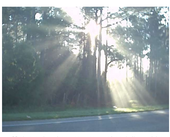
Family News

December 15, 2002



Taken during my morning bike ride

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." I pray that your faith is in Jesus and you are enjoying the abundant life! We hope this year has been a wonderful year filled with joy and plenty of sunshine! We've been sending out this news letter instead of Christmas cards for over ten years. It is my one chance to bore you without hearing you complain too much .

Our family has had a busy year this year. Kathy and I have had a wonderful time spending our Saturdays working on a Habitat for Humanity house. The new homeowner works at Walmart with Kathy and graduated from high school with me. It is a great project and I can honestly say I've gotten much more out of it than what I put into it!



Kathy at the Habitat House

Last February I began a fascinating journey into the world of genealogy. Learning about my family's past has litterally changed my life by being able to appreciate what our ancestors sacrificed and their hard work. My grattitude towards the freedoms and luxuries we enjoy in the United States has deepened as I find more and more information on my grandparents from two hundred years ago. I have found old photographs, letters, and books about people that I am descended from, and am amazed by them.



Grandma Kathy and Taylor

On June 18, 2002 Taylor Nicole Fannin was born in Ft Walton Beach, FL! There is a big difference between thinking I'm going to be a grandpa some day and actually being a grandpa! I am still trying to adjust to the idea, but Kathy is right at home being a grandma! She is a natural at it. She is very comfortable with being called grandma even though she has a hard time convincing other people she is old enough to have grand children.

Taylor is about to get her first toothe just in time for Christmas. She is also trying very hard to sing with Grandpa when nobody else is watching.



Taylor Nicole Fannin



Sparky

I am still writing computer programs and love it. I continue to ride my bike 8 miles every day even though I'm in my 40's and almost as old as Kathy (I'll pay for that comment). Kathy is still at Walmart and driving her Blazer. I cannot talk her into riding a bike with me.

We lost Sparky this past July. He managed to jump the fence in our back yard and was hit by a car. Marc did a great job drawing Sparky. The drawing hangs in our bedroom with his dog tags.



Marc's hand drawing of Sparky

Speaking of Marc... He is our last child is in high school. He is 16 and a junior at Walton High Schooll. He is at that age where he makes foolish bets and looses them and his hair .



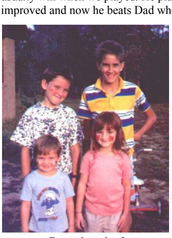
Our Baby

Marc landed a role as one of Joseph's brothers in a musical put on by a local theater group called "Joseph and the Amazing Technocolor Dreamcoat". They preformed the play on 4 straight days this past August and did an outstanding job! Someone from our family was there for each preformance to make sure he had support in the audience. He was fantastic! Several people from church and work told me he sang well enough to get the lead role.



Guess who lost a bet?

Marc has had an active year. He made the high school tennis team last spring. He had only been playing tennis for a few months and Dad could usually win when we played. He plans to try out for the tennis team again in 2003 and should not have any trouble making the team. He has improved and now he beats Dad when we play every other week.



Remember when?

Remember when our kids looked like this? Without photos and videos its sometimes hard to imagine the "good ole days". They continue to grow and change before our very eyes. Our baby now has his driver's permit and drives every chance he gets! He has also gone horseback riding, learned to play the guitar, won second place for a drawing in the fair, and has grown six inches! He also sings at church and is the best singer in the family.



Marc is driving!

And of course one of the highlights of this past year was watching our little girl graduate from high school. She continues to be very active working a Camp Victory (a wonderful Christian camp 40 miles north of our house). She has just registered for her second semester at Okaloosa Walton Community College.



Justinn is a Graduate!



The gang's all here!

Justinn's Christmas present last year was a ticket to Boston for spring break. She flew to Boston and visited her friend Jessy last April. Jessy is going to a Christian college and Justinn spent a week with her on campus. I thought the tickets were a good idea when we got them, but by the time April came I was wondering if I had lost my mind. I did a lot of praying that week .

TJ and Tiffany came all the way from Kansas for Justinn's graduation. She also had friends come from Misourri, Louisianna, south Florida, and Boston. In the photo of her gang only two of the girls attend Walton High School.



High Mileage!

The rest came from out of town just to be at Justinn's graduation.We made the down payment on a 98 Toyota for her graduation present. She has driven it to Louisianna by herself this past summer.

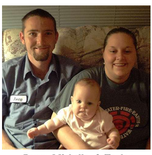
Justinn is 19, working at Walmart, and going to college. She now has car payments to make and all those miles she puts on her car requires gasoline. She stays so busy that I get tired just thinking about her schedule.

Justinn still finds time for church and Camp Victory. She sings solo and is a great guitar player. She is always learning new gospel songs and can sing harmony with Marc. She is also the best artist in the family. She was named art student of the year at Walton last year!

After looking at the photo of the kids on the previous page its hard to imagine both TJ and Perry married. We are not as big a part of their lives as we once were, but they will always be a big part of our lives. Kathy and I feel blessed to have such wonderful children and two great daughter-in-laws.



Justinn & her guitar



Perry, Michelle, & Taylor

Perry is 22. He and Michelle (our new daughter-in-law) plan to close on a house in January. The house is brand new and about three miles from our house. Starting a family can be exhausting and expensive, but well worth it!

When TJ (25 years old!) and Tiffany came home for Justinn's graduation it was the first time we had seen them in a year. They recently celebrated their second wedding anniversary. Tiffany is still in the Army and they are living in Junction City, Kansas.

Since a picture speaks a thousand words I guess I've bored you enough for this year.



TJ & Tiffany

Merry Christmas!

May God Bless You!

from:
Tommie, Kathy,
Justinn, Marc,
TJ, Tiffany,
Perry, Michelle, &
Taylor Nicole





The Gipsons

1963 Juniper Lake Road

DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Remember: ATFAR - All Things For A Reason
Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: - Romans 5:1

For inspiration from one of God's typist check out The Yes and Amen Archives. You will enjoy reading them and will feel humbled, thankful, and strengthened all at the same time. I HIGHLY recommend them! The website is at: http://www.jilnet.com/YesAmen

You can still reach us at tomgip@yahoo.com - we would love to get email from you and hear the latest in your lives. This year's newletter was done as a web page. If you have access to the internet you can view this online at: atfar.com/fn

Thanks for allowing us into your home and we hope you have a **wonderful Christmas and a year of peace and joy in 2003!**