

01 Jan 2003
Happy Holidays

2002 was a challenging year for us. Forgive me if this letter gives you more information than you ever wanted to hear.

The biggest thing for me to deal with this year was prostate cancer. Last January I learned all about PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen), Percent Free PSA, Gleason scores, and clinical staging. I learned that I had prostate cancer or more formally prostate adenocarcinoma. (Clinically, my PSA was 7.2, Gleason score was 3+3, and staged as T1c.) So I found out I had this slow growing cancer that I needed to do something about. The hard part is there are no guaranteed cures, only vague statistical statements and worse, there is no universal agreement on what constitutes being cured! You can cut the prostate out (surgery), you can kill it with radiation (about 11 flavors of that), you can take hormones to delay the consequences, you can try new experimental drugs, or you can do nothing! All of these treatments potentially have side effects that might be worse than the cancer. You find that urologists are trained as surgeons and so that significantly biases their advice. The radiation guys, oncologists, really disagree about the definition of a cure and they have all sorts of techniques. Early detection makes all of these techniques have a success rate of more than 50%. However, I wanted significantly better odds than that. You do lots and lots of data gathering and then you try to sift through it. The Internet was invaluable, bought and read some books too, and then I talked to lots of people. I really appreciate John Henriques, Helen's uncle, for steering me to the Radiotherapy Clinics of Georgia (RCOG) in Atlanta. In my gut I felt that surgery was a risky option and frankly, painful! But I needed to be sure that a radiation technique would be more successful on a statistical basis, not an emotional aversion to pain! RCOG has a better 9-year (I'm being very technical here) cure rate than surgery with RCOG's ProstrRcision. What finally tipped the balance for me was reading Dr. Patrick Walsh's (Professor of Urology, Johns Hopkins cancer center) recent book on Surviving Prostate Cancer, where he discusses prostate cancer growing outside of the prostate gland. With my clinical data there was a 25% chance of the cancer already being outside the prostate gland. ProstrRcision dealt with that contingency. So by the end of March we had a plan.

Helen and I drove to Atlanta to visit the Clinic and start the process. I was surprised at it being a normal sized office complex, not a huge research facility—there was no data suggesting that it was a research facility, but with all the publications they had generated I sort of thought it might be. We met with the doctors, got an MRI, and met a several of the patients who were in the ProstrRcision process. The patients were very open and friendly. As I went through the process this camaraderie was one of the more enjoyable and unusual parts of the treatment. On April 9, we returned to Atlanta and I started ProstrRcision with the radioactive iodine seed implant in the prostate gland. I did this as an outpatient. Got there at 5am and was out by about 10:30 am. The next day was very significant—the day they pulled the catheter out! I met many of the men and their wives who were also undergoing the same treatment. Since there was an average of about 30-40 new patients a week, I met people in the waiting room that were in the many different stages of treatment. I got to know a Canadian from Vancouver Island quite well, as he

was 10 minutes behind me in many of our first appointments. That first day all of us who had had the implant the day before kind of had the same uncomfortable look, walked very gingerly, held a big red bag of papers and x-rays, and some held their catheter bag. Many of the other patients and/or wives freely walked up to us and offered encouragement. When I was called in the nurse took me to the MRI room where I got ready for the MRI. She said she was going to remove the catheter and that I should take a deep breath. Before much air came in, I experienced a searing pain and the catheter was out!! I didn't feel great, but a whole lot better than the minutes before! In the waiting room, the guys seemed to know what happened and offered additional encouragement saying the hardest part of the treatment is over! After another night in the motel, I drove us the eleven hours back home.

After 3 weeks, I drove back to Atlanta to complete the seven weeks of radiation treatment (April 30 through June 18). My original plan was to commute back and forth from Michele's house in Auburn, AL. This is about 130 miles each way. She had given me a lot of talking books so I was ready. The radiation treatment consisted of coming in every weekday, dropping my pants, and then receiving 150 Gy of photon energy targeted to various areas around the prostate gland. After two or three minutes I left and waited for the next day's treatment. I had no ill effects from the radiation. After about 6-8 weeks from the seed implant, I had totally recovered from it too. I got to know many of the patients who had similar appointment times. Also we had many other activities during the week organized by the clinic. The most interesting was the weekly seminars given by the doctors describing various aspects of our treatment. First there was a formal presentation and then a question and answer period that lasted up to a couple of hours. Also before the seminar we had an informal supper emphasizing soy products. There were about 100-200 people at each of these seminars made up of the patients, their wives, and potential patients who had come to visit the clinic. We were especially empathetic to those who were exploring this treatment option. They would ask many of the same questions we had, but now we were confident of the answers. Many times we would start talking to them after the seminar was over to relate our experiences. We all learned a lot about prostate cancer and its treatment, and I certainly felt that I had made a correct decision. The patients I met were from all over the world, all races, creeds, and income levels. A fairly common characteristic is that they had all taken control of their own health care (sometimes the spouse was in control). The doctors were advisors and expected to substantiate their statements with data. I found this very refreshing. RCOG, a radiation clinic, treated other cancer patients too. Many times we prostate cancer patients felt we were blessed because our treatment was so easy, so pain free, and so successful! (If you have a friend who is learning about prostate cancer I would be happy to share my experience with them.)

