

February, 2024

Dear family and friends,

Hello, and welcome to our family biannual news letter.

The headline news item is that we are in the process of building a new house. At this point we have the lot and plans in place, and expect to break ground next month. By the end of the year we should be at our new address, 4508 Winchester Ave, Lisle, IL 60532. The design is very much based on our current house except all on one floor (plus a basement), wheelchair accessible, and a little smaller. The lot is much smaller, so there will be less yard to maintain. It will be all electric with solar panels, and so net zero energy use. It's quite a bit closer to many of the places we go, but still not very far from where we live now so we can go back to doctors, etc. It's only 3 minutes further to Dave's work. We built our current house 32 years ago, so we know that it's a lot more challenging than buying an existing house, but this way we get exactly what we want and everything new.

Sadly, Ruth's father suffered a severe stroke and passed away in 2023. He moved to a retirement home apartment in 2022 and had been enjoying it there. Now between us we have just one living parent left, Dave's Dad who is still doing very well at 96, still driving and staying active at church and with his townhome homeowner's association.

Ruth spent a lot of time helping her Dad with downsizing and visiting with him. She sorted and digitized many hundreds of her parents' old photos. That work is now mostly done. She also had one knee replaced at the end of last summer and the other one last month. Her craft business has been doing well, and she added making small blank-page books to the items she offers.

<https://whennotgardening.com>

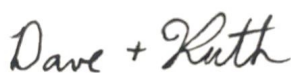
Many Fermilab employees still mostly work from home, although Dave usually goes in to the lab 4 days a week. Most meetings are completely on Zoom and all have at least a Zoom option, so it's no problem to work from home when Ruth needs help with recovery from surgery. He still loves his work and so is not planning on retiring anytime soon. Dave became the head of the IT team at church and is now in a 2 year break from being on the church council. There haven't been any in-person lectures at Fermilab since before the pandemic, more because of new security requirements than concerns about spreading diseases, but hopefully the lectures will be able to start again this year.

Mark still works at Business IT Source in the northwest Chicago suburbs and lives in a shared apartment. He has been doing computer programming for them but not being recognized for it, so he is looking for a programming job that takes better advantage of his Computer Science degree. Sarah & Aaron have been enjoying their home in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, with very little change in their situation in the last couple of years. They're both active in their church, with Aaron running the sound system and Sarah teaching Sunday School.

We did quite a bit more traveling than the previous two years, although not as much as pre-pandemic. We drove to Montgomery, Alabama, with a group from our church and an inner city Chicago church to tour the racism museums. We participated in Mission Impossible trips in Tennessee and North Carolina. We went to Puerto Rico and Culebra last winter and St. Louis last November. Ruth came along on work trips that Dave had to the Netherlands, Virginia, and Madison, WI, and Dave went on his own on work trips to Texas and Switzerland. The whole family went to the quinquennial Klompier reunion in Montana last summer, and we had Dykstra sibling reunions to the Wisconsin Dells and Union Pier, Michigan.

We have a guest room available now and will have one in the new house as well, so let us know if you want a place to stay. We hope you are all doing well and wish you God's blessings.

Love,



Dave and Ruth Dykstra



Ruth & Dave in Mission Impossible cave



Ruth in Netherlands cheese museum



Dave & Ruth at their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Mark



Aaron and Sarah at a friend's wedding



Dave's siblings & spouses at Dad's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday