

MIKE & JANE'S ANNUAL REPORT

(December 25, 2007)

So. Last year's report ended with a couple of unpleasant surprises, and we might as well point out up front that no immediate family members have died or gotten gravely ill, so there's no point in peeking at the end of the next page. Anyway, Jane started in on her post-surgery treatment adventure, with Mike's sister Betsy coordinating a community-wide meal program that left us little to worry about other than wishing we had about three extra refrigerators. Because if we did, we would be set for meals at home through August of 2009. So the chemo went pretty well, all things considered, and she is recovering quite nicely from all the "cue ball" jokes. At least, after her hair re-emerged sometime in June.

After chemo, Jane graduated to a course of radiation therapy, which had its good points and its bad points. On the minus side, it really burned, and tended to tire her out a lot. On the plus side, we no longer need to use a night light in our bedroom.

Of course, what with Jane's treatment going on, we couldn't travel much. The big thrill for this year's Spring Break involved repainting Maggie's room, due to her having acquired a fixation on the color green, which we figure is better than wanting to paint everything black with pentagrams on the walls.

Getting back to the regular course of things, Maggie played some softball in the spring, and went off on a class trip to Washington D.C. and New York before graduating from 8th grade in May. Maggie spent nine years at St. Paul the Apostle School, so the graduation was kind of traumatic.



Eighth Grade Graduation

She got over it fairly quickly, though, and went back to DECATS shortly afterward. In June, she came home with a love letter from Emmanuel, a student she met at her community service program. We learned that our daughter is "botfo," "pide," and "fune." But most of all "botfo." Whatever that is.



Love Letter to Maggie

Dave has kept on with his electric guitar lessons, and the dogs do not howl quite so much while he is practicing any more. He and some friends put together a band for the St. Paul talent show in the spring, and their performance went over pretty well, at least until they finished by kicking over their



Really boring uniforms...

amplifiers and setting their instruments on fire. Maybe letting him watch all those Hendrix documentaries wasn't the smartest idea after all. (The talent show video is available on our Web site, if you would like to see.) Other than guitar, Dave had a good spring season of academics, baseball, and soccer. Mike re-upped as assistant coach of Dave's soccer team, the "Texas Thunder," which has really boring uniforms but missed the league championship by all of one point anyway.

Then came summer, with the usual complement of activities. Dave tried classes in fencing, rocketry, and "science gadgets," which disappointingly did not involve extremely high voltage or radioactivity.

As per usual, Mike participated in the Bar None show, even though the director stubbornly refuses to play the "Tonight Show" theme whenever Mike walks on stage. Although that would be totally awesome.

Maggie's summer also involved a week in East Texas at Summer Camp, and a painting, poetry, photography, improv, cooking, and sculpture classes. So we have several of her freeform masterpieces adorning the house these days.

There was a lot of Boy Scouts stuff going on too: Dave and Mike attended Catapult Camp, Camporee, Wilderness Survival, Planning, Rock Climbing, and Sailing camps. And Mike served as acting Scoutmaster for Troop 728 as they attended Camp Constantine for a week in July. This was about the time that Troop 728 Planning Committee



Speaking of boring, get a load of the "costumes" they wear in Bar None



Some of the summer camp crew

members started pestering Mike about taking over as regular Scoutmaster. Mike thinks there is a big neon sign reading “SUCKER” following him around.

You all can probably guess how *that* turned out.

This fall brought a pretty major change, as Maggie started high school at Ursuline Academy, an all-girls Catholic school. Ordinarily, this would be something one does to a kid to try to tone *down* their social life, but in her case it had the opposite effect. Maggie has been enjoying a whole lot more

social activities, including football games, dances, homecoming, intramurals (“Spirit Week”) – and has a bunch of new friends. Actually, her eighth grade graduation acted as a sort of Calvin & Hobbes Transmogrification Machine and turned her into a Teenager. Naturally, with only girls around all week, there are major boy-related events going on every weekend, and the boys they hang out with attend a school somewhere near Fort Worth. So our advice would be to invest heavily in Exxon stock for the foreseeable future, what with all the shuttling around that has been going on. Maggie is also beginning work toward her Gold Award in Girl Scouts and has been continuing to develop her sewing and cooking talents. She has not set off a smoke alarm in weeks, which is something of a triumph for her.



Probably a little overboard with the whole “green” thing

Jane and Maggie did get to run up to Wisconsin to visit Jane’s family this summer for a few days while Mike and Dave were sweltering at summer camp. Jane and Maggie probably got the better of that deal. As for traveling the other direction, Jane was thrilled that several of her brothers and sisters came to visit this year, and she got to see many parts of Dallas she wasn’t familiar with like Corvette World, Minter’s Thunderbird, and what the inside of a fabric store looks like. Also some old favorites like the Nasher Sculpture museum and the Dallas Museum of Art. (And the help they offered around the house was AWESOME!)



Jane after a surgical tweak or two

Near the end of July, Mike discovered that there are actually some people named Koenecke in the world that he does not personally know, so he flew up to attend a family reunion held in the teeming metropolis of Reedsburg, Wisconsin, and was able to spend some time with Jane’s brother Jim and family as well.

Back to Jane’s course of treatment: with everything looking good, we finally scheduled her reconstruction surgery in October. Since she was going under the knife anyway, we figured she might as well make the most of it, so Jane may look a trifle different the next time you see her.

There is no particular news on the career front: Jane is still at Interstate Batteries, and looking forward to her ninth semi-annual convention next year. Mike is still doing estate planning and general business work. While this past year went better than it could have, we are still looking forward to getting back to normal. Whatever that is. We have all gotten our passports updated (see below), and are planning a trip to Europe this summer to make some great family memories that we can always treasure.

Our best wishes to you for a happy and blessed holiday season, a Merry Christmas, and a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2008!



Mike, Jane, Maggie, & Dave