Helen was able to fly down join me for about 10 days during the early part of the treatment, but the airlines wanted to recoup all their loses on the Charleston—Atlanta flight (\$1020), so Michele had to put up with me the most. That commute got old and while Helen was with me, we found the Atlanta Hospital Hospitality House where I could stay virtually free. It was a mansion built in 1927 in a wooded 44 acres area on Ponce de Leon Avenue. It was called Jacquiland. Our first night was a result of a violent

thunderstorm knocking a huge tree down across the driveway. We had been visiting our Canadian friend when this happened. The next day I found a handsaw and the resident assistant and I sawed several branches and removed them from the roadway. A cyclist, who was passing through, helped us to move the larger branches. The only draw back to Jacquiland was that it was dormitory style living. I reduced the number of trips to Auburn by staying a couple of nights in Atlanta then back for Wednesday and the weekends. Michele saw a lot more of me than she wanted too, but I really appreciated staying there. Also I went with her when she refereed a duathlon near Marietta, GA. I was also around when she got her job offer from University of South Carolina...she was happy! She must have trusted me a little, because she let me give and grade a couple of her finals at Auburn. Of course she had to provide the final grades that I turned in for her.

I drove home on June 18, but Cagri (our Turkish exchange student), Helen and I joined Michele in Sumter, SC on June 21 to start house hunting! Michele had some idea of budget, some requirements and a real estate agent. On the first day, we saw lots of places. By the next day found a very nice 3-bedroom house that is only 3 years old. On Monday, Michele filled out the paperwork and our job was done! I couldn't believe how easy this was, but enjoyed it! Sumter is a town about the size of Parkersburg. Michele wanted to check out more of the town and college, so Cagri, Helen and I went to Myrtle Beach! It was really hot, but Cagri had to experience an American beach. We did our best. Cagri conned me into ridding the "big banana." The water looked calm and the people coming off looked like they had fun, so why not! (Helen's job was to hold the camera and take pictures.) After buying the ticket we found out that Cagri's parents wouldn't let her do this in Turkey. Anyway, you get on a hot dog shaped rubber raft that is pulled by a ski do. You straddle the dog and hold on to a very secure handle. The ski do pulls you out from the beach and then parallel the beach. You are bouncing up and down on the banana and your forearms are taking all the strain from the each bounce. Cagri is in front of me screaming with delight at each big wave. The two boys behind me are talking and devising ways they can fall off. The salt water is hurting my eyes and blinding me. I am silent. It seems like we are going on forever down the beach finally, we turn around and I am glad to know there might be an end. Turning around puts even more tension in my arms, as I fear falling into the water. I remember the sharks I saw as we walked out on the pier earlier. My rear end is sore from bouncing up and down, up and down! I close my eyes and continue to hope the time passes quickly. Finally we come into the beach and doing the opposite of what the ski do driver says, I fall into the water. I walk ashore and am now a veteran of the "big banana." My arms hurt for days afterward. Cagri confessed that her arms hurt too!

Cagri only had another week with us before she returned to Turkey. Her year, and certainly the last half year, was not anything like we planned. As I was finding that I had prostate cancer, she was quite supportive. Her grandfather in Turkey had survived prostate surgery and was encouraging. In the second half of the year she changed her courses around so that they could be more fun and useful to her. If anyone wants some genuine Turkish pottery, we have some available for sale (or if you come by...free). She enjoyed her ceramics class. French IV frustrated her. She had 7 years, but according to our Canadian born French teacher, she had an accent. Cagri got the last laugh though.

There was a national French competition and Cagri won first place in the state of West Virginia. Cagri also succeeded in passing her TOEFL (English language proficiency), so that she didn't have to do any remedial English work when she returned to Turkey. Just after she arrived here in September, she found out that she was accepted in the Department of International Trade in Bogazici University in Istanbul. This program required a certain level of English proficiency. Cagri, a Japanese exchange student, and a bunch of other girls became beautiful and went to the prom together—didn't stay out all night, just up all night! Cagri liked the pomp and circumstance of her high school graduation, even though it was only honorary for her. She and the other exchange students made once last fling at absorbing the essence of American culture by going to Disney World in Florida. We really appreciate the lady who chaperoned them during the week they were in Orlando. Cagri got along with everyone, particularly adults. Very few American students get to know the exchange students in any real meaningful way. The exchange students always seem to bond together in spite of the vast differences in their cultures because they are sharing learning about America. I think Cagri, while sad to leave us, was looking forward to beginning her university life. We will miss her, but we look forward to hearing about her life's adventures.

Another of our exchange students came to visit us in the middle of August. Kirill and his partner, Elise, came from Amsterdam to stay with us for a couple of weeks. Kirill was from the Kiev, Ukraine and had visited us before. I picked them up in New York City and we had a quiet week here...included numerous shopping trips. Kirill and I also had fun driving both tractors to see how fast we could mow the yard...2.5 hours! We visited Michele and took our second trip to Myrtle Beach!!! We drove back towards New York and took a quick walking tour in Philadelphia and finally dropped them off at the airport to fly home. I keep in contact with Kirill almost daily by chatting on the Internet. We think we are pretty good at it.

