

## VANDERLIPS NEWS FROM 2013, ON THE OCCASION OF 2014

Allow the four of us to extend the most sanguine of New Year's wishes to all of you, those who dropped us a holiday card and those who did not. As a family that doesn't lard the solstice/Christmas/New Year period with any undue responsibilities, we Vanderlips don't judge. Not on this count anyway.

As 2013 drew to a close, we were balanced between looking back on a full/fulfilling year and looking forward, with some trepidation, as our unit of four will, in 2014, be diminished by one. Silas has ably applied to a bunch of colleges and come April, we expect at least one to accept him (he's actually got two in his back pocket right now, but who's counting). Come late August, he'll be gone — for much of the next four years really, maybe forever as an active member of the household.

On one level, it's exciting to see the boy fledge his wings. On another, the rest of us already mourn the pending holes in our hearts... But let us not get all mawkish here. This is supposed to be a happy occasion!

## Party. January 31. Come.

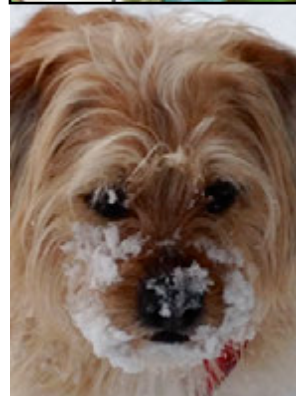
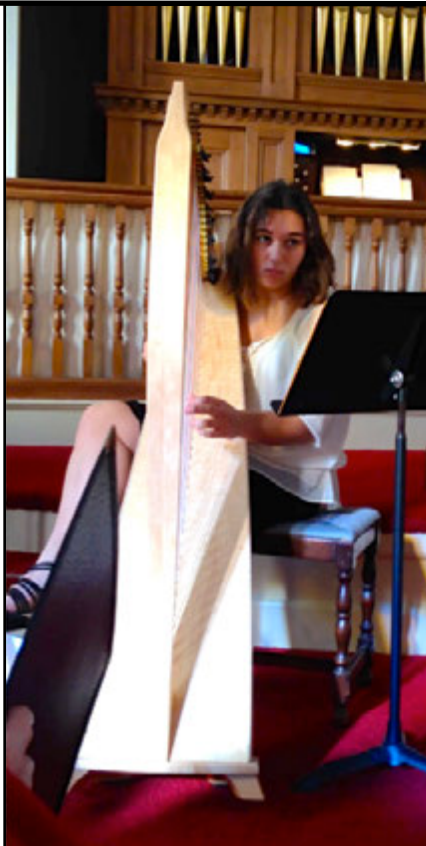
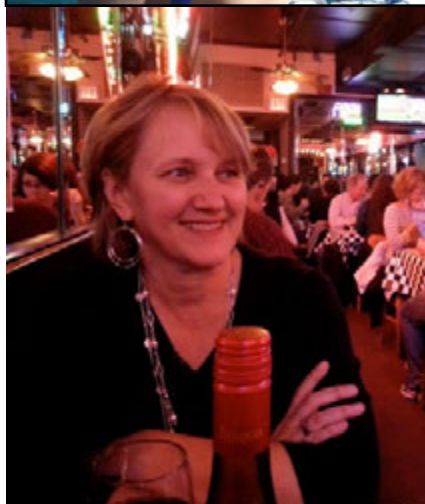
Please join us in celebrating The Year of the Horse, Chinese New Year at Camp Vanderlips, 77 Gloucester Hill, NG — 7 p.m. til whenever (RSVP, [onintwo@maine.rr.com](mailto:onintwo@maine.rr.com)). The Chinese calendar traditionally eschews continuously numbered years. Outside China, at least three different years numbered "1" are now used by various scholars, making the annual lunar cycle beginning this Jan. 31 the "Chinese Year" 4712, 4711, or 4651. Take your pick.

Accordingly, please direct your attention to the party invitation above. If you're anywhere in the vicinity later this month, do stop by to help us usher in the Year of the Horse.

In several ways, 2013 was the Year of the Harp. Clara made great strides on her full-sized Celtic model, under the steadfast tutelage of teacher Danielle Paus. Further strides were enabled by several recitals and

performances, esp. the anxiety-filled prospect of Clara's first paying gig, a late-November wedding that ultimately went swimmingly.

More big news: The addition we finally put on the house here at Camp Vanderlips. When we moved to NG in '98, the house sported both a front door and rolled roof. We never used the front door much, tucked away as it was on the north side of the house; one



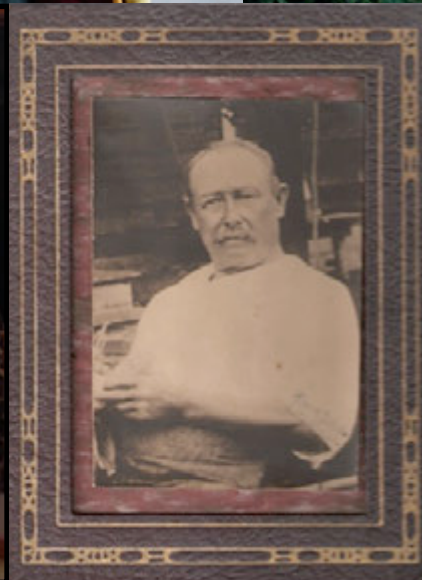
Silas and a running blue, in Fla.; first church gig; press conference just south of Subic Bay; The Governor, with his winter whiskers; Sharon in NOLA, making like the *Times-Picayune* food critic.



was obliged to walk past the operative entrance in order to reach it. In any case, when we replaced the rolled roof with a metal job in 2005 or so, the snow and ice slid off far more readily and regularly. Indeed, it eventually crushed to smithereens the small front porch that served the already underutilized, near vestigial front door.

