

February, 2014

Dear family and friends,

Greetings! We hope you all are doing well. Here's what our family was up to in 2013.



Ruth took a significant step in starting a business in April. She chose the name "When Not Gardening" for the business. She makes arts and crafts, primarily out of felted wool, and sells them at local craft fairs. Most often she sold at the "Batavia Artisan Collective" fairs which are held once a month on a weeknight. She very much enjoys making beautiful things, including quite a few knitted things that she makes for fun. You can find pictures of her products linked from her web page <http://whennotgardening.com>

Another significant although unfortunate step Ruth took was in her garden, at the beginning of September when she fell and broke her ankle. She went through a long period of a cast and physical therapy, and it still bothers if she's on her feet for long.

The other major thing she does when not gardening and when not managing our home and family is continuing to lead several small groups. This year she was also the co-coordinator of the small groups program at our church along with Dave.

Ruth is pictured above in Yellowstone National Park which we visited on our family vacation this summer in conjunction with the 3rd every-10th year family reunion of her mother's siblings and their offspring. We also visited Grand Teton National Park and spent some extra time staying with Ruth's aunt and cousins in Montana. We enjoyed that trip very much.

The other trip we did with the whole family was with Dave's siblings at a very nice Bed and Breakfast in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. We rented the whole place for the weekend, which included an indoor swimming pool. Ruth went with Sarah to Tennessee in March on another one-week Mission Impossible trip, which was unfortunately rather cold and damp. Three of us went without Mark during the school year to St. Louis, because the college and high school breaks didn't coincide.

2013 was not much of a travel year for Dave. The only work trips the whole year were driving twice to Indianapolis. (That's changing, however, with 3 long distance trips already scheduled for 2014). He kept plenty busy at work, with a lot of activity upgrading software while the Large Hadron Collider is shut down, and also helping to prepare for many new smaller physics experiments based at Fermilab.

Dave continues to chair the Fermilab public lecture committee and lead or co-lead 4 small groups. This picture of him was taken at the Dykstra family reunion in Wisconsin.





The biggest change for Sarah was that she got her driver's license not long after her 16th birthday in the spring. She **loves** to drive. At the end of the summer we got a fourth used Toyota for the family, a 2003 Corolla, which she has been told she can use when she goes to college. Meanwhile she takes the older minivan to school while Mom gets the "new" car during the day.

Since Sarah is a Junior now she is starting to get lots of mail from colleges. At this point her first choice is the same as her big brother's, Dordt College, although that choice was made before visiting any of them so it might change.

In addition to going to Mission Impossible, Sarah very much enjoyed going for a week in June to Worldview Academy in Deerfield Illinois and then a week to SERVE in Crown Point Indiana. She is hoping to get a job next summer and so she probably won't be able to do as much of that kind of thing then. For now she makes pretty good money babysitting about once a week during the school year. Her picture above was taken in the Gallatin National Forest in Montana.

Mark is 19 and in his second year at Dordt (studying Mechanical Engineering). He enjoys it there and has made a lot of friends. Homework still takes too much time, however. Most of his spare time is taken up with playing Minecraft and making videos to post on his youtube channel "DroidFreak36".

During the summer he worked for the second time at Fermilab, this time not in the Computing Division. He worked on software and some hardware for the "DarkSide-50", an experiment that is trying to detect dark matter. It was good because the work was a little closer to his primary area of interest, robotics. Mark's picture here is by a lake in the Tetons.



In summary, we had a very good 2013. We hope yours was good too and that God will bless you even more in 2014.

Love,

The Dykstras

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