

MIKE & JANE'S ANNUAL REPORT

December 25, 2009

All righty then. In 2009 we got back down to bidness, as we say here in Texas. None of this gallivanting about the globe, which should make for a fairly standard, run of the mill narrative. But a lot shorter one, so there's that.



April: Jane with high school buddies, the "Chicky Hawks."

We wound up last year right back into travel adventures, arriving in Milwaukee too late for the flight to Appleton, so wound up on a bus, arriving around 2:00 a.m. in Jane's home town. As always, it really did not matter, and we had a fine time with the Kesler clan, winding up with a Christmas morning Mass at St. Pius, the church where we were married. Mike and Jane signed up for a "Financial Peace University" course early in the year, which had its ups and downs. On the plus side, the plan to buy Ross Perot's mansion by leveraging over \$7 million in junk bonds has been scuttled. On the minus side, each shopping expedition now involves several hours of Jane haggling over the price of a box of Cheerios.

In March, Troop and Venture Crew 728 went

spelunking at Longhorn Cavern, which involved a fair amount of squirming through tiny and tight openings in rock. This worked out pretty well for Maggie, who has a 12" waist, but less so for Mike, who needed three cans of WD-40 to make it back to the surface.

In April, Maggie's cousin Will had a birthday party at home. Since they live only a couple of blocks away, the boys decided it would be a good idea to come over and TP our house, but some brave soul tipped Maggie off in advance. So she and her friend Cathryn hid in the bushes for an hour with a charged garden hose, and ambushed the boys when they arrived. Like, girlz rule!

As the school year wound down, Dave got to take a trip to Washington D.C. and New York with his 8th grade class, then finally graduated after nine years at St. Paul the Apostle. We had been going there every day for eleven years, all told, and knew all the staff and teachers personally. Now they are both in high school, and we are not entirely sure where. They just disappear every morning and come back in the afternoons...

Maggie developed an intense interest in a local band called *Disco Curtis* early this year, decorating her laptop¹, shoes, and various notebooks with stickers. We are pretty sure no tattoos, though. Yet. Anyway, in May she decided that the coolest Sweet Sixteen ever would be to hire them for a birthday party, Preferably at Carnegie Hall. Surprisingly enough, by splitting the difference with her friend Mary Catherine and finding a place to rent for the magnificent sum of \$50, it actually

worked out, though we drew the line at the whole helicopter limo idea.



See Dave. Dave is in a Cave.



Maggie rappelling in November



Antione (or Geoffroy), Cousin Jack, Geoffroy (or Antoine), Dave, & Maggie

¹ Computer!



With Uncle and Auntie in Minnesota

She now wants to go for *five* weeks next year.

In July, Mike attended his fourth straight summer camp, this time without Dave, who was brushing up on his English at summer school. Since our nephew Will went to France in June, in July two brothers, Geoffroy and Antoine, showed up as exchange students, so we hosted one for a couple of weeks. Having covered South America and Europe, we are now looking for exchange students from Asia, Africa, Australia, and Antarctica to complete the sweep.

In July, what with the exchange students, we took turns going out of town: Jane and Maggie traveled to Wisconsin for her niece Laura's wedding. Mike then went to Minnesota to visit with his great uncle Jack and great aunt Angie, as the latter (aged 93) had broken her hip, and they had relocated to a nursing home.

In general news, Maggie is working towards getting her driver's license in February, so you might want to stay off the roads for a couple of months after that, just to be safe.



Mike & Dave, sweaty after their Order of the Arrow "ordeal" in August

Dave is continuing to progress playing guitar. Apparently the instrument he has been working with for a while was not quite loud enough, so the new love of his life is his black Gibson Les Paul Studio Edition with custom pickups. We are pretty sure he sleeps with the thing.

Dave started his first year at Jesuit (Mike's alma mater) in September, and was proud to be the first freshman to sign up for their rugby team. (This was about 99% of the reason he wanted to go there in the first place.) Also in September, we all went up to St. Peter, Minnesota, to celebrate Mike's great uncle Jack's **100th** birthday and great

aunt Angie's 94th birthday: they were born on the same day, six years apart (1909 and 1915). Mike made another run to St. Peter in October to help them move into assisted living, completing the trifecta for the year. November and December mainly involved the usual things: school, work, various Scouting camps, and now preparing for Winter Camp, just after Christmas.

Here's to a wonderful 2010 for all...

Mike, Jane, Maggie & Dave

In June, Mike participated in yet another Bar None, this one number XXIV, titled "Scumbag Billionaire," and figures he will retire from the stage when he can come up with a sufficiently grand finale. So far, after 20 years or so of trying, it is not looking promising.

Back near the end of 2008, Maggie decided to interview for a summer camp staff position, and got the job. By the time June rolled around, she was having second thoughts about spending four full weeks away from home, so worked two weeks as a teacher's aide at DECATS (a summer school program) instead. After that, there was still a *great* deal of drama involved at the thought of leaving even for *two* weeks. As you would expect, upon her return we learned that she had a terrific time, and also acquired a boyfriend while doing so.



Maggie and Michael, polka-ing at Westfest



With Elvis at Westfest