Helen probably had the hardest year of the family. One of her closest friends became her Hospice patient. She worked with the family and got to know her friend's children and grand children. Hospice care doesn't stop with the death of the loved one. Helen still visits with the husband and talks to the children when they are in the area. She only took on 3 other hospice patients during the rest of the year. Helen got a new car the hard way. We misjudged the condition of the driveway and it was glare ice. So after slaloming down the driveway, she finally stopped with the back end of the car wrapped around a tree at the bottom of the driveway. I knew things were bad when I saw her walking up the hill. So we are the proud owners of a 2002 Toyota Avalon. It is a very comfortable and smooth driving car...very quiet too. She continued to run her "profitable" religious gift shop at her church. The new priest seems to appreciate it a lot. Her inventory turns are improving, so she has the things that people want. Helen is very active in the women's group of her church. She also volunteer's for Faith Link which provides services, such as driving or shopping, for people in the community. Helen's sister Rosie came to visit us from Jamaica. Also Helen's sister, Maureen, has helped us a lot in our genealogy efforts. She has sent us several packets of pictures and family data from Jamaica. Also she has given us names and phone numbers of relatives in the US who we call to gather even more information.

I continue to enjoy substitute teaching although only just one or two days a week. I have to play racquetball three mornings a week! I have started teaching, or actually tutoring, at the Sylvan Learning Center 2 nights a week. There, I can work with a student over time as opposed to stand up comedy in the classroom. I worked with the Robotics team at Parkersburg High School. We built a robot (36 inches by 30 inches by 60 inches tall weighing 140 pounds) that would lift soccer balls off the floor and put them in a goal that we were towing behind us. This was a very intense 6 weeks while we designed and built it. The kids, other adults, and I put in many hours in this fun engineering task. Dean Kamen whose recent invention the "Segway" is making the news spearheads the national program. I went with the team to the competition in Cleveland where we didn't do well, but the kids went to the nationals in Orlando and did great! First place for a while, finally 44 out of 250 high schools. I joined Rotary last year and this year I started a web page for the club. You can look at it at <http://www.parkersburgrotary.org> . It serves as an electronic newsletter for the club that I change each week. Also, using the web page as the basis, I send a weekly meeting reminder to the members. It is fun and keeps me using computers.

This year started out pretty scary, but everything seems to be under control now. We have some plans for a big trip next year. We hope all of you are well and will have a prosperous and happy year.

Love,
Clark and Helen

My email address has changed to cjreese@charter.net
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December 2004

Dear All,

Important things happened this year! Meet Julian William Wright, our grandson, born on June 4, 2004. He's in the light blue!



What amazes us is that he likes to study things. Here it seems that he understands that I am using the sheet music to play the piano. Michele and Chuck will have fun providing stimulation for Julian.

Michele's cousins and our extended exchange student family also added sons to our family tree in the past year or so. Must be global warming!

We started taking advantage of our Maui time-share by taking a

few trips. Our first was in March to Paradise Island in Nassau in the Bahamas. There were many things to see and do, and I tried scuba diving, but the water was way too cold for me to actually swim in the ocean...just the practice pool. I will try this again in warmer water. In Tampa we visited Helen's nephew and his wife who just had a baby boy, Anthony. We checked up on some our friends from Parkersburg who have moved to Florida. We also looked at some of the time shares on Sanibel Island for future trades—hopefully the hurricanes didn't hurt them. Finally we ended up in Atlanta for the robotics national competition with our Parkersburg High School team. Robotics is lots of fun and I am sorry we aren't continuing next year. You can see what they do on Discovery or NASA TV.

In August I went with the Rotarians to Nicaragua on a Medical trip. We had a major foul-up in Miami and we spent 2 days at the airport trying to fly to Managua. Once we got there we were busy—especially the 3 doctors who donated their time for the trip. It is a beautiful country that reminded me a lot of Hawaii—volcanoes. Lots of development taking place, but lots more needed. Hopefully, through Rotary, we will be able to help more in the future.

Michele and her husband, Chuck, teach at the University of South Carolina at Sumter, and were able to join us in Myrtle Beach in October. We did Myrtle Beach kind of things

and I even fished off the pier for a few hours—nary a bite though. It was fun for all of us to be together and we hope we can do more of that in the future.

