

mandann media



Welcome once again to the annual Vanderlips New Year's Letter, a publication informed as much by good cheer and familial self-regard as our inability to manage this sort of correspondence in anticipation of the holiday season itself.

In the interest of time and space, let's boil down and dispatch with the major themes, several of which return relatively unchanged not only from past Vanderlips letters but most all holiday correspondence. These include:

We are very proud of our kids, Silas, 11, and Clara, 9, who are extraordinarily cute, well read and otherwise high achieving.

We're all in reasonably good health.

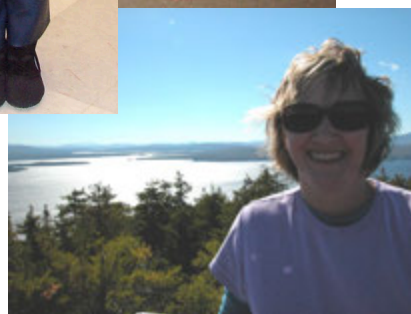
Business is good.

We spent a ton of money on the house.

Et cetera...

There were, however, some new and otherwise notable happenings from 2007 that we'd be remiss in not passing along.

Clara landed a full part with the Portland Ballet Co.'s production of the Nutcracker this fall, something she undertook in addition to her normal PBC ballet classes. You may recall she was an understudy last year, the source of some consternation. This year she was a soldier, fully fledged, and loved every minute of it... Clara also made huge progress in softball this year — with the bat and behind the plate, where she showed herself to be a natural catcher. Her team, the mighty Twins, also won a title... In all other matters, Clara is all about animals, real and imagined. After spending the better part of 2007 unsuccessfully lobbying her parents for turtles, as pets, she settled for mice, hamsters, another fish, our mainstay cats and dog, plus a veritable menagerie of Webkins and other animal figures.



Big year for Silas. He left the warm bosom of his grammar school (where his looping class had been together for two years) for 6th grade at the local middle school. The bus shows up at 6:54 a.m. (ouch), but he's otherwise quite pleased with the relative freedoms and new offerings (drama club, school dances, band) ... The Boy did indeed get well into his music in 2007: trumpet,

guitar and keyboard. He attended GarageBand Camp over the summer (where they jammed all morning then mixed their efforts via the Mac software in the afternoon) and an electric guitar, amp and earphones (!) arrived at Christmas. Look out... To soccer each fall, Silas added swimming this winter and he's loving it; he quickly dropped his 50 free time below 40 seconds and is shaping up as a serious breastroker.

As a unit we visited some cool places in 2007: the Rangeley Lakes here in Maine, Quebec City for Winter Carnival, Florida at Christmas time. Sharon and Clara took in a show (Phantom) and did some shopping during a girls weekend in NYC. Silas and I reciprocated with a boys outing to the Brazil-Mexico futbol match down in

Foxboro, a transcendent experience for all. I traveled a bit individually (London, on soccer assignment for espn.com) but, in an always welcome twist, Sharon and I spent two weeks in Vietnam and Cambodia without the kids, who were deposited in Michigan with the Vandermayes and didn't even know we were gone (Silas

caught his first pike in Kazoo, a 22-incher).

Back home, Sharon re-upped for another term on the school committee, which is actually like serving on three or four committees, what with finance and CIP and various budget subcommittees. She routinely does 2-3 evening meetings a week, teaches Sunday School every other month and volunteers each week in both kids' classrooms. Thankfully, we relieved Sharon of any bookkeeping duties this year because, after 10 years, Phillips Golf Media was, on Jan.

1, 2007, formally folded into Mandarin Media, the company I formed with partner Jim Sullivan. We had a profitable year, here and in Southeast Asia, and we're poised to grow things further in 2008.

The formal birth of MM was momentous, but so were my 12 months completely nicotine free. I replaced that obsession with another: the guitar. Started in February and can't stop... Mountain

Avenue, the band my kids are not yet old enough to be ashamed of, doesn't really need any more guitarists but I continued to sing with them. We had what seemed like a busy summer of gigs, culminating in a triumphant SRO show at the local church coffee house in October.

It's an event like that one, along with the other get-togethers and day-to-day niceties that make us thankful we landed in a place like New Gloucester. This April 1, it'll be 10 years here. Wow.

— hp