

THE STEVENS FAMILY 2014 NEWSLETTER

Feb. 2015

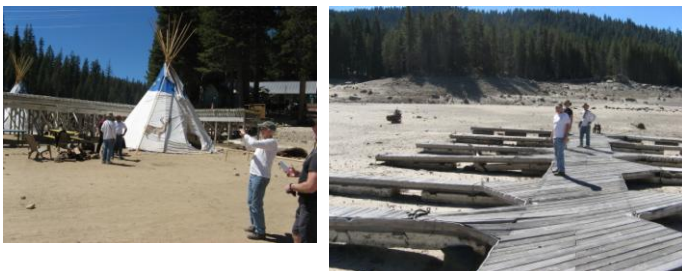


Greetings Dear Friends,

Here is the Stevens Family Annual News letter and, as always, it wouldn't be the same if it weren't several weeks late into the new year.

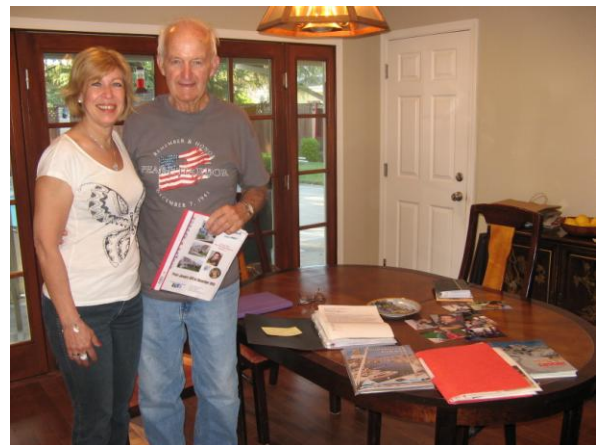
The three year California drought produced brown lawns, dried rivers, lakes and high monthly water bills. 'Brown is the New Green' for California lawns and many creative ways to decrease water usage were tried. During mid- December, heavy rains finally occurred for a week but much more is needed to return to normal.

Our annual sailing trip to beautiful Huntington Lake was limited to just camping and hiking due to the dry lake conditions. It was a shame to see businesses struggling to survive. A popular restaurant rented teepee lodging at their unused boat docks.



Longtime friends from France, Cathy and Pascale Duprat, visited during their month long tour of western United States. Their daughter Cecilia was our guest several years ago and it was a real pleasure that Cathy and Pascale could finally come

and visit us. Cathy surely worked countless hours to prepare another of her wonderful books that documents several years of events of her active family which was much appreciated.



The Stevens family enjoyed two nights of camping at nearby (45 minute drive) Mt. Madonna County Park that is an alternative camp site for distant (5 hours) Huntington Lake. The Mt.



Madonna campsites included electrical power that was appreciated for using the microwave oven and lights in the camper van. There

was no lake for sailing but the campsite is located just 30 minutes from Watsonville and several ocean beaches.



Scott, Kelle and Zachary spent 7 days vacationing in Hawaii and did all the usual things tourists do including snorkeling, zip lining, waterfall rappelling, Pearl Harbor tour, and bicycling down the 10,000 foot Mt. Haleakala volcano after seeing the sunrise from the top.



Scott now has two cats with the 2014 addition of Mally who has learned some unwanted household events from Maverick such as opening closed cabinets and jumping on top of the refrigerator. Scott is surely one of the best customers of Animal House pet Care, a great family owned pet sitting business who take care of the cats during Scott's frequent traveling to San Jose or abroad. Carlsbad had several fires in May along with several other fires in San Diego County. This is the earliest time of year where "Santa Ana Wind" induced fires have started. Scott stayed close to home for that eventful week and kept close watch on the local news.. The firefighters deserve special kudos for their efforts and we're lucky to have such dedicated individuals.

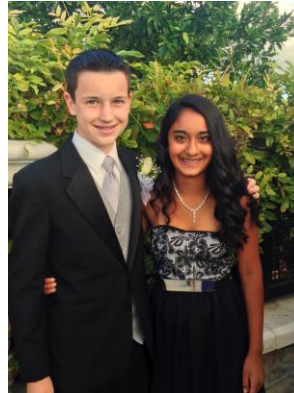
Scott visited Belize with several friends and was impressed at the quality of the numerous tourist accommodations. His favorite photo was of the official country bird, the Toucan.



Grandson Zachary turned 14 in April and graduated into the freshman class at Valley Christian High School. He became much taller during the year as evidenced in the photos.

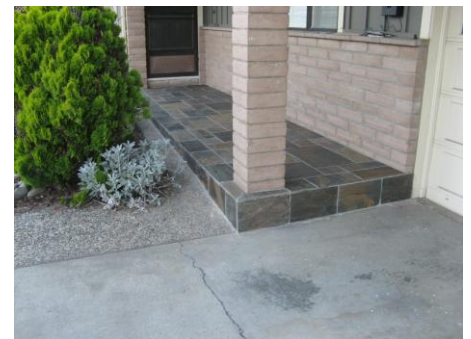
Although he is experiencing more homework than ever (partially due to being in advanced classes), Zachary finds time to be in the honors jazz band (trombone) and be a member of the freshman soccer

team. Tutors have come in handy to assist with the challenging academics this year.



Zachary attended his first formal dance where tuxedo, corsages and flowers were traditional items. His grand dad offered some basic dance lessons, but Zachary opted to not (yet) get involved with older generation dances.

Ralph's 2014 projects included resurfacing of the small front porch, repairing the 25 year old air conditioning system and replacing failed pool valves only this time, contractors were hired and all jobs were completed in just a few days each. Ralph successfully (and finally) repaired the failed garage door opener which was a major ego-builder event. Genie Door manufacturing Co. graciously provided a free circuit card and technical assistance thereby eliminating the local contractor's \$400 bid to repair it. Ralph also contracted to replace two trees and performed major pruning on others. This was a long delayed project that ended up costing well over the planned budget. Another overdue project was installation of "Plantation" shutters. Ralph upgraded to a newer (2008) Ford Ranger pickup truck but has second thoughts on getting another two-wheeled scooter.



His atrial heart flutter and peripheral neuropathy continue to give him some concern and long walks are becoming difficult. He performs daily floor exercises and enjoys attending twice weekly stretch exercises at a local senior center.

Sandy continues to care for Zachary as often as possible mostly by providing snacks during pick up from school, asking lots of questions and having dinner together one day a week and on special occasions.

Kelle is still tap dancing and performed in her first recital in ten years to prove to all that she still knows how to do “shuffle-ball’ changes” and other tap dance steps.

Her house was burglarized over the summer-on a week day in broad daylight- and although all of her jewelry and computers were stolen and front door and window needed replacing, it could have been worse. She quickly invested in a high tech security system that needs some serious adjustment because Annie and Kahlua (the two cats) alarm the cameras and motion sensors. Fortunately, her iphone app allows her to intercept the alarm before it is sent to the police

Sandy and Ralph continue to enjoy the many visits by Scott, Kelle and Zachary. The Christmas holidays were especially appreciated as Zachary was the Grand Organizer and

creator of games and events. The team of Sandy and Ralph narrowly missed first place with their cut out



Christmas decoration. Play Nine is still Ralph’s favorite card game but Uno and a memory game were among the dozen interesting games played.

Best Wishes for a happy, safe and healthy 2015 New Year.

Ralph, Sandy, Scott, Kelle and Zachary

FYI: Scott’has many photos on his website
<http://www.Seizethedayguy.com>



5K Turkey Trot



Scott zip lining on Maui trip



Kahlua & Annie



No water in Huntington Lake



Maverick & Mally