

The Taylor Gazette

Volume 8

Winter 2002-2003

Dear family and friends,

This was quite an eventful year for our family – filled with the usual bustle and some sadness. The year began as any other, this time with thoughts of adding another animal to our zoo. What were we thinking? Last year we reported the adoption of Adina, a little puppy. It became apparent after a short time that she had an aggressive disposition. Our vet strongly urged us to find her a home without children. We sadly gave her up much to David's despair. He accepted in her place, a guinea pig who he named Adina (too). While he loves her, she was no replacement for the puppy, so after months of anguish, we sought to find another dog that was more "proven" to be a family pet. Just as we were about to save a 6 month old puppy, our vet called us about rescuing a 16-month old purebred black lab.

We went to see Spencer that day and took him home. The first few months were difficult as he acclimated to a new home, family and the changes described below. We learned that nothing could be left around, so we removed all the books from bookshelves, put away toys, pillows, stray clothing, shoes, etc. After eating (and miraculously passing) more socks than have disappeared in 15 years of laundry, Spencer

calmed down and became the (120 lb) puppy he was meant to be. It seems he has become more secure knowing he is loved. It is such fun to see him frolic with Vita (our 9 year old lab mix). It has kept her in shape and frisky. She is clearly the "boss" and keeps him in check, yet cares for him by licking the water off his face after his sloppy drinking habits.



THE STAR OF THE YEAR

In March, Debbie started a new job in Shelton, close to home. She is the Manager of Learning & Development for Inline Plastics Corp. Her responsibilities include corporate learning and organizational effectiveness and seem to expand every day. She is making good use of her Master's degree, doing the kind of work she loves. She had an opportunity to return to New Orleans in May, to attend a training professional's conference. Debbie completed six years (the maxi-

mum) of service on Stratford's Youth and Family Advisory Board and sadly had to step down. In September, she was appointed to the Stratford Ethics Commission, which she has been interested in serving on for years, but it had been inactive until the town council revived it this year.

Jim has enjoyed his 2nd year at Kramer Electronics continuing as the Eastern Region Sales Manager. Although the

poor economy has hurt the professional audio visual industry, Kramer enjoyed double digit growth in 2002. Jim's travel takes him down the entire east coast, but he works hard to balance work and family. Jim and Debbie also attended Jim's 35th (ouch!!) Taft High School reunion in May.

April brought terrible news to the family. Both Jim's and Debbie's fathers were diagnosed with cancer. Jim's father was treated for liver cancer at Memorial Sloan Kettering. His health is currently stable and the prognosis is good. At 81, he still works, though has curtailed his travel schedule considerably. Debbie's father is not faring well. He has been undergoing treatment since diagnosis, yet has steadily declined. Being a trooper, he has, as of this writing, declined to give up treatment. The family has been back and forth to Florida in various combinations over the past few months. Debbie's brother Barry has taken a leave from work to care full time for Dad.

During the aforementioned tribulations, we were showing our house and preparing it for sale. We moved on the hottest day in history (July 2nd), into a non-air conditioned house. We had prearranged for the A/C contractor and electrician to begin work on moving day, and work they did, in the brutally hot attic. They could have asked us for thousands more and we would have paid! Everyone, including the movers, jumped into the pool (what a new experience having a pool is!) at day's end! So, other than discovering the house's ailments (including a \$600-700 pool filter problem), we have enjoyed the change. The house is on an acre as before and we look out onto a golf course. The kids have enjoyed the snow-covered hills on the course twice already this season.

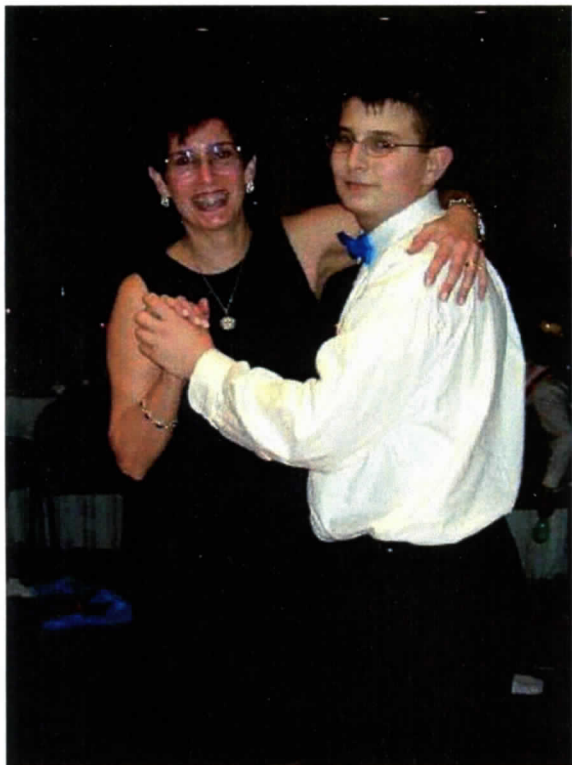
We took our annual trip to Maine, once again enjoying the beautiful lake. With each passing year, we get more relaxation as the boys mature and become more competent explorers and boaters. We shared the trip with our friends the Raccuias for the second year, as well as with Debbie's sister and family.

Jared is now in 8th grade, preparing for high school next year. He continues to play clarinet and has gotten into electronics BIG TIME...taking after Jim. He now



The Taylors at Jared's Bar Mitzvah party—October, 2002

produces movies with his video camcorder, has surround sound in the family room and spends too much time instant messaging with friends. His cockatiel Peaches is a sweet little bird and graces our home with beautiful morning chirping. The big news this year was Jared becoming a Bar Mitzvah. He worked hard to learn the Hebrew language, musical system of chanting



Jared outgrows his mom and learns to dance!

(several of them) and his torah portion, not to mention his speeches. Considering the relatively short period of time he had to do this, we are all so very proud of him for his determination and commitment. He continues (as do we) to have wonderful friends and a great sense of community in this temple.

David is now in 5th grade and is balancing his new workload with twice weekly religious school classes, a basketball league and sleepovers. He is showing early signs of electronics addiction too, wanting the same equipment as his brother. David played baseball this fall as well, his favorite sport.

So, despite some challenges, we still recognize our blessings. Our health has been good, the boys are doing well, we have wonderful friendships and we're productively employed. This gives us the strength to deal with the challenges and we are grateful for that. May 2003 be a year of blessings and peace for you and your families.

With our love,

**PLEASE SEND US YOUR
E-MAIL ADDRESS !**

Jim Debbie
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