

Christmas 2006

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Gardiner Family!

“Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, and in His name, all oppression shall cease!” It’s time again to celebrate the coming of the chain-breaker, Jesus, and as we do so, here is another annual update as to how He has brought us through another year.

Lesley continues to work toward a Ph.D. in nursing and has finished her residency requirements. She only has 9 more hours of coursework left and will be done with that in the spring, barring any unforeseen problems. After that all that remains is the qualifying exams and dissertation. If all goes well Lesley plans to graduate in



Lesley (second from left) dressed as a Star Wars character at the opening of Neptune Comic Store

2008. On another positive note, Lesley has been offered (and accepted) a part-time faculty position at Marquette teaching a theory course rather than the clinical courses she has been teaching for 2 years. Nursing Care of the Older Adult is the name of the course and is the same that Lesley was an assistant teacher for this year as part of her teaching residency (Ph.D. requirement). This is for her a step up and in the direction of her career goals – full time faculty with an office (preferably a corner office near the stairs). Lesley also continues to work at Aurora QuickCare with her primary site being in a truck stop. It’s very interesting work, sometimes weird though. Lesley got back into Sci-Fi costuming this year. She attended a few Cons, a Cruise, and she helped open the Neptune Comic Book Store by dressing up as a Star Wars Character. She is uncertain about her future with the church due to the spiritual and psychological

trauma associated with the callous, thoughtless, and abusive behaviors of the leadership of the PCUSA. However, her ministry as a nurse practitioner and teacher are going well.

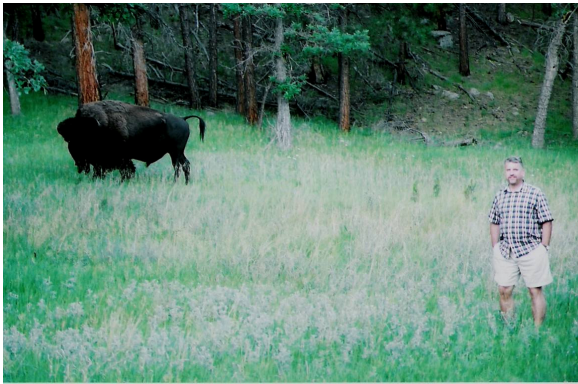
Richard continues to teach at Catholic Central High School in the social studies department. His experiential learning experiences are always a big hit and several students have gone on trips with Richard to the middle school for historical interpretations. In February, he led a class fieldtrip to Gettysburg battlefield. In March, he performed as “Doc” in the school musical, “West Side Story.” He has been appointed as the coordinator for the graduation ceremony in 2007. This summer, Rick received an award from the college where he was teaching as “Distinguished Faculty of the Year.”



Rick explaining to his students what happened on Little Round Top at Gettysburg



Rick and his students doing Civil War living history



Mt. Rushmore

Mary has reached a major milestone in her life by graduating from Juniata College this December. She will earn a degree in Human Rights and continue on with her education at Illinois State University in the spring as a graduate assistant in the Peace Corps International program. Entering graduate school at the age of 20 is intimidating but we are certain she is up to the task and will enjoy it immensely. During the beginning part of the year, Mary was in Europe, studying abroad. This past summer she took an internship at a Presbyterian Church in Maryland.

Our ferrets, Obi and Feanor, are still mostly well. Obi is getting very old for a ferret, 7 years, and has had some minor health problems this year. We aren't sure how much longer he will be with us due to an enlarged spleen but we enjoy each minute given to us anyway. Feanor continues to be feisty and crafty despite a bum leg which was operated on last year for a torn ligament. The leg is messed up again but she doesn't seem to care. Earlier in the year Feanor also lost almost all of her hair due to an adrenal gland dysfunction but another surgery corrected that and she is no longer bald. No pictures – bald ferrets are really ugly.

Should you ever find yourself in Wisconsin, please come to visit us. Our address is 1509 92nd street, #88, Sturtevant, WI, 53177. Or, drop us a line at our email addresses, Gardinerfnp@yahoo.com or Doctorgardiner@yahoo.com.

We pray for you continued well-being and your family. Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season,

Why is Richard standing so close to that buffalo? This summer we took a week long trip out West to explore a part of the country we've never traveled to before. The scenery was spectacular and daunting at times with the wide open plains and skies. We actually learned a great deal about the Lewis and Clark Expedition by following along the trail in some cases. Camping out each night saved a bundle of money even if we were bit grungy at times. Bathing in a lake in South Dakota, even in summer, was cold! The Black Hills of South Dakota were beautiful. This is where we nearly drove into a herd of wild buffalo, one of the largest herds in the country. They are quite large up close. Lesley was able to fulfill a life-long desire to see Devil's Tower National Monument (the one in the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*). No space ships though. Just a whole lot of rock. Prairie dogs are also abundant on the plains as well.



Mary on Gardiner Street in Dublin, Ireland; a street named for our kinsman, Luke Gardiner

Rick and Lesley Gardiner