

Christmas 2010



Jenny and "Big"

In the middle of 2009 Jenny was laid off from the job she had loved for almost 10 years. One of her clients negotiated a deal so Jenny could keep working for them through the non-compete period and continuing to this day. Jenny has also found new clients so now she is her own boss, enjoying her job as controller or CFO of multiple smaller companies, with more work than she wants. Between client projects she remains an avid quilter and seamstress (and traveler).

Charlie continued building furniture, including a giant 6 foot diameter dining room table with a 3 foot lazy Susan in the center. With the curved base and veneered top, he estimated it would take a month to build. It actually took three months, so when it was finally delivered, the backlog of work was in shambles. When he finally got the list of committed or probable projects together, there were 21 projects on the list. Jenny has threatened to take away his phone privileges so he can't accept more work.



Large Round Dining Table

Our son Mark continues to work as a database administrator for Ignite Technologies in Frisco (suburban Dallas). His wife Stacey continues to do well as Director of Business Travel (sales) for the Dallas Intercontinental Hotel (despite the poor economy's impact on business travel). Their daughter Chelsea is taking honors courses in South Garland High School, and is very active on the Southern Belles Dance Team.



Dallas and Janet

Not everything was as upbeat with our families... Jenny's mother Janet suffered from Cancer and dementia – she was able to live at home as she wanted, with the heroic support of her husband of almost 4 years, Dallas Doss. We visited her during a very alert and active period at the end of April, in the picture, but she died in mid June at 86 years old.

Charlie's brother George was a disabled veteran who has served in Korea and during the cold war (maintaining B52 bombers). He had been a displaced person in Europe during World War II, came to the United States in 1949, and after leaving the service, raised a family in western New York. His mind was sharp to the end, but cancer, heart disease, and the remnants of military injuries wore out his almost 80-year old body by November.

Travel is a highlight again this year... in March we continued Jenny's quest to visit places that were just emerging from behind the iron curtain, before the history became hidden under modern construction and they were overrun with tourists. Prague was fun, but we missed the "before it was overrun..." part. As someone warned us (after we had bought our tickets), it is like Disneyland. Charlie's theory is that there were fewer languages on the signs, so people joined groups with guides, who congested the narrow streets with clusters of tourists following someone's raised umbrella. We also booked through American Airlines Tours, which we will never do again... the hotel was changed far from the place we expected, and the bonus that enticed us to book through them was refused on a technicality. Sorry, but we haven't put together a travelogue yet (but when we do it will be listed at www.plesums.com/travel).

At the end of April we made our pilgrimage north to see Granddaughter Chelsea's Dance Team show, visit family in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (where the horse "Big" is owned by her nephew), and attend the Berkshire Hathaway annual meeting in Omaha with Warren Buffett and 32,000 of our closest friends.

In September we spent 5 days in Cabin John Maryland visiting Charlie's sister Rita, including her orchestra and "big band" rehearsals, and playing tourist in the DC area.

The other major trip was a driving trip around Scotland in October, to be sure they were making enough Scotch whisky to last another 40 years. We do have a travelogue on line at www.plesums.com/travel/scotland. And most important, Jenny maintained her "gold" status with American Airlines.



Charlie in DC

We wish you health and happiness this Christmas season and pray that you have a very Happy New Year.

Jenny and Charlie