2008 Season's Greetings from the Illinois Dooleys

Dear Friends and Family,

It was one heck of a busy year for the Illinois Dooleys! Five of the more significant events have their own galleries, all accessible from our annual photo gallery page. These include major milestones in all three kids (kids???) lives. Sarah is continuing her dream of becoming a physician, after being accepted into the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (KCOM). James felt that graduating from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy wasn't enough stress for all of us for May, and decided to get married as well. Carol returned from her 10 months in Thailand (including an appendectomy!), and had the #3 lead role in her school's production of Once Upon a Mattress.

Jeff continues his employment as a licensed athletic trainer at Lake Forest High School, commuting most days 3 hours round trip. Especially when gas prices are high, or if he works early in the morning or late at night, he puts in a bid on Priceline and stays over at a motel near work. Anne continues teaching Anthropology at the College of DuPage. Sarah, as I said above, is in medical school and continues to work at A-Tec Ambulance when she's home for breaks. She is waiting to hear on an application for a Navy scholarship to pay for medical school. James and his wife Crystal are on different Coast Guard cutters based at Kodiak, Alaska (the Coast Guard's largest base). James' cutter was above the Arctic Circle long enough to earn the Arctic Service Medal, which has a picture of a polar bear on it. Crystal's cutter went on a very long patrol across the Pacific, and she got to visit Japan. They really enjoy the outdoor life, and sent us some awesome smoked salmon for Christmas. They both love married life, and really seem to have found their soulmates. Carol is a senior at East Aurora High School, and is applying for several colleges to study technical theater, with a particular interest in costume design. Her preference at this point is Emerson College in Boston. She's out at Kodiak spending Christmas with Crystal and James. I find it very amusing that she's in the frozen state of Alaska, and is warmer there than if she was here! (as I write this, it is 1 degree in Aurora, 8 degrees in Lake Forest, 19 degrees in Falmouth, 11 degrees in Kirksville -- and 38 degrees in Kodiak!)

One story about the outdoor life on Kodiak that amuses me: After James returned from his Arctic patrol, and before Crystal returned to Kodiak, he went fishing on a river on Kodiak. As is pretty standard out there, he was carrying a handgun as wildlife protection. He found a great spot for fishing, and had cast his line when a Kodiak bear came out of the foliage across the river from him. The bear was HUGE. (it gets bigger every time this story is told) Anyway, James starts gathering up his gear, making as much noise as possible. Then he starts walking along the bank toward his car. And the bear paces him along the other side of the river, looking at him (and probably trying to decide which steak sauce to use on James). Luckily the bear came across a dead fish on the bank, and stopped to work on that. James kept going, and got in his car and left. And drove to the gunshop to buy a new handgun. He decided the 9 mm he was carrying (the size of handgun issued to our troops) would have just irritated the bear (which I think is at about 20' tall or so at this point), so he bought the kind of handgun that the professional guides carry. He hopes the only time he ever fires it will be on the range, especially since it's so powerful it's not a fun gun to shoot. In fact, Crystal shot it at the range and told me the recoil literally knocked her down.

Our year in review:

- **January:**
  - **Anne, Jeff, and Sarah go to My Fair Lady at the Cadillac Theater in Chicago.**
  - **Carol has her own opening night: an appendectomy in Thailand!**
- **February:**
  - **Jeff & Sarah go to Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine for an admissions interview.**
- **March:**
  - **Anne & Sarah go to the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine for an interview.**
  - **Anne & James meet in Maine for Easter.**
  - **Jeff goes to California over spring break for Sea Cadet Surgical Technician Training.**
  - **Billet night at the Coast Guard Academy, where James learns his first assignment - Kodiak!**
- **April:**
  - **Anne goes to the Channing-Murray Foundation Reunion in Champaign then to a memorial service in Jacksonville for one of the cadre of genealogical cousins who did so much work together a few years ago.**
  - **During reunion learns her mother has broken a hip so goes to Maine two days later.**
  - **Sarah goes to Thailand to visit Carol.**
- **May:**
  - **Carol comes home from Thailand.**
  - **The whole family (and cousin Matt) attend the Coast Guard Academy Graduation.**
  - **The whole family (and more!) attend James' & Crystal's Wedding.**
- **June:**
  - **The Madokawando house gets half a new, water side, roof and new skylights.**
  - **Jeff & Anne get away to Springfield for a couple of days, staying at the Rippon-Kinsella House while Jeff has a meeting at the Division of Professional Regulation.**
- **July:**
  - **Jeff works summer camps at Lake Forest High School, staying at a motel for 3 weeks (he came home for weekends).**
  - **Jeff, Anne, & Carol attend the Rotary Central States Meeting.**
  - **Carol works on the Tech Crew for Fox Valley Park District's performance of Beauty & the Beast.**
- **August:**
  - **Jeff, Anne, & Carol repaint the front of the house.**
  - **Jeff, Anne, & Carol go to Milwaukee for a night; Carol visits a church friend, Jeff & Anne have a nice dinner at a Thai restaurant, and visit the Milwaukee Public Museum - awesome butterfly garden.**
  - **Sarah gets accepted to KCOM from the alternate list -- and only has 10 days notice!**
  - **Family goes to Kirksville for Sarah's white coat induction ceremony.**
  - **Anne & Carol go to Maine.**
- **October:**
  - **Anne & Carol go to Maine for the celebration of the life of a favorite aunt, Molly White, who passed in September.**
  - **Jeff and his fellow athletic trainer Jen finally move into their new Athletic Training Room at Lake Forest High School.**
- **November:**
  - **Carol goes to Emerson College for a visit.**
  - **Carol plays Queen Agravaine in Once Upon a Mattress.**
  - **A large tree falls on the house at Madokawando, damaging the roof (and one of the skylights put in in June!), and Anne goes to Maine.**
  - **Anne stays in Maine for Thanksgiving, and Jeff, Sarah, & Carol go to Sarah's boyfriend Jon's parents' house (Jeff got the award for greatest variety -- he had some of everything).**
- **December:**
  - **Anne & Jeff go to Moline for her friend Libby's 60th birthday.**
  - **Carol goes to Kodiak for Christmas.**

Otherwise, Jeff continues to dabble with Sea Cadets and enjoys movies (including a dusk-to-dawn 4-movie show at the drive-in); and Anne snuck in a bit of family history work with a couple of nice finds, continues with the high school PTA, and did a few tours at the Schingoethe Native American Center. Gramma Wilson recovered very well from the hip surgery, enjoyed the wedding festivities, and continues to do well in assisted living, albeit with some additional assistance.

We are ready for 'a long winter's nap!'

We heartily wish you all the very best for 2009.