Since US Airways is in its second bankruptcy, I thought I had better use up my frequent flyer miles. We went to Europe to visit our exchange students in the Netherlands and Helen's sister's family in Hamburg, Germany. Using some of our time-share benefits we stayed in the Pulitzer Hotel in Amsterdam for free. Since we sponged off relatives and friends, the trip was almost totally free! Our exchange students were both busy starting families: Jasper in Enschede has two children, Jorik born last year and Karlijn; and Kirill in Amsterdam (originally from Kiev, Ukraine) has a newborn, Lubomir. We enjoyed visiting with them very much. I had bought a new computer and took my old one to Amsterdam—that was an interesting adventure. I thought we would have problems either when we boarded the plane in Parkersburg or in customs in Amsterdam. I guess people carry computers in their suitcases a lot in the US, so the TSA folks passed it through. In Amsterdam I just went through the “nothing to declare line.” In Hamburg Helen and her sister made Jamaican Christmas pudding which my brother-in-law and I enjoyed. We were gone about three weeks and really enjoyed ourselves.

We took one trip to Springfield, Missouri to attend a family reunion in September. I have managed to collect more information and pictures from my mother's side of the family. I plan to publish a small genealogy book and send it to my nieces and nephews. In Florida we also collected lots of information from Helen's relatives there. (Helen's cousin, Felicia, also had a baby boy, Dylan.)

Helen continues to be a merchandiser of religious articles in her church. She volunteers at Hospice and Faithlink, too. I do some substitute teaching of science and math in our local schools—it is always a challenge and usually a pleasure. Also I enjoy the fellowship of Rotary. We attend meetings of different clubs in many of the cities we visit. This gives us some local insight. I enjoy helping people with their computer problems either as a consultant or as a friend. I maintain a web page for Rotary at www.parkersburgrotary.org. The page changes about every week and serves as our newsletter. I particularly like to include pictures of Club activities and people.

We didn't send a letter last year but you can check our web page at

<http://webpages.charter.net/AustraliaAdventure/>

We wish you a happy and fun new year...

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December, 2005

Happy New Year,

Our common theme for the year was “trips”. We started off by spending February in the Galapagos Islands and Costa Rica. (Actually, there was brief excursion to visit Julian and family in South Carolina in January.) Charles Darwin got a lot of his ideas about evolution from visiting these mostly volcanic desert islands and seeing how the various animals responded to the conditions of the different islands. My favorite, of course, was the turtles.



There is a different species of turtle for each of the islands. Even though we knew this beforehand, we were still amazed at how close we could get to the animals. Fortunately, there were rules forbidding the touching of animals. We sailed island to island on a 100 passenger ship and went ashore by riding Zodiacs or rubber dingys and climbing off onto a dock or a lava cliff. Usually we took 2 excursions a day, some of them involving swimming. The seals, iguanas, and penguins were just as bold in the water as on land. Ecuador has made a major effort to preserve this part of the world for the future, but our advice is to see it soon.

Unfortunately the boat was a closed environment that exposed us all to the flu. We had a day of rest while going from Guayaquil, Ecuador to San Jose, Costa Rica and I seemed to almost recover, but Helen started getting sick. We passed it back and forth between us for the next 12 days, so our memory is rather an ethereal chain of bus rides and hotels stays. We did learn about rain forests and fog forests. Those are places where it rains every so many hours and you can't see anything but fog. We spent several days trying to see some volcanoes, but only saw fog. I do remember going up a river and seeing lots and lots of caymans (tropical American crocodile). Costa Rica is using its undisturbed countryside to build an ecotourism business, while Ecuador is using tourists to support the Galapagos Islands national park. Both are working hard to preserve as best they can their natural wonders.

We were glad to get home and it took awhile for us to recover. We decided to cancel our Alaska trip and postpone our visit to the Northwest US. This is the second time I've had money spent for a trip to Alaska and had to cancel—hopefully the third time will be a charm. We had some baby sitting time with Julian in April, post recovery.

Something that has always bothered me has been how parochial most of our high school and college students are. No spirit of adventure. We have seen exchange students over the years learning all sorts of new ways, while our kids seem to be just so stick-in-mud! Also, Helen and I both enjoyed learning about new ways of doing things when we were in our late teens and early 20s. So I'm trying to do something about it by working with Rotary in its Youth Exchange Programs. My emphasis is to get some kids going from one or more of our four local high schools to one of the many different countries where there are Rotary Club sponsors. There are lots of exchange programs around, but Rotary has the best one going. Rotary has a large network of people all over the world helping the community and, as far as costs to the student, it is the best deal because of the support Rotarians provide the students. So I have been attending conferences and meetings learning the ropes. The deadline for the one year academic program has passed, but I am hoping to get someone for the shorter summer exchange program. You can follow my success by looking at the www.parkersburgrotary.org web page and checking Youth Exchange. We like to take trips to exciting places and so everyone else should too!

In June, Julian turned one year old, and we joined the family for his Christening in Sumter.

In August we traded some of our time share for a week in Orlando where Julian, Michele and Chuck joined us. It was very warm (Florida in summer...duh), but we did visit the Magic Kingdom and the Magic Animal Park. Julian found time to go swimming every day. Grandpa even attempted to buy more time share, a long story—he may still attempt to buy more. We were glad to visit some of the relatives who live in central Florida-- Julian met his second cousin once removed, Dylan.

