



My goal of an annual holiday greeting to family and friends has proved overly ambitious. Four years have passed since I last sat down to share our news, which represents a small improvement on the previous lapse of five years. Please forgive the length of this missive caused by my delay in writing.

Tanya (35)- Gary's oldest daughter Tanya and her husband Chad are expecting their sixth child in February. Hailey (almost 11), Ivan and Nolan (almost 9), Violet (almost 7), and Leo (two and a half) are enjoying childhood in a small, rural community --- Springfield, Minnesota. Several generations of Pautzkes have grown up in Springfield. Gary's folks still live there. Two years ago, Tanya and Chad purchased a century-old, vacant convent that they have restored. With all of its secret nooks and crannies, the house is a child's dream come true. Chad is teaching in the public schools and Tanya teaches part-time in a private school.

Crystal (31)- Recently Crystal, Gary's youngest, and her husband Nick also moved to Springfield. Their family, Skyla (4), Hazel (2), and Lydia (4 months), lives on a small acreage just outside of town. Nick finally has enough outbuildings for all his handy work. I believe the play yard he built for the girls is larger than the one in the town park. Nick works with developmentally disabled adults in New Ulm. Crystal is busy taking care of her three daughters. Recently, Crystal, Nick, and Lydia played Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in the local Nativity Pageant (gender-fair casting), which drew a large number of spectators in spite of the heavy rain that drenched the event this year. Several of Tanya and Chad's family members also had parts in the pageant. It would be a rare week if the Springfield paper did not carry news of one of our grandchildren!

Nick (33)- Following Tanya and Crystal's relocation, Gary's son Nick is the only "local." He and his roommate Andy live in Maple Grove. Nick continues to work for the bank and Andy finally landed his dream job --- a firefighter. His fire station receives more than a dozen calls daily; most of which are medical. One of their two dogs, a Huskie mix, loves to play in the three feet of snow in the backyard! Nick and Andy, not as enamored with the snow as their dog, plan to visit Florida in March. They enjoy boating, music, and home improvement projects.

Jaslyn (33)- Jaslyn and her husband Jim continue to live in Longmont Colorado, with a view of the Rockies from their "ranch," Goathead. *The name, Goathead, refers to a noxious weed similar to the Midwestern "sand bur," that had overrun*

their acreage. As described in one reference source, the “thumbtack-like Tribulus terrestris nutlets are a hazard,” and not only do they puncture bicycle tires, but they become imbedded in the soles of most shoes. Fortunately, the goatheads at Goathead Ranch are now under control. Jaslyn recently completed her MBA and was asked to spearhead for the EPA a pilot program that unites communities in support of healthy environments for children, especially children raised in poverty. Prior to this new assignment, Jaslyn, received a prestigious award for her work in the pesticides program. Jim earned his PhD and is doing his second round of postdoctoral work in breast cancer research. Through an NIH grant, he and fellow researchers have discovered a new and significant finding that may help advance the war against this dreaded disease. From construction to sustainable agriculture, Jaslyn and Jim follow a “green” theme. They have used salvaged timbers from Wyoming windbreaks and pulverized denim (insulation) in their remodeling. Jim and Jaslyn have become quite accomplished at gardening and Indian cooking. Jaslyn has sewn quilts and they both enjoy running and hiking. The number of extremely fortunate animals that call Goathead home has increased to five cats (Bosco, Chickadee, Odie, Fog, Mary), two horses (Jack, Music), two goats (Ichabod, Burt), and two geese (Chinese, Gargamel). Almost all are rescue or stray animals including a stray Billy goat found wandering the streets of Denver. Sadly, a very special companion, Snow Duck, died a year ago. Her exuberance and strength were a lesson to all of us.

Lesanna (29)- Lesanna and her husband Aaron live near the University arboretum in Madison, Wisconsin as Les finishes her final year in veterinary school. In addition to veterinary training, she spent a year earning her Masters in Public Health. Concurrent with vet school she has obtained acupuncture certification and spent time engaged in wildlife research at various locations throughout the country. Madison weathered the economic down turn fairly well and Aaron has been busy as a superintendent for a framing contractor building residential and commercial structures. Over the past two years, he has also built an addition to their home. As has become customary, I helped with tile and electrical. Jaslyn and Dorissa assisted also. Forever finding the frontier, Lesanna liberated, through proper channels, the only cow to emerge from the veterinary school on anything other than a truck headed to slaughter. For the past year, No. 8 has been kicking up her cloven Jersey hooves at our farm. When Lesanna visits, No. 8 is still a little suspicious about Lesanna’s intentions after her stint as Lesanna’s “surgery cow.” During her schooling, Lesanna has worked part-time at two private veterinary clinics and will be ready to practice or begin an internship after receiving her DVM and MPH this spring. Aaron and Lesanna enjoy spending time with their two dogs (Miska and Tombo), Horse (Burnie), African grey parrot (Turkei), and various cats. The parrot’s communication skills are quite amazing and the source of much entertainment. I am especially amused at the array of power tool sounds that Turkei can imitate.