For years, front-porchless, we said to ourselves, “We should really build out the house there, extend the dangerously short-stepped, overly steep staircase, add closet space and sunlight, and create a proper entrance.” Well, we finally did it this spring and we’re pleased, though it’ll be spring 2014 before the two barn-board hues (old and new) sync up.

There was, as always, a good deal of travel during the last 12 months. As a unit, we did a four lovely days at Vandermay Christmas down in Florida, and another few in Kalamazoo over 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Otherwise, we divided and conquered. Silas and his dad, for example, converged on LAX in late April (Silas from Maine; Hal from Hong Kong) for a massive, south-to-north California college tour, during which we also visited our Gonsenheim relatives in San Diego and Wellesley boy Tom Wadlington in San Francisco. At about the same time, Sharon and Clara did a weekend in New York City, shopping, site-seeing and taking in some shows (including “Mamma Mia”, long a favorite of Ms. Clara)... Hal was in Asia a couple times, Sharon did some business in New Orleans (plus a birthday weekend in NYC with “the Girls”), and we sent the kids on their own down to the Outer Banks for a visit with the Kahla cousins. Actually, Hal and Sharon ultimately joined them there in OBX, where a great time was had by all.



From top: One of Silas’ “senior” pictures, probably his dad’s favorite; finally, a proper entrance experience takes shape at Camp Vanderlips; Sharon and Hal during their leaf-peeping star turn, this fall; Clara & Co. doing the Bridesmaids thing; and James Quarles Dickinson, Hal’s maternal great-grandfather’s older brother. Hal’s mom has been working on a detailed family history, due to be published this year. She writes, “I think JQD looks a lot like my father. He certainly has the Dickinson forehead!”





There was one kid-less trip that Sharon and Hal took together, this fall: They celebrated 18 years of wedded bliss by heading to the Western Maine mountain towns of Bethel, Fryeburg and Cornish to star in a film produced by the Maine Office of Tourism (MOT). Yeah, you read that right. Apparently MOT has thrown itself into video marketing, producing a series of web films highlighting not just the things to do here in Maine, but the people who live here (and best understand “The Maine Thing”). Sharon and Hal apparently embody this campaign mantra, or at least the 45-55 demographic — just the people MOT want to lure here for foliage appreciation and all the other things “middle-aged” couples do on such a trip: antiquing, fine dining, hiking, canoeing, covered bridge-ogling, etc. It was a real hoot; a few outtake images are included here. The finished product should be available at the [MOT website](#) come June, or whenever they start selling fall tourism packages to Maine.

Some Nuggets: Gov. Brody continues to entertain. We shaved him this summer when it got hot. He resembled a muscular, golden ferret... Cats Snowflake and Stripes still don’t understand why we need a dog, esp. this one... Soccer has now overtaken softball as Clara’s favorite team sport. She may bag the latter this spring in order to do the school play... Meantime, both kids are swimming this winter, having cranked it up in October. Silas and his senior relay mates have the chance to make some noise at states/regionals... Clara got her driver’s permit in December. Look out world... Sharon did yeoman quilting duty this year, supplying one of several for a successful high school raffle. But her “craft” of the moment, or 2013 let’s say, is fabric marbling, a process of floating fabric



**Reflecting on someone’s first-ever goal; The Raffle Quilt, displayed here by Ms. Maggie Michaud and Silas, but crafted by Sharon, whose handiwork raised \$500 for the Class of 2014; marbled fabric; Halloween 2013, a night of 3 parties, including a Mountain Ave. reunion gig; Snowshoe Mode, in Rangeley.**

paints on the surface of a thick cellulose solution, a bit like the way oil sits on water. You lay fabric on the surface and it picks up the marbled patterns (see an example bottom left)... After a decade or more in the wilderness, Hal’s golf game returned. He played more often than he had in years, and promptly developed a nerve issue in his left arm... As you may have gathered from images included here, fishing remains Silas’ primary obsession. Hiking’s a close second; he and several friends summited several peaks in NH’s







Meta scene from of the Maine Office of Tourism shoot; a weekend on Broadway; northern terminus of the Great California Junket of Higher Learning; GNG Homecoming Parade 2013, featuring the Homecoming King (oddly, without any fishing accoutrements); hole 35 of 36 at Cypress Point GC.



Presidential Range this fall, including Mt. Jefferson in December... Long-dormant obsession with Scrabble was, for Hal, fully animated in 2013, via the iPhone... Silas was named GNG Homecoming King this fall. No one knew quite what to say about that...

Early in 2013, we rented a ski house in Rangeley, about 2 hours northwest of New Gloucester. Great fun, and while the kids wore out Saddleback, Alpine style, Sharon got well into snowshoeing and Hal went Nordic (skate-skiing). For the 45-55 demographic, both proved easier on the knees and way better exercise.

We got that ski house for three months of family togetherness, recognizing our already wistful feelings about someday soon being down to three and figuring this winter would be crazier still... and it is.