In September we took our postponed trip to the Northwest of the US and visited relatives and friends from Vancouver, British Columbia to Pleasanton, California—effectively Interstate 5. Unfortunately the trip started with Michele and me attending my brother Kern's funeral in Whittier, California—he had been suffering with respiratory problems for a couple of years. I joined Helen and her sister, Rosie, in Seattle where we visited my cousin Mitzie who I hadn't seen for 40+ years. We then visited Helen's "half second cousin once removed" in Vancouver where we met three generations of Henriques'. They are active genealogy buffs and have traced Helen's ancestors back (they think) to Italy in 1585! Driving to Pasco in central Washington we visited Helen's "cousin once removed" Cleve. He is a very active practicing physician at 91. He has a mean game of ping pong as Rosie can testify. We left Rosie at a monastery near Portland, Oregon and also visited my cousin Linda and her daughter. All along, I am collecting pictures and family history for our family tree. I really went back in time when we visited a high school girlfriend and her sister. Relived some of the crazy teenage years—it was hard to realize that 40+ years had passed and we had all lived quite different lives. We were able to visit my

nephew Shur, and his family, niece Lynn and my “first cousin once removed” Ruby. Helen also got to visit with her uncle John and his wife Vera. Finally, we ended up in Pleasanton, California where we met Velma and her family who is related to me both by my father and mother. She also is active in genealogy and I collected hundreds of pictures and lots of information. This was a very different trip that was like going back in time in some strange sense. First the memories of the things that my brother and I did together, then the visits with friends and relatives to see how their lives have changed, and then learning about the ties that we have by blood and tradition to many people who have been before us and with us now. Lots of people making things happen.

Michele and Chuck had a “fall break” in mid October and we joined up at Myrtle Beach and spent some more time share time together.



Fortunately it was warm and Julian loved going swimming, wading, splashing—whatever every day. He also had a day of building and knocking down sandcastles at the beach.

Chuck’s family invited us for Thanksgiving in their new home near Knoxville, Tennessee. It turns out that Knoxville has a very large genealogy library covering most of the Southern states. The Reese’s were a part of the large immigrations of people from North and South Carolina, to Tennessee and Kentucky and on during the late 1700s and early 1800s. This library has a lot of information and we even found a book with our names in it. Thanksgiving was very traditional and we enjoyed ourselves immensely. On the way back, we visited another high school girl friend

who is a nurse at the University Hospital in Knoxville.

When we are not on trips we are doing the normal things, Hospice, training a new Priest, Faith Link, and running the church store for Helen; and racquetball, Choral Society (missed a lot rehearsals, so didn’t sing in many of the concerts), part time substitute teaching, Chamber of Commerce-Education Committee, and Rotary for Clark.

We wish you well for the coming New Year and if you are nearby come and visit us--even if you are not nearby come and visit.

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January 2007

That time of year again when we review for our friends and family what we have been doing for the year.

This year we are actively involved with Rotary Youth Exchange. We are the second host family for Mary who is from Poland. (In the Rotary exchange program they try to have 2 or more host families for the year.) She has been with us for just a couple of weeks but we have known her since she arrived in August. Also I am glad that we were able to recruit a young lady to go overseas from our area. Right now we don't know what country she will go to, but by next August she will be starting her adventure. It has been fun working with the other Rotary Exchange students as well. We were both chaperones on their trip to Washington DC. Rotary provides a wonderful opportunity for high school age kids to learn about themselves and the world. You can read what they are sharing with us by going to www.parkersburgrotary.org/YouthExchange.html. You can get the straight scoop on what it is like to be an exchange student by clicking on Heather's name. She is a particularly good writer and has a "blog" which you will enjoy too. This is fun for both Helen and me.

Genealogy has continued to be a strong interest this year. I have focused my attention on the Reese family and some of the new technology techniques to collaborate with family members. This year we went on four genealogy expeditions. In January we visited my cousin Beverly in Lake Havasu, Arizona. I think we camped there a lot longer than she expected, but we scanned many family pictures and collected a few stories. Our next trip was to Mountain View, Missouri for the Reese family reunion on Memorial Day weekend. Amongst the Reeses there was some confusion as to whether this event was going to take place—it did. My cousin Frank went to the Mountain View City Park (near the Reese cemetery) early on Saturday morning and reserved a pavilion and people showed up about lunchtime. I was able to make lots of contacts and have collected data about many branches of my family that I didn't know about. There were several other events taking place in the area and motel space was non-existent. My cousin Bryan and his wife Mary let us stay with them. It was very peaceful staying with them on the farm. Brian's farm contains part of the original family farm and as a child I visited it many times during which my cousins delighted in showing this city slicker the wonders of the farm. Our most recent genealogy trip was to Wartburg, Tennessee (near Knoxville) to track down information on my great-great-great grandfather Elijah Reese. (We were there to join our son-in-law's family for Thanksgiving.) Yes, we found lots of pieces of information...some confirming information already known and some new facts. I found a copy of a book (published in 1971) that said Elijah was the son of Abraham of Surrey County, North Carolina. I have visited Surrey County (on one of the trips to Michele's) and it just doesn't make sense that we are related to Abraham. So this is a typical mystery and controversy that you find when tracing your ancestors. It wasn't all about Reeses this year. We also visited one of Helen's relatives in Raleigh, North Carolina for new information. (We enjoy visiting friends and relatives between here and Sumter, SC.)

