

THE TAYLOR GAZETTE

Volume 10

Winter 2004-2005



Debbie's 50th birthday party

First, happy new year to you and your families. We hope your holidays were enjoyable – not too stressful. We had a fairly uneventful year – that's good. There were a few events we wish we could say did happen, but at least we can count our blessings that we are all healthy save some minor age and sport-related issues.

This year our family celebrated several milestones. Jim's mother turned 80 in September. We celebrated with friends and family at New Pond Farm (Jim's brother and sister-in-law's home). She was surprised by the attendance of a few long-lost friends and family. Debbie celebrated her 50th birthday in October with a party at our house and a visit from Debbie's mother. She also checked a few things off her "things to do before I die" list, such as singing a solo at her chorus' concert and starting (not finishing!) the book she has always wanted to write.

This spring, we had a visitor from "down under." Jim's good friend Ralph from Newcastle, Australia stopped by for a few days on his way home from Europe. He has been a frequent visitor over the years including a surprise trip for Jim's 50th (many years ago). We spent our usual 2 weeks at the family camp on Tunk Lake (Maine). We were visited by two good family friends (the Levines and the Raccuias) and

It's official. We have given up calling this our holiday letter. It will henceforth be known as our New Year letter with highlights of the past year! We now can stop feeling guilty.



Jared "toots" his horn

Jim's mother. This year we rented the camp out during the time it is unoccupied by family to defray the cost of the camp's upkeep. It seems to be in demand and several tenants committed to next year right away. You can see the camp at (www.taylorcamp.com).

The boys are now taller than their parents. At 15, Jared is a sophomore at Bunnell High School. He continues in the Marching Band, playing Tenor sax this year. He also plays the alto sax at other times to keep his skills honed. During spring break, the Band performed and competed in Orlando. While a fairly grueling schedule, they managed to have a lot of fun at Disney where they also marched in the parade. They returned home totally exhausted but happy on the last day of break at 2:00 am, only to rise for school at 6:00 am. Jared is getting excellent grades and enjoying his friends. He attended his first formal dance, actually glad to put on a suit and tie! This fall his braces came off and his glasses have been replaced by the newest technology in contacts. He wears them only while he sleeps.

David is now 12 and is still an athlete, playing baseball, soccer and basketball. This is his first year in Middle School – a tough time in a child's development (for those of you who have been through this, wasn't that a good way to put it?) His grades have been good and we are working toward bettering them with more diligence on the outside assignments. David opted to start his music lessons with drums and joined the band at school. We now enjoy the (loud) sounds of music from his new drum set. We envision some day



Jared's first formal



David, the cool dude

hearing the boys play together. When we were teenagers (way before call waiting, caller ID, voicemail and cell phones), we used to tie up the phone talking to friends. With “instant-messaging,” they have 4-5 different conversations going on at once. Instead of “get off the phone” it’s “get off the computer.”

Jim is now finishing up his 4th year and Kramer Electronics but has recently switched from sales to business development. The company had another great year and Jim is very happy with his new challenge.



Mom, the Raccuias & the Taylors at the cabin



Deb's show at the library

Debbie has found it difficult to establish a niche for herself with her business. She has however used the “down time” productively, including volunteering, shuffling the boys around and pursuing artistic things – always near and dear to her heart. We finally painted, papered and finished the family room, kitchen, hallway and main bathroom and love the results. A few more bedrooms to go, then we move on to the basement. Debbie has also been crocheting – for family, nursing home residents, soldiers, baby blankets for the hospital nursery – you name it. She finds it relaxing. She still feels the need to

work in her chosen profession however and welcomes any contacts or ideas. Check out her website to see the offerings. www.strategicorganizationalolutions.com She has also been doing some business writing – an informational booklet for taxpayers and a guide to filing an ethics complaint – a simplification of the legalese language used in the town code. Writing assignments are right up her alley too! Debbie’s proudest artistic achievement is the January 2005 display of her photojournalistic odyssey to China – “Bringing Julia Home.” It is at the Stratford Library through the month of January. This link gives details. <http://www.stratford.lib.ct.us/news.html>

On the animal front, we adopted another lab, Sammy (for Samantha), now 2 ½ years old. She is the sweetest thing – she has the same disposition as our beloved Vita did. She is good company for Spencer. David agreed to relinquish his 2 rats for adoption in favor of an adorable blue-eyed bunny he named Foo Foo.

Last, but not least, we want to declare appreciation for our neighbors. This summer our water pump broke. We couldn’t remove it for replacement because it was jammed in the ground by tree roots.



Rabbit Foo Foo



Our girl Sammy

The solution: drilling a new well and living without water for potentially 2 weeks. As we were considering living contingencies for us and the animals, our neighbor hooked us up to his father-in-law’s well for the duration of the project. Tony also dug up the yard to run new pipes with his

machinery. Thanks to the generosity and kindness of our neighbors, we didn’t have to move out for the two weeks it took to get this done. This is the type of kindness one can never repay in any tangible way – we can only express our deepest gratitude to them and hope that they are blessed with happiness equal to their kindness. Thanks Tony and Al!

May 2005 see you through health, happiness and growth – in every way. With great fondness and gratitude for having you in our lives,



Niece Hayley and Spencer



Niece Julia

How to reach us

320 Keating Drive,
Stratford, CT 06614

Home (203) 377-1770
Jim (O) (203) 377-6818
Jim (C) (203) 981-9000
Deb (C) (203) 952-5355

Jim: jbtaylor@jbtaylor.com
Debbie: DGilbertTaylor@optonline.net

*Jim Debbie
David Dave*