



Scenes from '06



# THE VANDERLIPS: CLARA, SILAS, SHARON AND HAL

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## COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE

*To assure family and friends of our continued survival and relative contentedness here in the Maine woods during 2006; to extend heartiest collective good wishes to one and all for the coming year; to distance ourselves wherever and whenever possible from the current administration; to brag on our gifted and talented children (with all manner of seemingly innocuous but nevertheless coded language); to further this never-ending circle of obligation by acknowledging your holiday card...*

## EXPERIENCE

- Clara, 8: Gained valuable insight into stage- and teamwork as understudy in Portland Ballet Co's Winter '06 production of Victorian Nutcracker; after weeks of tedious rehearsal with no stage payoff, big break arrives — after a whole day of skiing; called into last-minute service as a soldier; performed flawlessly. Bugaboo: Food weenie, no mixing/touching.
- Silas, 10: Hurtled headlong toward young adulthood by reading everything in sight, widening geographic range here in N.G., growing hair out to 1970s proportions, establishing own musical predilections via iTunes, lobbying for dirtbike/atv (no dice), settling for neighbor's go-cart. Bugaboo: crowding teeth (palate expander debuted in fall)
- Sharon, 29: Managed to balance the not insignificant demands of home, family, church, school committee, local volunteer establishment, and, for the first half of 2006, work (at a local publishing house) with characteristic aplomb; wisely junked remunerative employment in summer; redid upstairs bathroom in along whimsical beach theme. Bugaboo: Stink bugs.
- Hal, 29: After years of purposely keeping eponymous media consulting firm a one-man operation, expanded it into fully fledged agency via partnership with fellow United Publications refugee Jim Sullivan; together they formed Mandarin Media, with offices in Hue, Vietnam and New Gloucester ([www.mandarinmedia.net](http://www.mandarinmedia.net)); '06 may just go down as the year that changed everything. Bugaboo: golf game, in toilet.

## EDUCATION

- Clara: Matriculated at NG's Burchard R. Dunn School (3-5) in September; "graduate", Memorial School (K-2), June 2006; advanced tutorial study in self control, multiplication, monkey bars; never gets school lunch
- Silas: On schedule to "graduate" from Dunn this spring; BMOC, in demand; honors thesis, "The Rat, The Cat and the Trashcan"; will matriculate at Middle School, September 2007; always gets school lunch
- Sharon: Untold hours devoted to MSAD 15 School Committee (chair, Finance subcommittee; best legs on board); rare levelheadedness and compassion combine with enormous campaign war chest to ensure re-election in fall 2007 (unless Governor's evil plan consolidates away all school administrative functions first).
- Hal: Nine months into indefinite co-op project involving international business development, with concentration in languages he doesn't yet speak, such as accounting, Vietnamese, budgeting, staffing and working half the time in GMT+7.

## INTERESTS

Drama (Clara especially, with the Portland Ballet, in workshops at Fiddlehead Center for the Arts, just being Clara day to day); Music (continuing piano lessons for both kiddies; Silas on the trumpet, guitar to begin this winter); Singing (Clara with God's Little Voices; Hal with Mountain Avenue, a bluegrass/folkrock outfit of locals); Cartography; Skating; Skiing (Nordic via the school, downhill as a family unit — when there's snow); Softball (Clara); Soccer (Silas, and maybe Clara this fall); Golf (increasingly everyone); Quilting (Sharon); Sewing (Sharon & Kids); Gardening and Landscaping (Sharon and her crew of three); Hiking (esp. Silas and Sharon, who navigated NH's Carter Notch in July); Bernard Cornwell; Philip Pullman; C.S. Lewis; Travel (Florida, VN, Michigan, Portugal, Baltimore/DC); Dog Care (Trajan going strong at 11); Cat Care (Stripes and Snowflake, likewise; Flash, the stray, still squatting under the house); Rodent "Care" (domestic mice joined by hamsters in fall; wild mice killed by the dozen in pantry); Fantasy Hoops; "Scrubs"; Weird Al Yankevic; [www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com); Webkinz; Fishing; Poker; Laying about the Shanty.