

Mike & Jane's Annual Report

December 25, 2010

As the new year of 2010 commenced, it suddenly dawned on Maggie that she had been 16 years old for a whole half year already, and still had no driver's license. Most people would want to enroll in a driving school and get the thing over with, but not Maggie: no, she wanted her *parents* to teach her to drive. And so, after hours and hours of instruction, now neither one of us can get in an automobile without uncontrollable twitching. Anyway, Maggie did eventually get her license, but on the condition that she drive with at least eight rosaries and a bobble-headed Jesus on the dashboard.



Give Blood. Play Rugby.

January also involved Dave's first regular rugby season at Jesuit starting up with Rugby Boot Camp. Since this is still high school, it fortunately did not involve beer, R-rated songs, or the Elephant Walk. Dave did pretty well in his first season, and wound up with all his pieces in the right place. Except, perhaps, his brain, but we knew *that* going in.

In March, Jane was summoned into the President's office and told she had been promoted to Interstate Batteries Vice President of E-Mail. At least, that is what she spends all her time doing. This was a bit of a disappointment, as she had kind of hoped they would let her drive the #18 car

for their racing team instead. But she's coping.

In May the family joined Jane in Orlando for Interstate's semi-annual convention. We naturally spent some time at some of Orlando's 13,000 separate theme parks, though next time we will probably give *Worlds of Foot Ointment* a miss. The fact that the Harry Potter section of *Islands of Adventure* was not yet open was a big letdown for Maggie, who has been addicted to all things Harry since first grade and was hoping to bring home a pet owl. Dave did not mind so much, since his favorite activity was drooling over all the guitars at the Hard Rock Café.



At the Convention in Orlando

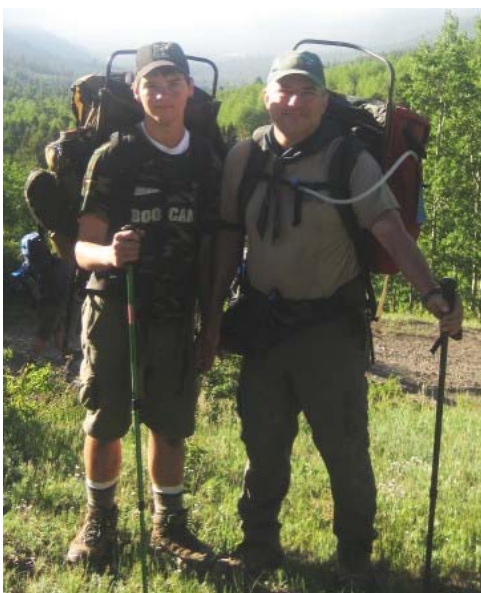
Anyway, with Maggie's junior and Dave's freshman year safely in the rear view mirror, everybody pretty much scattered to the four winds. Maggie headed off to staff for four weeks at Camp Cherokee, to acquire

yet another batch of 142 eleven-year-old admirers. Soon after that Mike and Dave, having decided that all the camping they had been doing with Troop 728 was way too civilized, went off to Philmont Scout Ranch to spend a couple of weeks backpacking in the mountains of northern New Mexico. Dave emerged fairly unscathed, while Mike returned with a beard (which only lasted a couple of days) and a truly amazing set of blisters (which took a good month and a half to disappear completely).

So Jane got to relax by herself for a time in June. In July it was Mike's turn, as Dave went off to a Scout leadership camp, and Jane, Maggie, and Maggie's boyfriend Michael went with their Venture Crew to Sea Base in the Florida Keys. This involved sailing, fishing, snorkeling, and hanging out in pepper shops, and sounded pretty much like Club Med without the Mai-Tais. At one point, Maggie even caught a shark, though it was touch and go as to who would be catching whom for a while there.

