month with his new 4.375% mortgage rate. HP appears to be doing well and Scott has been employed there for five years, somewhat of a record accomplishment in today’s poor employment conditions.



The Bund and Oriental Pearl TV Tower in background



WebCam view of restaurant dock

Kelle, Brian and 10 1/2 year old Zachary's biggest, although not "brightest" event of all was selling their beautiful large home and they are now apartment living while searching for a smaller and more manageable home. Maintenance, taxes, and finance costs of the larger home became issues that required unreasonable time and investment to continue for the long term, especially with private school tuition and future college tuition on the horizon. (Zachary, by the way, has already decided he is going to Stanford!).

Kelle continues working at Quantum as a Global Compensation Manager that keeps her in touch 24/7 with employees around the world. Quantum (QTM) made successful moves in the market and the stock price exceeded \$4.00 in January whereas a year ago it was under \$2.00. Scrapbooking continues as a fun, although very time consuming, project with each year producing elaborate albums of Zachary's life. Both Kelle and Scott decided to switch home computers and are now happy Apple MacBook users. Kelle claims that viruses are a non-issue and she enjoys having her iPhone, iPod, and laptop all in sync (*although some features are not compatible with Ralph's HP Vista computer*). Kelle served as a board member for Silicon Valley Independent Living Center (SVILC) that helped organize the 1ST Annual Disability Pride Parade and Festival which



celebrated the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Sandy, Zachary and Ralph walked the one-mile parade route to help promote the cause.

Brian continues with Scintera Networks as a Sr RF Engineer where he is still working very long hours (very, very long hours as Kelle would say!). He has acquired several test instruments that could become his personal mini-



electronics shop should he ever consider a different business venture. He is trying to get back into the game of golf after several years and is hoping to join the senior tour and/or caddy for Zachary when he turns pro. 😊 His two children, Brianna (19) and Connor (17) continue with their education and personal activities. Brianna is in her second year in college and is currently getting used to life on her own (she just moved into a condominium) while Connor, a junior in high school, still plays both roller and ice hockey and is continuing his involvement with the San Jose Fire Department.

Zachary had his usual busy year of activities that included a trip to Disneyland with Kelle and a school friend Jacob and his mother Denise where they stayed with Scott in Carlsbad for a couple of days. Zachary competed and won multiple awards in local and regional robotics competitions and also made it to the State Championship in January. Kelle and Zachary volunteered as score-sign carriers



("standard bearers") at the Frys.com Open, a PGA tour event just south of San Jose, and attended the U.S. Open in Pebble Beach where he met golf greats Tom Watson and Johnny Miller. Golf is still the sport of choice, but Zachary also participated in another



season of soccer in the local U11 CAA league. On top of all of this, he still continues to do very well on the piano. He started



lessons with a new piano teacher in 2010 and performed Kabelevsky's *Novellette* at the annual piano recital on a huge Steinway grand piano.



All of the above will hopefully continue for another year. Zachary's growth chart indicates he will be as tall as Ahma (Sandy) by December 2011---another milestone in his young life.

Ralph's best year (healthwise) was due mostly to the inspiration received from York '52 High School classmate Bruce Downey, when he convincingly expressed that improved eating habits and more exercise would help in our advancing years. After



sticking to Bruce's "no flour-no sugar" diet and losing 20 pounds

in 4 months, Ralph was again wearing size 36 pants that also required use of a belt. Also, his doctor said that he no longer needed to take Lipitor. Perhaps the weight loss also contributed to resolving his plantar fasciitis problem he suffered through the previous year. Unfortunately, the holiday season is tough on diets and Ralph now needs to lose eight pounds that he recently gained.