A lot of my interest in genealogy is around the application of computer technology. The program I use stores all the facts, stories, relationships, pictures, and sources in a database. So I have fun working the issues of backups, confidentiality, and data management. One of the big problems is sharing and collection of new information from all the relatives. Between Helen's and my database's we have about 5,000 people. So the latest thing is constructing a web site that tries to solve all of those problems. You can look at it at www.cjreese.name. The web site is in its infancy and I expect it to change a lot this year. I am using a web program called "The Next Generation" and it is a little like Star Trek so in a way I am having a lot of fun beaming up and down!

A lot of my effort in genealogy has been fostered by joining several online communities. I have learned more about different programs, general genealogy tips, and even met some relatives. I have participated in other internet groups focusing on timeshare and Rotary Youth exchange. I'm enjoying internet social networking. You meet people with similar interests all over the world. I typically just interact passively by reading their thoughts and maybe follow up with a note. I think the computer provides all sorts of neat communication tools which I like to use and enjoy--spoken like a true computer geek!

Helen has enjoyed spending time during the year with her grandson Julian. Between timeshare trips, holidays and just visiting we see him about every couple of months. As a two year old he is changing quickly. He likes to explore and try new things. He makes simple statements and he can remember songs (his grandfather is especially impressed with that skill). He is polite. Helen likes to take him on an art tour of any house or building; they look at each picture or figure discussing what they see.

Helen has continued to work in both the office and patient care in Hospice—22 years. She also volunteers driving clients for Faithlink, is active in church and has her store (for the women's society) just inside the vestibule.

Helen and I reached a milestone this year: we both started getting Social Security. We started early and hope to get at least what we paid in and, with a little luck, the younger generations will still offer their labor to keep us funded.

We are very proud of Michele, or Dr. Reese, for she has published her first book: "Following Phia". You can buy your own copy at Amazon.com.

This year we shared our time share time with Michele, Chuck and Julian. At the



beginning of the year we all went to Maui to check out the home resort for the first time. It was so great to be in warm weather that Helen and I stayed an extra week to soak up more of the sun. The next trip was to Paradise Islands in the Bahamas in May. There were so many different things to do that we felt we had just gotten started when we had to leave. Only recently have we become resort people, but the lifestyle is good especially if you are enjoying things with your family. (Julian in January 2007.)

Have a wonderful new year and keep all of your resolutions.

Clark and Helen

PS Please note the email address change to cjreese@gmail.com.

PPS Forgive us if you receive this note almost by the middle of the year, we completed it just before we left on a month long trip. More about that next year.

January 2008

Happy New Year Everyone,

Our family's newest member is Mitchel Norman Wright Reese. He was born on August 27 just a little early, but with no problems or complications. You can see that at four months he is a happy child.

This year we totaled up the number of days we stayed in hotels, motels, and time share villas—it was more than 120 days! Our first trip was to Chile and Argentina (mid January to mid February). It was a combination of tour with Elderhostel and being on our own. We spent five days in Santiago at the beginning of our trip and five days in Buenos Aires at the end of the trip in Luxury Collection Sheraton Hotels. This worked out great. Before the trip I had been suffering with back pain and every day I walked a little further. By the end of the trip all the pain was gone and I could go for miles.



Mitchel Norman Wright Reese – born 28 Aug 2007—Picture 28 Dec 2007

On returning from a late afternoon tour (night) and walk around the Valley of the Moon in the Atacama Desert, our guide stopped us and pointed out the McNaught comet. *First time I had ever seen a comet!* Cool! The rest of our stay in San Pedro was fascinating because of the sights, the people we met, and our guide. We flew back to Santiago and immediately joined our Elderhostel group for two weeks to visit Patagonia and the Andean Lake Region. Elderhostel works very hard to make its tours educational with lectures that supplement what you are seeing. We drove through large areas of Chile's agricultural regions searching for the best tasting wine.... For me it looked like California only the rivers had water in them. This water and great climate makes it possible to grow lots and lots of fruits and vegetables. So Chile is where we get delicious grapes in the wintertime. We crossed into Argentina to Bariloche by taking a series of boats and buses through a surprising low pass (3,000 feet +/-) in the Andes. We actually took a bus across the northern part of Patagona to the east coast. Because the Andes blocks all the rainfall in Chile, this region is quite dry and reminded me again of California (San Bernardino or Riverside County). We had a wonderful trip to visit a penguin rookery where there were hundreds of thousands of penguins and chicks who showed no fear of visitors. Finally we visited Buenos Aires, which is a huge city. We could actually afford housing there which was not true in Chile. On one of our "extra" days we visited for a few hours Montevideo

in Uruguay. My stereotypical images of these countries were totally destroyed. Chile and Argentina are thriving democratic cultures totally different from one another. I would really like to go back and explore some more.