Dorissa (27)- Dorissa spent three years in Colorado working as a chemist before returning to Minnesota to apply for veterinary school at the University of Minnesota. In addition to her work in Colorado, Dorissa received a Yoga teaching certification and enjoyed trail running. During her one year regaining Minnesota resident status, Dorissa lived at our home in Northfield and worked two jobs: chemist in a research lab and assistant to an equine veterinarian. Fortunately, Dorissa found an inexpensive foreclosed home in Roseville near the University campus. Gary, Dorissa, Aaron, and I worked hundreds of hours rehabilitating the house and adding a fence for Dorissa’s two dogs: Juniper and Cayenne. Dorissa has just completed her first semester of veterinary school and the small 1948 bungalow has turned out to be perfect for her. The house is in a nice safe neighborhood, has a kitchen that accommodates Dorissa’s passion for cooking, and a bright sunny study room. Dorissa is working at the veterinary hospital pathology lab part-time, in both active and on call roles.

Gary - Gary continues to build roads. In fact, he is rebuilding some of the roads he built early in his career. He has spent the past couple summers on southern Minnesota projects. When he is not engaged in construction, Gary finds time to ride his motorcycle, tackle various farm/home projects, and feed visiting birds and wildlife. Generating great frustration among our cats, Gary rigged a pulley system to elevate the bird feeders out of danger of the impressive vertical jumps displayed by the cats beneath bird feeders. He has established a deer and pheasant feeding station, which attracts these species in groups of a dozen or more. Emboldened by hunger due to the snow cover, the deer help themselves to birdseed from feeders as close as six feet to the house. The dogs of course consider this intrusion an enormous insult and bark frantically to no avail.

Fortunately, Gary and Aaron were available to work on the tasks that required their skills and strength when we renovated Dorissa's foreclosure purchase. They replaced windows, removed flooring, hung doors, sheetrocked a ceiling, and fixed plumbing. One of the most exciting aspects of our work on Dorissa's house was the discovery of a "hidden" closet. Unfortunately, no large sum of money lurked in the concealed closet. The record-breaking December snowfall provided Gary the opportunity to spend hours pushing snow off the driveway with his new (used) Skid Steer. Delivery truck drivers who certainly dreaded 7136 Chester during past winters are finding now that our driveway is in better shape than most of the country roads. I am reserving judgment until after the snow piles melt and I see how much gravel this new plow pushed into the lawn.

Family - Gary's parents continue to live on their farm near Springfield and participate in many activities. With the exception of minor complaints, their health is good as they hit that 80-year mark.

My brother Ron and wife Kristen maintain a now "empty nest" in Seattle on Bainbridge Island. Son John is in law school and daughter Janna has just completed college. Brother Jim and wife Traci just sent their oldest, Nicole, to college (Northwestern). Sons Dylan and Ben are at home in Eden Prairie, MN. If you are on Facebook, you may be able to see a video of Nicole, Dylan, and Ben jumping off their deck into the backyard snow bank.

Sadly, the past four years have marked the passing of loved ones. My cousin, Lee Roberts, died of cancer three years ago just shy of sixty years old. His wife Vickie passed away this month following a prolonged battle with cancer. Although I have dozens of cousins and unfortunately do not keep up with all of them, I was close to Lee and Vickie, and am distressed at their untimely passing. My Aunt Lu (Dad's brother's wife) and my Uncle Spence (Mom's sister's husband), both from Iowa, died. In addition, my Uncle Dick (Dad's sister's husband and Lee's father) died last spring. My first mother and father-in-law, Betty and John Arnesen, passed away a year apart at the Hospice House in Owatonna, Minnesota. They were both wonderful role models of generosity and compassion. During the past two decades, John shared with me his philosophy of life and Buddhist beliefs. Although I miss his teaching, he left me with many inspiring memories and enlightening writings.

Animals – Our current horse herd includes Penny, King Arthur, Cheyenne, Sierra, and Ozzie. At some point in his battle with cancer, Lee could no longer care for all his horses. We provided a home for two (Cheyenne and Sierra) and Jaslyn one (Music). Mary, our thirty-something appaloosa pony died three years ago, the last of the animals that came to Northfield from Rosemount in 1988. When we purchased Mary in the early 1980s, her previous owner, from Park Rapids MN, told us that his neighbor, who could not drive because of various disabilities, would occasionally "borrow" Mary and ride her into town. Not only would he ride her into town, but also he would ride her right into the bars. This story was actually believable, because Mary was fearless. In

her day, Mary was a wonderfully bold riding horse, cantering over bridges, jumping small obstacles, and rarely spooking. She could jimmy gates, crawl through gaps in fences, and yet, when she managed to breach our security measures protecting the grain, she never gorged to the point of founder or colic, which shows restraint rare among horses. Her trademark though was stubbornness and she displayed that trait until the end.