As Maggie's Senior year approached, in August we started gadding about the country in an

effort to visit the Top Five Colleges Most Like Hogwarts, which was Maggie's main criterion on where to apply. So Mike took her to see Haverford and Villanova in Pennsylvania, where they got to spend a weekend with Uncles Joe



Only another 2,000 feet of climbing to go...



Jane, Maggie, & Michael on their "Club Venture Crew" trip

and Rony; then Jane took her to see Oberlin, Dennison, Kenyon and Xavier in Ohio. After that, Mike, Maggie and Dave motored down to San Antonio for Maggie's Girl Scout Gold Award project. She had collected hundreds of letters and created a video for the wounded soldiers at Brook Medical Center, and presented all of that to them.

Jane also took a short jaunt to Appleton for her 30th high school reunion. Wow: everybody else there looked really *old*.

Speaking of projects, in September was Dave's Eagle project, which involved a crowd of teenage boys occupying the garage with plywood and power tools for a couple of weekends. We are glad no one wound up with a nickname like "Lefty" or "Stump."



Dave, cousins Jack and Will, and friend Francis with the completed project

September came up on us pretty fast, and with it started Maggie's last year in high school. We are pretty sure it was only last month she was playing with Barbies in her dollhouse. Anyway, for years we had been looking forward to the luxury of her driving both herself and Dave to school. Then we found out she was supposed to have applied for a parking spot back in June, when she was off at camp, so she missed it entirely. *The Senior-itis is strong in this one...* So we are back to driving them both back and forth, only this time without even a car pool.

Jane and Maggie also visited a couple more schools in Texas, en route to spending Thanksgiving with Mike's sister Katie and her family in San Antonio. (Mike and Dave, plus Mike's other sisters Betsy and Trish and their families, were there too of course.) None of the schools had Quidditch as a varsity sport, though, so that was a letdown for her. We are wondering if perhaps this Harry Potter thing might be getting a bit out of hand...

Dave is in his second year at Jesuit and having fun. Probably too much fun. He and some of his friends have started a band called *Lost Transit*, which so far just practices in the garage from time to time. The garage has been a particularly noisy place lately, since Dave also practices out there by himself with his 200 watt amp. Oddly enough, our neighbor across the alley suddenly put



See Jane. Jane is in a Plane.



*Maggie & Michael, Dave & Missy:
Homecoming 2010*

up an 8-foot fence just a month or so ago. Of course, that's just a coincidence. We think.

Mike's time on the Parish Pastoral Council ended in April, and he celebrated his 50th birthday in July. And his three year term as Scoutmaster ended in August, which means that next year you will not have to read so much endless yabbering about camping and Boy Scouts. Here's hoping. Until then, Dave figured he could get a few things done without being bossed around quite so much. So he is now Senior Patrol Leader for Troop 728, passed his final Board of Review for Eagle, and is finishing up his *Ad Altare Dei* religious award. In other news, Maggie finally completed her paperwork and delivered it all in an enormous binder to the Girl Scouts, which completed her Gold Award. Or, judging from the binder, maybe her Weightlifting or Junior Hernia Award. We are not entirely sure which.

Mike was thrilled to go out with his brother in law Cary, the (former Marine, now airline) pilot, to San Diego for some pretty wild mock dogfighting, and Jane got to do the same thing with him right here in Dallas, where he even let her fly the plane for a while. This was more than Cary trusted Mike to do; perhaps Jane should have gotten that racing job after all.

And since we started reading the books to Maggie when she was in first grade, it was only natural that we all attend the midnight premiere of the latest *Harry Potter* movie. We learned in the morning that was a pretty knuckleheaded thing to do on a school night. And Maggie recently had a fun time acting in a one-act farce at Ursuline (her high school) called *The Mystery at Twickman Vicarage*, featuring the most ridiculous English accents this side of Monty Python.

So anyway, as the year winds down and we look forward to bouncing up to Wisconsin for a few days, we sure hope all is well for our friends and family. Merry Christmas, and may 2011 be a great one for you.

Mike, Jane, Maggie & Dave