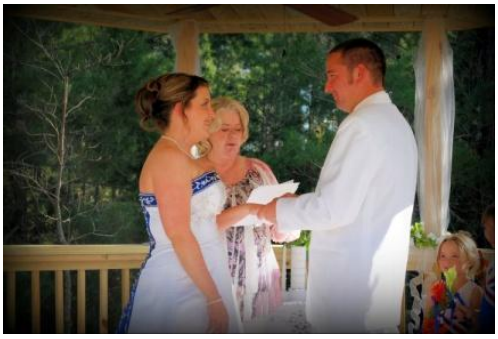
# Family News

**December 15th, 2011**

As I glance back over last year's newsletter, I am reminded of all of the changes that have taken place since then. It always amazes me how much things can change in one year. Perry and Sammy were married last March. It was a beautiful wedding. All of our children were able to come and that may be the last time we see all the kids in one place for a long time. It was a wonderful and special day.



Yet while some things have changed other things remain the same like - Kathy and I continue to spend most Saturdays building houses for Habitat for Humanity, I am still riding a bicycle 10 miles a day to work, I am still making bamboo flutes, and Kathy continues to enjoy being retired.



Our local Habitat does not build during the summer months, so this year Kathy and I took a boat to Shell Island in Panama City. There are no man-made structures on the island (not even a dock) and it is home to one of the largest bottle nose dolphin populations in the world. Kathy and I went kayaking on the river north of Milton again this year (more than once) which is always a blast. I also took my kayak to Lake Stanley and Morrison Springs. In July Sinder, a good friend of mine, and I took our kayaks to Grayton Beach State park and had a wonderful time kayaking in Western Lake and then following the river connecting it to the Gulf of Mexico.





**Travels:** I had to do a lot of work related traveling this year. Kathy was able to go with me on 4 of the 5 trips. I always took extra days off to allow us to enjoy seeing some of the sites. In March we were in Orlando and took Jamie and Clayton's advice to see NASA. I am glad we did. I now wish we had taken the kids there on one of our many trips to Orlando. Maybe we can do that with some of our grandchildren. In June we spent a week at Myrtle Beach. Our hotel was right on the the beach. I love seeing the Atlantic Ocean, but there is no comparison between their beaches and ours. In October we spent a few days in San Antonio. Our hotel was on the Riverwalk just a couple of blocks away from the Alamo and the Tower of the Americas (which was well worth the price to go to the top). We returned from TX and a week later went to Edmonton Canada. While we were there we spent a day in a huge mall that has the largest indoor wave pool in the world along with a water park, ice skating rink, aquarium, and the largest indoor roller. I expect the mall gets a lot of visitors during the cold winter months there. I had to get a passport and Kathy had to upgrade hers to travel to Canada. What an adventure that was! Now that we have passports, Mexico may be on next year's radar.



**Updates:** All of our kids and their families are doing well. We had a family night last March days after Perry and Sammy's wedding. We all (well almost all of us) got together and played goofy golf in Destin. Then some of the bigger kids raced go carts while Kathy and I took all six of our grandchildren and did some of the rides in the amusement park. It brought back fond memories of all of the wonderful family nights we used to have.



**TJ** and Angela are still living in KS. TJ has come off the road and is the department manager in electronics (I'm sure he is a natural at that!). Angela is s Sales Representative for the Northeast Spirit Market of GTM Sportswear. They enjoy going to the KState games and have spoiled their dog Ammy. We were very happy they were able to come visit last March.





**Perry** is working for Budweiser and Sammy works at the Walton County Courthouse. Last spring they were coaches on Kacey and Caitlynn's T ball team. Kathy and I were able to go to some of the games and I was very impressed with both the players and the coaches. With juggling school schedules, ballgames, and jobs they are on the go much of the time. Kathy and I remember our time raising four kids and Perry and Sammy have our sympathy.



**Justinn** earned her two year degree from Northwest Florida State College this year. We are *VERY* proud of her! She is taking more classes working toward her 4 year degree in between working at a radio station and Carters. Cory is an assistant manager at Publics and with Angel in school this year they too have a sometimes hectic schedule. Justinn continues to paint wonderful paintings and has even taught some art classes. We proudly display some of her great paintings on our living room wall.



In April **Marc** surprised us by moving to Miami. He is working at Barns and Nobles and hoping to take some classes in 2012. In August Kathy spent some time with her sister Lori in Orlando. Marc surprised Kathy with a visit while she was there. One good thing about having a son living so far way in Miami is - we have a warm place to visit if it gets too cold this winter.



It's hard to believe but Taylor is nine and now in the fourth grade. It seems like just yesterday she was about to go to her first day of school. Kayce turned six last January and is in the first grade. She will soon turn seven just three days after Caitlynn turns six. Caitlynn started kindergarten this year. She reminds me of Perry (in more than just her resemblance). And Ryan turned four last June. He is handling having three older sisters without too much trouble. Angel is five and she too started kindergarten this year. Angel (like her mom) is very creative and loves dolphins and butterflies. Abigail turned one year old this past October and is a very happy baby (reminds me of her Uncle Marc). She is very inquisitive and loves trying to play bamboo flutes. She decided it was time to start walking this past Thanksgiving.





We are all healthy (for the most part) and that is always a good thing. We hope you enjoyed this year's newsletter (or at least enjoyed seeing recent photos anyway <g>) and hope you have a very MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Favorite Quote -**"Don't sweat the small stuff." -Richard Carlson**