

Save this, it's a 1<sup>st</sup> edition from our Midwest publishing division and a sure bet to end up in the Classics shelf. Since we brought up the Midwest, the people here are great but always say the same thing on learning we're from the east, "Wow, must be pretty different here." Answer, "It is flat." If you need an illustration, hold up this paper. That's it. Especially when all the corn and soybeans are harvested. Don't talk to us about oil, we have a corn based economy.

We should never tell our readers how little we proofread because we ran out of time. So we won't. If we jump around irrationally just assume we did it on purpose to keep you interested.

Although we did not want to leave NH, being together has been fantastic. We can always find or build another house when we go back. Yes, we are going back. Being close to the nuclear family is great, but being 1,000 miles from parents, grandparents, other family, and friends isn't going to work forever..

Illinois politics are as crazy as NY or Mass, except the governors here get caught and convicted more. The joke is that to win you just have to carry Cook (Crook) County (Chicago) plus any one other county. Except it isn't a joke. We've had about 0.5" inches of snow this winter. Local kids actually go out to play in that. We don't even know how.

Jo has her IL vet license now, but vet practices out here don't specialize. Jo's not looking to pick up dog and cat medicine after a lot of years away from it. She's thought about teaching vet techs or dusting off one of her spare degrees to do something different. No rush on it, Jo is more than full time busy running the house and kids. We wouldn't be starting a business out here given our plans to head back east and not knowing what will happen in 2012. Of course we mean the end of the world (all hype, the Mayan calendar doesn't really end) not the election.

Kids. Yeah, they're still kicking around. Haven't run away yet. Megan (now 7) has spent the year in dance, Tae Kwon Do (almost ready for Orange Belt), swimming, school, horses, camps, playing the in neighborhood (yes, we actually live in a neighborhood for the first time), and generally enjoying life. Mason (now 1.5) has moved from scooting along (he never crawled, just sat on his butt and scooted), to waddling, toddling, running, climbing, and jumping. With frequent falling and crashing. Both are in glasses now, which exist to suck up our retirement to fund repairs.

Megan is in first grade and loving it. About 100 kids in her grade, so not a huge school but much bigger than NB or Unadilla. Mason spends parts of weekdays in day care and has progressed nicely from crying when we left to not caring at all whether we're even in the room. Megan is still more independent than Mason and probably always will be.

Mason is well into the mimicking phase, so we use him for party tricks. He also *loves* to talk on the phone. He only says hi or bye, but he's spooky good at knowing when to say them. Megan talks much more in person. Incessantly, and with no shortage of "did she just say that?" moments. Skype and FaceTime end up with Megan fighting Mason for screen space more than actually talking to anyone

If it is expensive and electronic Mason must be doing his best to be breaking it. Megan loves and excels at math. When he isn't doing calculus in crayon, Mason loves to drool and throw fragile stuff. Megan now knows what beer pong is.

Mason loves any kind of ball. All parental pride aside, he has a great arm. He's also good at making sure we know when there is "poopy in the diaper" (his words). He's also good at saying "no" until we guess the right food, drink, toy, whatever that he wants – which is of course maddening.

Both grandparents visited us in IL at different times during the year, which was great for us and the kids. We're heading back east for Christmas. Mike Kaveney, from RPI, came by to visit because he was in the area (2+ hours counts as "in the area") right after we moved in. Nobody else has happened to be passing through. Shocking.

We had a nice send off from the Danish's back in March (the day of the Japanese tsunami – don't get Keith started about how pathetic the reporting and our Secretary of State were when talking about it). We were in NH to close on the Pittsfield house in early June, and spent a nice stretch at McGuirk's in Hampton Beach (in June it's quiet). We'll be in NB and NH about the time you're reading this.

We've got at least another year to go out here. Keith loves working with Cat. Driving a D10 (you call it a bulldozer, we call it a track type tractor, but either way it is half the size of your house) was fun. The whole family has been pulled into the community of folks we work with out here is great. The day we moved here we went to a party (not for us). The day we get back we'll go to another (same host, but also not for us). Plenty of social events in between. It takes the edge off being away from family and old friends, but isn't sustainable forever. Keith had one international trip to Cannes, France this year. He also had a stretch of 16 out of 18 trips for Cat with a flight cancellation. Not a good year for flying. We're renting a house since we still owned two other ones when we moved here.

If you go back through all of our old Christmas letters (which you'd better have saved and indexed for reference) you'll find the 2009 issue in which we announced the sale of the NY vet business and move to NH. The buyer picked up everything except the property. If all goes well the property will finally sell and the closing ought to be about the time you're reading this. We're eager to stop being long distance landlords.

The horses moved here too, and Jo has been able to spend some time with them but with all of her other work definitely not as much time as she wanted. If anyone's in the market for a nice reining horse please call. Keith and college friends met up down in Atlanta during the summer. Keith played golf for about the 3rd time in his life. He had two 300+ yard (GPS verified) nice straight drives. We aren't going to talk about the rest. Golf is still good pasture wasted. Roscoe is living with Keith's Aunt Lucille while we're in IL, getting along great, and we really appreciate it.

Keith and Jo have both been getting in better shape. Jo's gotten in to spinning and both of us are doing P90X (which is awful but certainly works). Keith is also doing Tae Kwon Do with Megan. Keith just got his Orange belt and is really enjoying it. Looking forward to going back to Korea and surprising them with all the words I've picked up. We've gotten back into the swing of regular church attendance after what was too long a time of intermittent (at best) involvement. We're still shopping a bit, but do go to Catholic mass more often than most others.

Have a joyous and blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

Love,  
Keith, Jo, Megan, and Mason

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