Our five dogs are Kiefer, Rupert, Callie, Iris, and Daisy. We adopted Magpie and Fledermaus (poodle and terrier) as geriatrics and they happily lived out their years with us. They both succumbed to cancer, but brought a lot of interest into our lives during their brief stay. Sadly showing the signs of previous mistreatment, Fledermaus would not walk *across* a room. Instead, she hugged the walls. Once she was outdoors however, her personality changed. She would attempt to climb trees as she chased squirrels and she walked on her front legs with the rear end of her body held straight up. Three years ago, we adopted Rupert, a cute little terrier whose mother was a small, pregnant, stray terrier in Wisconsin. We now know that Rupert's father was probably not small, because Rupert is no longer a cute *little* terrier! Two years ago, we adopted Daisy and Iris (Chihuahua and Pomeranian), ancient tiny dogs needing a home. Callie, a blue Doberman, suffered through a puppy mill, an outdoor rescue "shelter," and abusive owner before Lesanna rescued her. Because Les and Aaron already had a full house of critters, we adopted Callie two years ago.

In the tradition of Frisky, my childhood pet, our terrier Spritzen beat all odds and lasted 15 ½ years. However, Frisky's record of 18 ½ still stands. In 1995, I pulled into a farm displaying a "Rat Terrier Puppies" sign at the end of their driveway. Although I intended only to look at the cute puppies, I asked why some of the puppies were significantly larger than their littermates. The owner told me that the entire litter had fallen into a shallow well underneath an outbuilding. Some of the puppies had managed to climb out, but others were still in the well when rescued a few days later. Spritzen was one of the successful climbers. The puppy purchase deal was clinched though when I asked about the bulge on the father dog's head. I was told nonchalantly that the dog had been run over by a tractor and the tire had left a mark. This all boded well for Spritzen to be a pretty resilient dog. Thanks to skilled surgeons, Spritzen remarkably survived two bouts of cancer during the past six years. Diagnosed with a third type of cancer a year ago, Spritzen's prognosis was a few months. However, after interventions, she enjoyed life for another year.

Sadly, our goat, Butterball, did not make it through a recent surgery. He had joined the barn menagerie last summer. Butterball was another animal rescued by Lesanna, this time through her work at a private animal hospital. Butterball's owners could not afford the veterinary work he needed and surrendered him to the hospital, where Lesanna performed the surgery to save his life. The lingering health issues arising from his original need for emergency veterinary care required two additional surgeries, the last of which he did not survive. We miss him. He was a fun and vocal addition to the crew. Although the dogs enjoyed playing with him, they also learned about horns, as Butterball was the only animal equipped with this unusual feature.

In addition, we have three rescue peacocks (all males) that thrill us with their beautiful feather displays in the spring. Fortunately, several retired laboratory pigeons were housed with the peacocks and seemed to elicit the displays. We still have Kirby (Mom's 22 year old cockatiel) and his companion, a somewhat younger, yet very old, rescue cockatiel.

Wood ducks, mergansers, and kestrels always find the houses we have mounted for them. Every March, they perform the rituals associated with investigating and claiming their nest. One day, I hope to see the youngsters leap out of the box at their mother's command. From time to time, we have mallards that over winter. Wild birds of all types encircle the house singing, building nests, and feeding their fledglings. The trees we planted on our conservation acres are just shy of twenty years old now and are starting to look like a young forest. They are mature enough to give shelter and nourishment to a variety of wildlife.

Rosalyn – Even when the temperature is below zero and the horse water buckets have turned to solid ice, I continue to take pleasure in caring for our animals, farm, and 112-year old house. I am fortunate to have the health and opportunity to perform my chores. Although most men would shudder at the possible consequences, I was delighted when Gary gave me a “No Down Time” wheelbarrow tire for Christmas last year and a John Deere walk-behind lawn mower for Valentine's Day a few years ago.

After four years of intense study, I earned my law degree (J.D.) two years ago. This accomplishment would have been impossible without the support of my husband and family. I must admit I fought mightily the urge to include footnotes in this holiday greeting. I continue to work at the Farmington public school district. For three years, I was assigned the additional duty of overseeing the construction of the district's new large high school, but am now back full time in technology. Although technology is a demanding, dynamic field, our team is comprised of wonderful, capable folks who make the job enjoyable.

Our children and their families are sources of immense pride and happiness for Gary and me. I am hoping that trying to keeping up with them will help keep us young!

May you be blessed with happiness and peace in 2011. Among my blessings, I am thankful for the roles that my family and friends have played in my life, especially my parents for their love and sacrifice. I hope for peace and the relief of suffering across the globe. I hope that I can contribute to making steps toward that goal. As quoted by Lesanna in her email signature, Paul Wellstone said, "If we don't fight hard enough for the things we stand for, at some point we have to recognize that we don't really stand for them."