

February, 2026

Dear family and friends,

Here's the news of the year for our family.

It has been a joy seeing our granddaughter Adelyn grow from an infant to a toddler. At this point she's not quite walking yet but she's doing a lot of cruising along the furniture. She's generally a happy child. We have been able to see her several times in person and in between we connect by video. Her parents Sarah and Aaron have been adjusting to parenthood very well. Sarah went back to working full time as a graphic designer and Adelyn enjoys her time in day care.

There have been a lot of changes for Mark this year. He got a job in the medical school at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks as a technician for their high-tech patient simulation robots. He moved just across the state line to East Grand Forks, Minnesota, in June. The motivation for the move was to be close to his internet girlfriend Rosa. Rosa's father gave Mark the tip about the job, but very sadly he suddenly passed away a few months after Mark moved. Then in December Mark and Rosa got married. We advised them to take more time to prepare, but we pray that God will work in their lives for good.

After more than 30 years off from square dancing, we decided to get back into it. We took lessons in the fall semester, and since it felt so familiar it was easier for us than most of the students, even though Ruth had to skip some classes to go to church council meetings. We joined the club in Downers Grove, and there are many square dance clubs in the Chicago area so we can go to dances now almost any weekend we want to. Ruth is happy that traditional attire is not required at dances anymore.

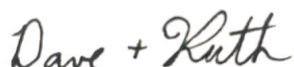
Ruth had lots of fun designing and setting up the new gardens at our house this year. We planted over 200 native plants in the rain garden, set up 6 raised beds for vegetables and fruits, and added many perennials in the front. With her sister's help she designed and made a nice stained glass piece for above our front door. She took a calligraphy class to expand her artistic skills even further. She also started exercising with the local park district, and began volunteering in the guest pantry at the PADS interim housing center.

Dave is turning 65 this year but doesn't plan to retire from Fermilab for a couple more years. Last fall he started volunteering for Exodus World Service, an organization that provides long term support to local refugees, helping to co-lead a weekly computing skills group. Participation was low, however, so the group was put on hold for the spring semester.

2025 was one of those rare years where we didn't go anywhere by airplane. Fermilab travel budgets were tight, but Dave did manage to get to two conferences by car, one in Chicago and one in Madison, Wisconsin. We went on Aurora Christian School's Mission Impossible trip again, this time at a very nice new-to-them camp in Kentucky. Dave led a fence repair crew and Ruth as usual was on the cooking crew. In July there was a mini Dykstra reunion at our house, with all of Dave's Dad's great grandkids attending. In August we took a weekend trip to La Porte, Indiana. In addition to weekend trips to Minneapolis to see Sarah and family, we took a longer trip in October going first to Duluth, Minnesota, then Grand Forks to see Mark in his new place, and then to Minneapolis on the way back. We did have an airplane trip last month, to the Caribbean island of Cozumel, Mexico. We enjoyed it even though we weren't able to go snorkeling the first few days due to the sea being too rough.

We hope you are all doing well and wish you God's blessings. Please let us know if you will be in our area and have some time to visit.

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave + Ruth".

Dave and Ruth Dykstra

dwd@drdykstra.us 630-485-1223

ruth@drdykstra.us 630-485-1224

