

Christmas 2009

Where do I start?? At home on Stillwater Ct... After the summer (8 months) in Georgia. Me, Not Gara Ann...I am a bonafide Snowbird and did not get south of Atlanta all summer. GAM came and went on too many occasions to recall. Speaking of remembering: I can't! It might have been 6 or 7 years ago I mentioned forgetting groceries purchased or Appointments... Well, it hasn't gotten any better. But here we go!

I enjoy my time in GA with loads of friends and family (30 and growing). GAM says that she had to come up and drag me back home, but I must confess, I was ready to come "home". However I will be back when the Dogwoods bloom.

New Home: I got back to Marco on December 3rd and walked into a new home...Well the structure is 20 years old but the house is new to me! GAM "Redecorated" thru the summer and did she do a nice job...as she says she knows a great interior decorator. Some old, some new, some borrowed.., Some blue applies here. I didn't recognize anything and had to ask directions to the "head". I went thru an indoctrination tour and now I can almost find my way around. My closet was full of stuff I didn't know I had. (The memory thing again).

Nate: Still playing Music with his band "The Gladzmen" and doing recording sessions on occasion, (the economy has effected that part of his business). Gara Ann and I sat in on one of his recording sessions this week while he worked with Anna Schilling and Ben Sprankle (singers from our church) producing a Christmas CD. I was impressed with his abilities with all that Electronic "Stuff". The CD is fantastic! All 3 of them are true professionals! I can't keep up with his "gigs"...One day the band is going to Sarasota and the next week they go to Ft. Lauderdale...Is he rich and famous?? Maybe not rich but when we go on a Sunday ride everyone has to come up and say hi. He has more friends at them Biker Bars (he plays at) than Obama at an ACORN Picnic. He continues to re-build the

homemade-hard tail chopper and spends more time working on it than riding it. Fortunately he still has my old "Hog" to ride when the chopper is under repair. His home "The Swamp" keeps him busy fighting back the jungle. What a neat place. Right now he has a big wild Hog rooting up the back 2 acres, but he tells me that fat hog will be "barbeque" before long. Almost Forgot!! New grandbaby for Gara Ann and me...Gibson Firebird appeared sometime this summer and joins Pinkie and Belle.. Gibson May prove to be the smartest grandson we have! The jury is still out on that! He has a cute face and huge ears and weighs, maybe 2 lbs. @ 6 months.

Nate and Gina flew up to Blue Ridge for 10 days in October and we rode! Friend Steve Oyer loaned me one of his Harleys and Nate and Gina rode mine... About 150 miles a day for 4 days. One afternoon trip into the woods with 4 Nephews and Nate on dirt bikes (GAM, Gina & I went in by Jeep) to visit Cashes Valley and ran into resident Criminal "Steve Sisson". A genuine character. GAM was "Impressed" with our old friend. Nate did not crash, fall down a mountain or dump in a creek this year's trip! Something new!

Gina is cooking Christmas dinner at their home this year (as last) and it is bedecked beautifully. I don't know how long the tree has been up but the home is spectacular and the table is set. Her sisters and mom and friends will be there and it is fast becoming a tradition. I helped out also. (I mowed the lawn)

We took the camper "North" on about 4 trips this year with the highlight being a trip to Iowa for a "surprise" Birthday party on the fourth of July for friend Jan Danbom. Got a boat ride on lake Okoboji and enjoyed the fireworks from the water. Spectacular! Camped in Jim's backyard and enjoyed visiting as many friend up there as possible. From there, we traveled in convoy (with the Danboms) thru Minnesota and over the top (Upper Peninsula) of Michigan to Petoskey where we stayed for 4 days enjoying the local sights and sounds. The highlight was a trip to Mackinac Island.

We were on our way to Fayetteville, AR (a little out of our way) for a wedding (Niece Anna Grace) and got a call from Sister Alice that Mom (Gara Ann's) was in the hospital and Alice was up to her ears in wedding and needed HELP! So we pulled stakes and hammered down to Columbia, MO for an overnight (and ribs at nephew Davey's Restaurant) then on to Arkansas to look out for mom while Alice did her thing. Mom is fine but mother of the bride was "plumb wore out"

Weddings!! Too much work for the mothers! Give the kids a couple grand and send them to Las Vegas! Then throw a big party when they come back! Alice now has 2 (weddings) under her belt and one to go. She is getting real good at it. Now I know I left her husband, Bob, out of the equation, and he also puts in a lot of sweat equity. But she is the conductor when it comes to marrying off all those pretty girls!

Football! GAM went to her annual MIZZOU game (Columbia, MO) this year... October the 8th... Nebraska Corn Huskers. MIZZOU lost the game: (GAM attended in spite of a driving rainstorm and cold! She enjoyed it ??? in spite of the loss. We sure put some miles on that camper to feed her need for College football. We "camp" at brother Bill and Vickie's and are always royally entertained. Bill even put in 30 amp electric service for us! I guess I enjoy the journey almost as much as the visiting so no complaints there. The game was on a Thursday night and on the following Saturday we attended the Celebration of Life for a dear friend, Steve Weber who passed the previous week.

My best friend: Gara Ann, 38 years married and as pretty as the first day I saw her. Continues to surprise me. How many 65-year-old girls will ride a motorcycle or climb on the back of a four-wheeler. This year she was chopping trees using my chain saw and her favorite tool is the weed eater. Amazing!!! I bought her some tree spikes (really) at the flea market (no leathers but what do you want for 5 bucks, and the seller said she could make do with duct tape) and this spring I will teach her to

chase squirrels and top trees (I'm Too old for that stuff). This coming spring she has signed up to walk 10.6 miles from Big Sur to Carmel with her Centralia girl friends Margo, Cilla and Elaine. I guess that is preparation for the Tree climbing. Real Estate is still her passion; she is doing well in a tough market and enjoying it. Thanks to her "girl Friday" and good friend, Carla Lindburg, she can get away and spend time with me in Georgia. Her office (Keller Williams) is growing fast and is a contender for top dog on Marco. Still very committed to our church (which is growing by leaps and bounds).

GAM gave me 2 weeks off last spring to attend Bike week in Daytona (with boyhood friend Phil), Antique Motor Show in Ft. Meade (with Jim Danbom, Skip Miller and wives) and the best bike swap meet/Flea market anywhere (Webster FL)! I'm getting into this retirement thing.

Sunday rides on the bikes with Nate and friends; a fire, a glass of wine and some classical music in the mountains with Gara Ann; Fellowshiping with bible study friends; playing in the woods (dirt bikes) with nephews; A camp fire/cook out with my Georgia family; an early morning walk up the hill with Happy or just sittin on the porch watching the birds feed... Just a few of my favorite things... What Blessings God gives us!

But the greatest blessing of all is the gift of His Son...with Jesus it doesn't get any better in this life on earth or the life to come...

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him." 1Corinthians 2:9

Don't miss the Best Gift...it's Jesus.

**New Address:
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