In March we went with Michele, Chuck and Julian to Orlando and enjoyed a couple of days at Sea World and many of the other sites. Here Master Julian is being cool! This was the right time of the year to visit for comfortable temperatures and small crowds.

In May we traded some time of our Maui time share for time share in the Virgin Islands. We visited St Johns and St Thomas with our Rotary Youth Exchange student from Poland.

This year was my 40th reunion year for Antioch College. I had been to one other reunion, but was disappointed because none of my friends showed up. But this year I got the opportunity to help call and make sure lots of people I knew would be there. But two weeks before the reunion, it was announced that Antioch College was closing! Well of course the whole time at the reunion was spent talking about why the college was closing and “*let’s save the college.*” There was hardly any time to renew old friendships and find out what has been happening in people’s lives--disappointing. In my opinion the college has lost its appeal to students because it has changed and changed and changed its programs each time losing credibility. My experience as a student was phenomenal with the co-op jobs and international travel. Many alumni are working to save the college, but I am pessimistic.



Cool Julian at Sea World March 2007

Our most recent trip was to Maui and Southern California. We went with Kirill, with our former exchange student from Ukraine. He is married to Elise, from the Netherlands, and has a 3 year old son, Lubo. Just this last year he received his Dutch citizenship. It was fun. They originally landed in San Francisco and drove down the coast to LA. From there, they flew over to Maui and joined us at our time share. They liked it. We then flew to LA and spent a week being tourists. We stayed in Pasadena for almost all of my relatives have moved out of the PicoRivera-Whittier area. We were seeing new things too. It was particularly interesting watching Lubo and Kirill talk to one another. Kirill speaks to him in Ukrainian and Lubo responds in Dutch. Someday he will just start speaking Ukrainian. He picked up a few English words on this trip too. Hey other exchange students, wanna go to Maui??



Elise, Lubo, Kirill & Helen - Santa Monica Pier, California--November 2007

We have continued to enjoy the study of our family's genealogy. One thing we really like is that it is a way for both of us to meet new relatives and to renew our contacts with others. For example, when we were in Southern California I caught up with my cousin Roger Reese who I hadn't seen in nearly 30 years. Also we got to meet his charming and artistic daughter Michelle. It seems like every month we make a contact with someone new. My plan for my ancestors has been to find all the descendants from my father's side five generations back (from me) and try to go back even further with the surname. My mother's family has lots of folks searching and so I just try to capture and document as much as I can. I hope in the coming year I can put Helen's family on the internet so we can share our knowledge with her family. Putting the family tree (www.cjreese.name) has been a good idea but it is harder than I thought to keep it updated. Lots of silly computer technical issues, I hope this coming year it will be easier.

We did go to a Genealogical Conference in Ft Wayne, Indiana where we were overwhelmed with information about libraries, genealogical associations, DNA testing, new computer programs, publishing techniques, on and off line data repositories and meeting crazy people like us studying their family histories. Got lots of ideas and enjoyed meeting people who have done this many more years than we have.

Last year I got my DNA tested to see if I could find Reese family connections more than 5 generations back. When you get your results you can try to match up with various people with the same Surname. Well, there were no matches. I did the most complex test of 67 markers. The basic idea being if you match DNA on all 67 of their markers you are

related through the male surname. After the conference I decided I would try to contact another Reese (Reece) line and get a sample of their DNA to see if we match. Some of our family believe we are related to Abraham Reece from Surrey Co, North Carolina. But before I could do the testing I was contacted by another Reese with whom I had a paper trail—fourth cousin once removed. A couple of our markers didn't match (?). So by DNA we only had a one in three chance of being related. Say what? Are there some other cousins that are intermarried? And what will the DNA from descendants of Abraham tell me?

Rotary has been a fun way to serve the community and work with our friends. I have continued to be the web master for www.parkersburgrotary.org . So far I have been able to publish every week from anywhere in the world. This year I have been the counselor for a Youth Exchange student from Chile. We enjoyed the time that the Polish girl stayed with us earlier in the year. My teaching certificate expired so I am now focusing my youth activities through Rotary where I can have longer term contact with the kids.

For the year Helen was active in church, Hospice, and Faithlink but has now retired. The plan is for her to help take care of Julian and Mitchel in South Carolina. We already have an apartment, furniture, and even signed up for electricity. I don't really know what I will be doing but my plan is to mostly stay out of the way and commute back and forth. I have a bunch of genealogy projects and house projects to work on. Watch out I may show up at your doorstep!

The past year has been rich and full for us and we are looking forward to 2008 with curiosity. We hope this finds you healthy and happy.

Clark and Helen

Dear All,

It has been since 2008 that we have penned a letter to you. Some of you may have given up on us. We thought that we had better say something before all of you give up on us.

What has probably been taking most of our effort has been to try to deal with our physical world. I have had both lower back pain and sciatic nerve pain. Slowly I have been able to first get rid of the sciatica and then manage the back pain. I feel a whole lot better than in 2008-9. I still spend far too much time sitting at my computer doing all sorts of things. I walk around a little, but not enough to really exercise. I feel pretty good but my endurance is not much. Helen found she has had Lyme disease which has caused her lots of problems. She underwent treatment and has made a lot of progress, but did not eliminate it from her system. Unfortunately knowing what the cause is doesn't repair the damage to the knees and back. Oftentimes walking is no fun. She has gotten better now she can walk and not have her knees give way without warning. She probably exercises more than I do. We both could do more. This getting old stuff is really a bummer.



