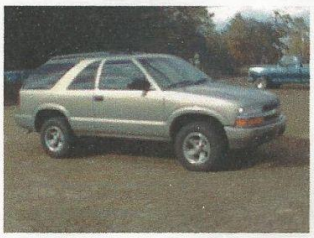
Family News

December 15, 2000

Merry Christmas! We are celebrating Christmas in the year 2000. Our family has gone through many changes this year. Get a cup of coffee or tea, or what ever you want to drink and find a nice quiet spot and I'll try to get you caught up (or bore you depending on your point of few) (g).



We've had very little rain this year. The lake (640 acres) is 3 feet below normal. Its not been this low since we moved here in 1985. We've taken the oppurtunity to dig out a bigger area for the paddle boat. When the lake comes back up we will be able to tun the boat around in the water near our little dock.

In July we began looking for a new vehicle. Our van was getting old and we decided it was time for a change. We considered the GT Cruisers before we finally decided on a two door Blazer. We drove it off the lot at the end of July with only 14 miles on it. Its the first new vehicle Kathy or I have ever owned! Looks like Walmart will be stuck with Kathy a little longer.

Last August Kathy's father died. It was unexpected and has been very difficult on her entire family. We were fortunate to be able to visit with him in June and will always have good memories. This will be the first news letter that will not be mailed to Jim and we just wanted to say we miss him.



I've been riding my bicycle all year. I'm just a normal part of the landscape on Hwy 83 on weekday mornings and evenings. Adding up all of the years on the bike and I'm getting close to 7,000 miles.

Sure feels good riding by all those folks spending extra money at the gas pumps. Except for mowing the yard I don't care how much gas costs (g).



Remember the black and white photo of mother and daughter from a couple of years ago? Well, here it is again with another photo of Justinn and Kathy. The color photo was taken when they were each in the 10th grade in high school.

Next Page



TJ is 23 this year and has had big changes this year. Last January the motor in in red truck quit working. He had to ride his bike to work for several months. He was working the night shift and some mornings we would pass each other when he was riding home from work and I was riding to work. In June he transferred to the Walmart in Crestview. He moved to Crestview and lives close enough to still ride his bike to work.

On October (10/10/00) he and Tiffany (his girl friend for two years) were married at the courthouse in Okaloosa County. It was a lovely, quiet ceromony with just a handful of people. To the left is a photo taken just before the ceromony.

TJ & Tiffany pulled up in our yard one Saturday in September with a new truck. He finally got tired of riding his bike every where and decided it was time to go into debt. Its a nice truck and he is very proud of it.



Tiffany is in boot camp for the Army right now at Ft. Jackson in South Carolina. The newlyweds were just getting used to married life and now they've been separated by the Army. Tiffany is a wonderful girl and we are proud to have her as our first daughter-in-law.



Perry is 20 and has gone through many changes this year too. Last March he left Walmart. He spent a few weeks in Texas and Alabama early this summer doing electrical work. He made enough money to make a down payment on a new truck. He is still driving the truck in the photo to the left. It was his fourth truck of the year. He's become quite a horse trader.

He is now working at the Goodyear tire store in Freeport. He has been working there for almost six months. Freeport is sixteen miles away and the drive to work was putting a lot of miles on his truck. In September Perry moved to Freeport. He and his cousin, Jeffery are sharing a nice trailer just a mile or so away from where he works.

Sure seems strange having both boys gone. We thought Perry would come home often and visit around supper time. He must like the independant life because he has only come by for a visit a few times and never stays to eat. Guess that means he has plenty of food and he'll invite us over for supper soon (hint - hint).



Not sure what Perry is trying to say to Laura in the photo to the right. Whatever it was she seemed more interested in her fingernails. (g)

Next Page



Justinn is now 17 years old. She is a junior in high school. Since TJ and Perry are gone she has two rooms in the shed all to herself. She is still working at Camp Victory. She has also started attending a church in Niceville. They have a big youth program. Justinn went on their youth choir tour last spring and visited New Orlean, Biloxi, Jackson,... She had a big part in the play they performed in front of hundreds of people.

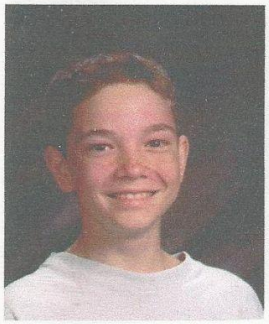
Last spring she got a button making machine and has stayed very busy making over 1,000 campaign buttons. She has made several hundred for the Bush/Cheney campaign as well as other local politicians.



We suprised Justinn when she turned 17 this year. Kathy and I had the joy of seeing her face when she got an 85 Ford Escort for her birthday. She was very suprised! All she could say was "Is this for real?"



For the first time in 15 years the school bus does not have to stop at our house because Justinn drives her car to school and Marc rides with her.

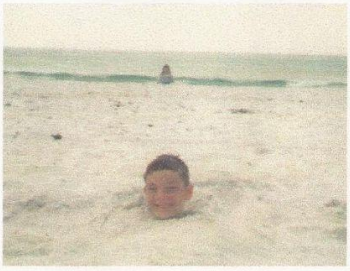


Marc Thomas is in his first year of high school! He was only six years old when we started this news letter and has certainly changed a lot since then as you can see by this year's school picture.

Marc earned extra money this past summer by mowing yards and making buttons when Justinn was away at camp. Several times over the summer he had more money than Mom and Dad!

He and I sang our first special at church this past summer. He has a good voice and is not bashful. He is also learning to play songs on a recorder (flute). Add his drawing skills to his musical abilities and you can tell he has his Dad's talent (g).

He still has a smile on his face most of the time. He enjoys bike riding, golf, reading, and video games. This past summer I took two days off work and Marc and I played golf. It was just the two of us, two days in a row. After the second day I drove my truck (the green Ford Perry gave me) to a dirt road and swaped places with Marc. He drove for nearly a mile and did a great job!



Here we are at our most recent trip to the beach last Labor Day. Marc lost his head for a little while, but found it before we left.

Next Page



The Gipsons

1963 Juniper Lake Road

DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Favorite Thought: ""Happiness is a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."
Nathaniel Hawthorne

From Our World to Your World:
You can still reach us at tomgip@yahoo.com

This year's newletter was done as a web page. For those we know who have internet access we have emailed you our web address. If you have access to the internet you can view this online at: http:\\atfar.com\fn.htm

Guess that wraps it up for this year. Thanks for allowing us into your home and we'd like to wish you a **Merry Christmas!**