

# THE STEVENS FAMILY 2016 NEWSLETTER

March 2017

## Greetings Dear Friends and Family

The past year went by much too fast and once again this newsletter is shamefully overdue. Major effort has been to stay healthy and mobile while



downsizing our living environment Getting rid of 60 years of collectibles is a monumental task and as typically happens, just when you dispose of a long unused item is when you have a need for it.

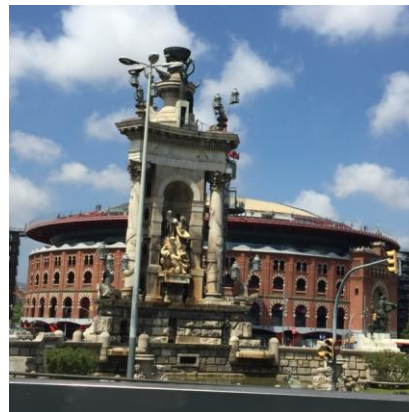
**Sixteen years of travel and camping** using the Coachmen 1995 Ford van is now history. We didn't use the self contained van sufficiently to continue maintaining it so it was finally sold on Craigslist. Needless to say, it was a sad moment when it departed from our driveway.



**The five year California drought appears to be ending. Record setting heavy rains and wind** in late 2016 and early 2017 filled most lakes, rivers and reservoirs, so much so that flooding occurred

requiring forced evacuations of fourteen thousand persons living in the south San Jose areas. Trees falling and mud slides forced closure of many streets and highways . Fortunately our house is in a higher elevation of west San Jose area.

**Son Scott (54)** and I went camping and sailing at beautiful Huntington Lake for the first time in two years. Our good friend Bard Johnson had his sailboat and the lake was full of water. Scott is still working at Transcend Insights, (5-years) a subsidiary of Humana, in southern California who may merge with Aetna to become a giant in the health care industry. **After 26 years**, Scott visited Paris to complete his goal of attending each of the four major grand slam tennis tournaments: French ('2016), Wimbledon ('2010), Australian ('2013) and US Open ('1990). It was the wettest May in history causing flooding and cancellation of several tennis matches. Our long



time French friends Cathy and Pascal Duprat were gracious hosts for several days which was appreciated.

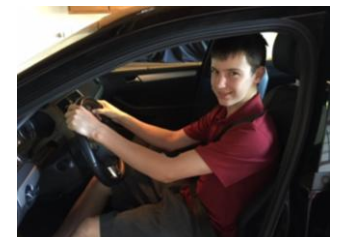
During the same three week long trip, Scott also toured Madrid, Spain with long time friend from

London, Pamela Swan. He was surprised to see a popular USA restaurant (Steak 'n Shake). when there are none in the San Jose area. Later in the year, Pamala Swan and Louis \_\_\_\_\_ (2000 Mt. Kilimanjaro partner) visited Scott in Carlsbad.



elsewhere in Kelle's 2005 Prius with a reconditioned hybrid

**Grandson Zachary (16)** is now driving himself to school and



battery that was half the cost of a new hybrid battery. The Prius has 240,000 miles but still runs well and gets excellent gas miles that hopefully will last his final two years in high school.

He still plays trombone in the Valley Christian Jazz Ensemble who took top awards at the Folsom Jazz Festival,



the Alberta Canada International Jazz Festival, and the Reno Jazz Festival. The talented group looks forward to playing at the 2017 Monterey Jazz festival. He volunteers to help with yard work at the local church and worked at Bed, Bath and Beyond until school started.



He was proud to be getting a paycheck.

**Daughter Kelle** (52) twisted her knee while skiing and corrective surgery affected her mobility by having to use crutches for several weeks.

She is progressing with several house improvement projects including a new flagstone patio and an outdoor shed to free up garage space and secure storage of garage and yard items. She and several girl friends went to Disneyland for another relaxing get-away from her high demanding day job.

Kelle convinced family members to visit all seven places (apartments, duplex, etc) where Ralph and Sandy lived upon leaving Illinois before they married in 1960.. It was a challenge to remember each location, but stories about experiences of living during those early years were memorable and interesting to Scott and Kelle.. I walked to work by crossing railroad tracks from our one bedroom \$69 apartment where Scott's crib was in the small kitchen.

**Ralph finally decided he was missing too much conversation** and began researching the Veteran's Administration about the possibility of getting a hearing aid at reduced cost. So far, the search

required several trips to different locations and it may take another 6 months to get a decision from VA. His active duty military tour in Germany was with a 105mm Howitzer battalion when no ear protection was provided and he feels confident his claim will be approved.

**Ralph's various medications for atrial heart flutter and peripheral neuropathy** now include new medications to control Parkinson's symptoms such as tremors and unbalance. Fortunately, the doctor is confident the symptoms are controllable. More exercise is high on Ralph's list for 2017.

**Sandy continues to spend as much time with Zachary** as possible. She attended several school events that he played in the band and enjoys lunch with friends as well as spending time with family during holidays and birthdays.



She had cataract eye surgery to improve vision in the left eye, but is unsure about repeating the surgery in the right eye.

**Kelle continues working** as the Senior Manager for Global Compensation of Palo Alto Networks, a high growth cyber security company. Her new Chevy Volt plug-In hybrid car is paying good dividends by allowing her to drive in the less crowded carpool lanes for the next three years. She still shares season tickets to attend the Sharks hockey games with hopes that someday they will win the Stanley Cup.



**Kelle and Zachary vacationed in Hawaii** for several days and did many of the normal tourist activities.

**Ralph** enjoys frequent visits from Scott, Kelle and



Zachary. "Play Nine" is a favorite card game and Scott typically helps to repair computers or printers. He also tutors his parents on the proper use of new cell phones.

Best Wishes for a happy, safe and healthy 2017 New Year.

Ralph, Sandy, Scott, Kelle and Zachary

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



Children (and grandchildren) grow up too fast.



Many creative games are played during family gatherings. "Play Nine" is best.



The family visited all seven of the San Jose apartments Sandy and I lived in during early years.



I forgot to count the number of steps.