Family News

December 15th, 2014



2014 has been a great year with a couple of firsts. On Valentine's Day Kathy and I spent the night with a room right on the Gulf. I surprised her with two concert tickets to see Elton John. It is the first concert she has ever been to. We had a blast! And then in July Kathy and I joined Sinder, Ronda, and Ron on an 8 day cruise to the Caribbean. That was the first time I had ever been on a cruise and I loved every minute of it. We stopped at four different islands and had a blast relaxing on the ship. I may have even kissed … a sting ray.

This year Kathy and I also spent time in Myrtle Beach, the Smokey Mountains, Nashville, Athens (GA) - home of the tree that owns itself, Orlando, New Smyrna Beach, and Sugar Loaf Key. And I had one trip alone to Kansas City (which was also a first for me).



This past April I marked 20 years of riding a bicycle to work. In July I began riding a small fold up bicycle and I love it. People ask me if I can do circus tricks and make other funny comments about the bike, but I don't care. It is much easier to ride and I love that I can fold it up and put it in a back seat or trunk if I need to.



TJ and Angela moved back from KS this past summer. It sure has been good to have them home. Once they settled into their new place in Crestview they hosted our first Family night in years.

Kathy and I sent saliva samples in and had our DNA tested this year. We now not only know more about where our ancestors came from, we also have a good idea of what major diseases we are at higher risk for. It is very interesting discovering what our DNA says about us.



In September we received news that Kathy's brother Jimmy was killed in a motorcycle accident. The world is missing a unique and free spirit. We were in Orlando for Thanksgiving and it was the first one without him. It is never easy to lose a loved one, especially at the age of 55.



I finished the lower floor of my sandbag "cave" in July of 2013. Every month since then I have spent at least one night in the cave. I call it Harmony Cave because of the peace and harmony I enjoy during my monthly retreats.

In August we had all six of our grandchildren campout in our back yard down by the lake. We had a blast taking turns in the kayak and taking the paddle boat across the lake to see the beaver lodge. Unfortunately we had about an hour of heavy rain around 9:00 pm. Everyone was able to get inside the cave except Angel. She was already asleep in the tent and slept right through the storm.





In September we joined Perry and Sammy and all their kids for a camp out at Grayton State Park. Sunset on the beach was spectacular. Next time we will plan to take our kayaks and enjoy the lake and the beach. It was a quiet event which made up for the excitement from Ryan's birthday party in June. They had a huge blowup slide for his party that began blowing away when a thunderstorm suddenly started. I think I may have been airborne for a bit.



Kathy and I did not go kayaking a lot the last half of the year, but we made up for it in the first half with trips on Cold Water, Ecofina, Grayton, and several trips on Turkey Creek. I also continue to enjoy taking the kayak out on Lake Juniper nearly every weekend.

Justinn opened an art gallery last spring. She spent much of the summer teaching art at the Library. The kids she was working with not only drew pictures, they wrote a book to go with their pictures and Justinn had it published for their parents. She continues to amaze me with her creativity.



If you have not seen some of the sun rise pictures Marc has been taking on the beach, you owe it to yourself to visit his Facebook page. The donnut shop where he works is right on the beach and at break he slips down now and then for some spectacular photos.





Everyone in our bunch is doing well. All of the grandchildren continue to shoot up. I predict Taylor will be taller than Kathy before her 13th birthday next June. She is within an inch now. We enjoy going to school events, ball games, recitals, … when we can. All of the grandchildren are about 45 minutes away, so we do not see them as much as we would like. We are SO proud of each of them!



Our dog Charlie passed away last May. We've had her for over 12 years. She was one of our favorite dogs. And for the first time in our almost 33 years of marriage, Kathy and I are alone in our house with no children and no pets. Although Kathy says that may change soon. She is keeping her eye out for a new pet.

Grandchildren's Ages:

Taylor 12 Kacey 9

Caitlynn 8 Angel 8

Ryan 7 Abigail 4

For past Family Newsletters go to:

http://hosttg.com/fn/

Favorite Quote:

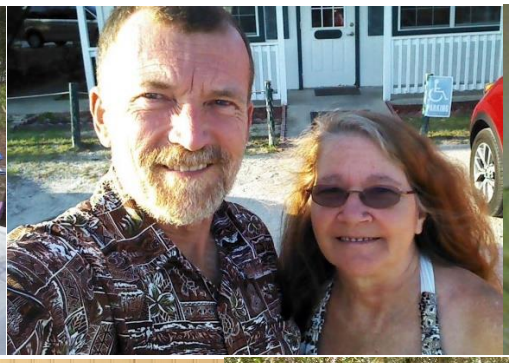
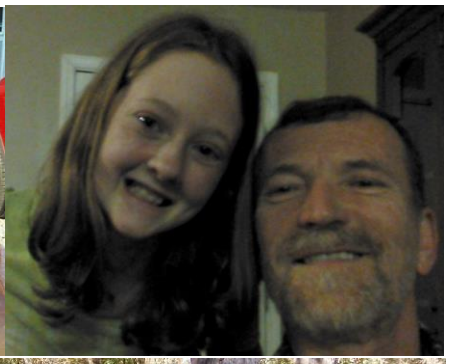
"*Happy is he who forgets ... what cannot be changed*." **Mark Twain**



More pictures from 2014:

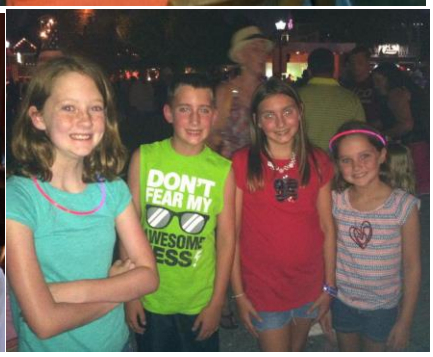








We wish each of you a very Merry Christmas!