Ralph's major home project was the addition of 730 square foot parking area where the camper van now rests on concrete rather than a mud filled area that was common during winter rains. The winning bid was to prep the area, install rebar, pour and finish 12 cubic yards of concrete while Ralph performed the extra features that included installing new water lines, sprinklers, electrical outlets and drain lines. Due to schedule conflicts, Ralph missed being a volunteer judge in the local Science Fair but hopes to resume the interesting activity in 2011. Thanks to Scott and Kelle, Ralph and Sandy will be celebrating their 50th anniversary aboard a Princess Cruise ship to Alaska that will include six other family members we don't spend enough time with. Ralph's 60th high school reunion is in 2012 and he's hoping to attend providing someone will organize the event. Ralph considers his organizing of the 55th in 2007 was his last. *(2000 miles is just too far away to be a major organizer.)*



After years of discussion, four York'52 High School classmates living in the SF Bay Area finally gathered for a couple of days to become re-acquainted.

The gathering was at the remote home of Neva Dyer where public utilities and services don't



exist. She lives "off the grid" and it made the overnight experience that much more interesting. One of Neva's trees has a trunk circumference of 331 inches that may make the Arbutus Menzieii-Pacific Madrone tree (named Molly) a champion size according to classmate Dick Benjamin who has a career with the U.S Forest Service. Ralph still enjoys line dancing and takes stretch exercises classes twice a week as well as walking throughout the neighborhood.

Sandy, Kelle, Zachary and Ralph visited

Dorrington, CA in the California Gold country for three days courtesy of Kelle's fellow Board



colleague at SVILC who loaned her cabin. Several historical places were visited including the Calaveras Big Trees State Park, but their advertised wheel chair access paths weren't



that friendly and Sandy and Ralph waited for the others to take the short walk around the area. Also, Kelle and Zachary toured 550 feet deep into the Sutter Creek Gold Mine that may reopen for production if gold reaches a slightly higher price. The 44 pound gold nugget found in 1992 and



displayed at the Ironwood Winery Museum proves *“there’s still gold in those hills”*.

Ralph, Kelle and Zachary navigated steep circular stairs to descend 165 feet into The Moaning Caves cavern followed by Kelle and Zachary completing several daring 1500 feet, 40 MPH Zip Line rides.

Sandy continues to do her own audio book recordings by converting Internet downloads to CDs

and recently did the same data transfer to an iPod---*good for her to accomplish such a computer related task.* An under-cabinet CD player (with iPod adaptor) for the kitchen allows her to bake bread, brownies and cookies and perform other kitchen chores while enjoying listening to the audio books. Of course her brightest and most



enjoyable moments of every day are when she interacts with 10 1/2 year old grandson Zachary. Shopping for and packing special treats for after school snacks and supporting his piano and homework are events that she enjoys most. Monthly lunches with friends and almost daily shopping at several different markets still occur as in previous years. Kelle ran and Scott and Ralph walked the 5K Turkey Trot event during the near freezing weather on Thanksgiving day.



Best wishes to all for a safe, happy, prosperous and healthy 2011.

The following web sites were created during 2010. Each contain 20-80 photos and most have captions. You may have to copy and paste into your browser to see all of the photo albums. When opening, click “pause” and advance manually to allow time to read the captions and view the photos. *Enjoy*

Send me an email and I'll return a .pdf file that will allow you to view larger photos and open the websites easier:
ralphbs@sbcglobal.net

Sailing and Camping at Huntington Lake 2010.
http://picasaweb.google.com/ralphbs8/HuntingtonLake2010?authkey=Gv1sRgCNGVj_mAmZHQNg#

Gold Country 2010 Vacation
https://picasaweb.google.com/ralphbs8/2010_6_6_GoldCountry?authkey=Gv1sRgCIDfrPjHxLeoxgE#

Scott's China Trip 2010
<http://picasaweb.google.com/ralphbs8/SCOTTCHINA2010TRIP#>

Ralph's 2010 Concrete Project
http://picasaweb.google.com/ralphbs8/Driveway_phase1?authkey=Gv1sRgCMSq9bXdo6vBEg#

Scotts 2010 England Trip
<http://picasaweb.google.com/101943575920667585320/SCOTTSENGLANDTRIP2010?feat=email#>

Ralph's Off the Grid Mini-Reunion 2010
http://picasaweb.google.com/ralphbs8/2010_08_29NevaRDvisit?authkey=Gv1sRgCPC48Nej2pOJcw#