

## Merry Christmas 2003



We hope the year 2003 was a blessed one for you and that the holiday season will be a joyous time.



2003 was eventful. Jay's Dad passed away September 30, less than a year after he (Bill) and wife Elaine moved to Florida. He had suffered with Alzheimer's and other ailments; a hospital visit for a minor but essential procedure resulted in complications. He died peacefully, living to the age of 86 and being happily married for over 60 years. Mom (Elaine) is handling it as best as possible under the circumstances. She is spending Christmas with daughter Ellen and family in Indianapolis and is enjoying her time there.

The rest of the family is well. Bonnie enjoys our new house, located about 1,200' from our old house. We thought we were living in our retirement home (give or take a condo on the ocean) but a better, bigger home came open in the same community and we made the move. Actually Bonnie got tired of just watching "Trading Spaces" and wanted to get in on the action. Q: Recently she bought herself [Pick one]: (a) a new outfit, (b) a makeover, (c) matching shoes and pocketbook, (d) a tile-cutting machine. If you didn't answer (d) turn in your Bob Vila Fan Club Card.

This is no joke: The people at Home Depot know Bonnie by name. Here's another chance to excel: Q: They know Bonnie by name because [Select all correct responses]: (a) They know everyone's name, (b) She knows them all on a first name basis and they feel obliged to reciprocate, (c) They are required by management to learn anyone's name who makes over 1,000 visits, (d) They get fair warning and a chance to hide when they hear over the intercom, "Will someone come to plumbing, Bonnie has a question?" The answers are (b) and (c), and probably (d).

Anne has become a Kindergarten teacher and is enjoying it – a lot of work, and some kids you are very glad you are not related to. Hey Anne, remember those Title Processing jobs you had where you got to go in at 9:30 a.m.? You traded them for a punch-the-clock profession where eager 5-year olds are waiting for you at 7:30 PROMPT each morning. Anne has recruited Bonnie, Sandra, and my Mom as unpaid teacher aides to help read to the class and keep them busy. Also to help escort certain young rascals to the Principal's Office on a regular basis.

Robert at Georgia Tech changed his major from computer engineering to intramural sports. Well, he still is a computer engineer major, but you wouldn't know it by the way he spent his time the first semester. Nonetheless, his grades are good, even considering the thermodynamics (thermoDIEnamics) course that about ate him up. Only needs two courses for graduation so spring will be even more sports we suspect. With a May graduation in his plans, the major three letters in Robert's life will be J – O – B.

According to Sandra and Bonnie, Savannah's big event of 2003 was potty training. After hundreds of dollars of bribery, Savannah surrendered to the porcelain throne. They felt it was a huge event; perhaps you caught sight of the announcement on the Goodyear Blimp. Sandra continues working as a Wee-Care teacher and she is great. She now is also Music Director for the four-year olds. I hope this experience doesn't render all the children tone deaf. Seth will be two in January. It looks like he'll have his grandfather's athletic prowess – he has a great arm, as evidenced by the toys, stones and other items he has tossed into the pool. We're trying to get him to understand that playing catch with a Styrofoam ball is much more fun than with golf balls 'cause a golf ball at three feet hurts. This year Steve gave up his 10-year-old Honda and bought a sporty new car. Mid-life crisis came early. He is still juggling his mortgage and tax business—with a little golf and basketball sprinkled in to make it interesting.

Karen is a social worker at Lakeland Regional Medical Center. She has reorganized the place in terms of forms management and other efficiencies. Just got a decent raise. Karen is also someone I never saw as a punch-the-clock person, and she says her supervisor does give her some slack because of the late hours she often pulls.



Beau went to Cat Heaven last spring, having made ten family moves in his 21 years. We now have Sampson and Delilah, two refugees from the Humane Association, who are now about six-months old and plenty lively. In case you didn't know this, you just don't go to the Humane Association and pay five bucks to save a varmint or two from a bad fate. You see, the process is a bit different: nowadays you adopt kittens and you have to be approved! This means – no lie – you get counseled to see if you are acceptable. You have to sign all kinds of forms that acknowledge how you'll treat your pet, etc. Then you get to pay \$55 EACH. Ridiculous!!! And that price doesn't include de-clawing, as attested by four sets of very nice curtains that amused the kittens up to the point the curtains became car-wash rags.

Bonnie and I are still playing volleyball about twice a week, and golf once a week though we've missed a lot this fall. I'm still in a racquetball league and play about twice a week. Bonnie played in the church doubles league, and she and her partner won their division. Bonnie has placed her trophies in very conspicuous places around the house just to make sure everyone knows about her prowess.

I'm still with Stetson University, putting in about 30K miles a year getting there and back. Doing technology training and other professional development programs. It's [www.stetson.edu/suite](http://www.stetson.edu/suite) for those who have trouble falling asleep at night.

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God's grace and design for our lives never ceases to amaze us. Pray for our wonderful troops. Have a fantastic new year.

Jay, Bonnie, kids, and kittens