

# ☆☆☆ Mike & Jane's Annual Report ☆☆☆

December, 2024

The years seem to be picking up speed as we move on... Jane's birthday in January started a new reason for a get together for a "crunch" (a/k/a "craft brunch"). And this year we finally joined the Big Climb up the tallest building in Dallas to help fund leukemia and lymphoma research (thanks for the inspiration, Beanie!).



After the Big Climb

Late in March we traveled up to Nashville with Michael and Maggie for a nice Easter weekend with Dave. We saw his friend Ted and his band Miki Fiki in concert, and investigated various breweries...



Disc golfing in Nashville with Sylvie

Back in Richardson, it was great to get some time with Mike's sister Katie, her daughter Erin, and sons Connor and Joe.



With Katie, Erin, Connor, & Joe

We did enjoy taking advantage of our once in a lifetime shot at observing a solar eclipse on April 8<sup>th</sup> over at Maggie and Michael's house: the dogs were totally *freaked out*, either by the eclipse or by our weird glasses.



Eclipse Spotting

In May, we went to Scarborough Faire (the local renaissance festival) with Michael and Maggie for the first time in fifteen years: the jugglers and jousters (quite jolly, jiggy, and perhaps a bit jejeune) looked a tad older, but it was pretty much the same...



Cheering against those naughty Sod Poodles

For Father's Day in June, Maggie and Michael surprised Mike with a trip out to a minor league baseball game, seeing the Frisco Roughriders play the Amarillo "Sod Poodles," who really should have had floppy ears dangling from their caps, but no such luck.

And, a bit later on, we decided to celebrate our 35<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary by re-creating our first adventure as a married couple. In the Fall of 1989, we had a delightful weekend at a B&B in Jefferson in East Texas, so we figured going there just before our July 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary and staying a few days would be pretty cool. Whoops: we learned that Jefferson, being a small town, pretty much rolls up the sidewalks every week from Monday through Wednesday, so the opportunities for touristy fun were fairly minimal. We still had a nice time being together, but will shoot for a weekend if we ever try *that* again.



Jefferson Trip, 1989

A couple of weeks later in July was a wonderful time down in the Texas Hill Country, where we convened for a family celebration of Mike's sister Betsy and



Jefferson Trip, 2024



*Cary & Betsy's Anniversary Celebration*

her husband Cary's 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, with a couple of relaxing days by a lake and a trip to a local vineyard for a wine tasting. Both their sons, Will and Jack, plus Cary's mother Jenelle, were able to come, as well as Mike's sisters Katie and Trish, his other brother in law Mike Zang, and various nieces, nephews, grand-nieces, and grand-nephews.

In May and in September we had a chance to hang out with the Kesler clan up in Wisconsin,

having a fantastic time (as always) with the family, doing puzzles, eating carrot cake, and boating out on the lakes!



*Cruisin' on the Chain of Lakes*

Overall, Michael and Maggie have had a very busy year. Michael was promoted to Associate Director for Protiviti, and in between all he did there he has been working assiduously on his journey towards being a certified (or perhaps certifiable) Master Smokin' Barbecue Savant. And they both got to spend a wonderful time touring Sicily with the Colonna clan this summer as well, in a trip that had to be postponed for several years. Maggie continues her work at Research Bridge Partners and through it is helping scientists and investors to bring more health solutions to the broader community. And... we are *super excited* about their family growing to three, with the "chicken nugget" (that's what the first sonogram looked like - they are going to wait to find out if it is a boy or a girl) due in April. We have even taken a "Grandparents 101" class to know how to put



*With Dave & Elizabeth in Nashville*

together these newfangled devices and to learn about all the things we did wrong with our own children.



*Maggie & Michael at Scarborough Faire*

We headed back to Nashville in November, and got to meet Dave's girlfriend Elizabeth, who he has been hanging out with for much of the year. We also enjoyed a ZZ Top concert among other great activities, usually centered around tunes and excellent beer. Dave enjoys a wide array of live music: it is always fun to share it with him, and it makes us so happy he will still invite us to come along! He continues working at the digital ad agency, Tombras, with a very cool crew of colleagues. He has done quite a bit of traveling again this year, most notably a ten day trip to New Zealand with his cousin Will (originally planned for 2020!). They have been talking about this trip for several years so it was very cool to see them make it happen and enjoy it so much.



*Don't know if Bonden really has the Christmas spirit thing going...*



*A very Haka Christmas to all...*

**Here's to a productive and delightful 2025: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!**

*Mike & Jane*