New sunblock technology



Helen and her boys: Lubo, Mitchel, Julian and Makar
Lubo and Makar are Kirill and Elise's children from Amsterdam, The Netherlands

For all of these past 4 years I have been active in Rotary Youth Exchange. For our district (30 clubs in Northern West Virginia) I have been the Out bound Chair and since we are a small district I tend to be somehow involved in all aspects of Youth Exchange. We work with 10 other Rotary districts from Canada to North Carolina. We sponsor about 100 kids out and 100 kids in each year. We see amazing transformations in that years' time—shy ones now show no fear. Bold ones have developed fantastic personal and language skills. We take bright kids, who are artful, advanced, atypical and adventurous. I'm sold. I have worked with youth my entire life in many different roles and this is fun. According to State Department figures the US sends out nearly 2000 kids a year. About 30,000 kids come to the US. The Rotary program accounts for most of the students going out. In fact our group of districts account for nearly 5% of all the out bound students from the US! It makes me feel good that we are having an impact but I wish more students availed themselves of this opportunity. If you know a bright adventuresome student tell him or her to look at my Rotary web page at

<http://www.Rotary7530.org/RYE1112.htm> We can direct him or her to the right Rotary club.

Rotary provides an outlet for one of my other lifelong interests: computer technology. I maintain the web pages for both our club here in Parkersburg and our district. One of the key things I do is send email reminders, weekly for the club and nearly monthly for the district. Actually I am more of a publisher than an editor. The clubs send me pictures and captions and I put them on the web. Normally the technical stuff is pretty easy, but when I mess something up I get to learn a lot. I get enough hits to make me feel that I am helping the communication process. Also I send out email reminder notes to the whole membership every 2-4 weeks, and after 4 years, they haven't told me to turn it off!

It seems that genealogy is also another excuse for me to play with computers. The website is <http://www.cjreese.name/> During this past year I have not done much at all. Recently I did upgrade the online version, but I couldn't get all the features running the way I wanted. I have lots of fun doing this—I even change some of the programs. (At times I spend more time on the programming aspects than the genealogy.) My PC database has grown a little but no one can see it. I am making a new year's resolution to do more. I still want to build a data base that includes the actual documents and pictures of my kin. It just takes time. I have enjoyed many sessions where Helen and I interview a relative and we have a delightful time scanning their pictures and collecting their story. I would like to do that more but people are spread out.



Chichen Itza beckons



Are we having fun yet?! Kirill & Clark

We have continued to travel even though we complain about our aches and pains. We do grandparents trips, time share trips, genealogy trips and combination trips. In 2008 Helen rented an apartment in Sumter for 6 months to help Michele take care of Mitchel. At the end of her stay we all went to Paradise Island in the Bahamas. Helen and I went on to Jamaica and Florida to visit her family there. In 2009 Rosie, Helen's sister, joined us in Cancun, Mexico at our time share. A very memorable trip that we won't forget or repeat. In 2010 we spent in month in Hawaii. Michele and family joined us in Maui where we enjoyed the whale watching.



Mitchel and Helen

Also a couple of Rotary Exchange students joined us in Maui for nearly two weeks. They really liked the beach—one girl was from Germany the other Finland. We also found some of Helen's relatives on Oahu. On the way home we spent some time in Southern California. On this trip I found getting around very frustrating even though I spent a lot of time with a chiropractor. I just had to be patient and keep walking, I feel a lot better now. We went to Phoenix too in October. This year, 2011, we entertained Kirill and his family (now from Amsterdam, originally Kiev) by driving through the South and a week a Myrtle Beach. We traded our car with Michele and drove to pick them up in Washington DC. Elise, Kirill's wife and a sun worshiper, really enjoyed the hot August in South Carolina. We had a lot of fun on the trip. Finally there have been lots of trips back and forth to Sumter. We know the road and restaurants by heart. It's fun watching the grand kids grow and change. Julian is 7 and in second grade and Mitchel is 4. They are clearly boys....

We spend a lot of time in Sumter, Michele would love for us to move there. Helen is inclined to want to do that, I'm not. I am not very good at babysitting, so I don't. My problem is I still haven't figured out what I want to do when I grow up. Then there are the long hot summers which I don't enjoy. Helen doesn't like cold and the snow. South Carolina winters are not bad. Culturally, I think it would be hard for me to be a southerner. It took us 30 years before we felt comfortable calling ourselves West Virginians. Perhaps the biggest thing is physically moving. Our house is big and I don't want to move into another big house with a big yard—can't afford it either. But we would have some significant downsizing to do. So you see we have stuff to ponder.

We hope this finds you free of aches, pains and metabolic deficiencies. That you are doing what you want to do. Keep on truckin'.

Helen and Clark