

The Gibson Gazette

Volume 13

“Good words, good spirits, good friends make for a good life”

December 2008



Joyce approaches the airport after her half-hour helicopter tour of Kansas City the day after her 59th birthday in October. “It was scary, at first,” she said, “but it was great!”

‘Up’ goes down on ‘bucket list’

Joyce’s “bucket list” got a little shorter on her 59th birthday in October.

“I want to fly in a helicopter,” Joyce would say every time she spotted one. Then she would add: “But not in a med-evac.”

On Oct. 3, her birthday, Malcolm and Joyce celebrated with great friends, Ann Brill and Larry Schmitz, at a favorite fine-dining eatery in Kansas City. She thought that was the “gift.” But the next morning, Malcolm said, “Let’s go for a ride.” “Where?” she asked. “It’s a surprise,” he replied.

They drove to Overland Park’s executive airport, where the ‘copter and pilot awaited. Off Joyce (and pilot) went, skimming over the rooftops and roadways.

“We got so low,” said an elated and exhilarated Joyce, “I could read the road signs.”



Joyce and pilot come in for a soft landing after her birthday ride over Kansas City. The surprise trip was one of the items on Joyce’s “bucket list.”

On the move for family, fun, friends

Travel was among the defining words this year — some for family, some for fun. As you read this, Malcolm and Joyce will likely be on the foundation part of that — in China. They’re spending two weeks in Beijing and Shanghai, where Malcolm will be recruiting Chinese journalists for a Freeman Foundation grant that will bring them to KU and Kansas for short visits. You’ll get a full report in next season’s tome.

Here are some of the Gibson’s “vital statistics” for 2008:

- Malcolm turned 65. Still no definite plans for retirement (“I still love going to work every day”), but he’s happy that his New York Times Co. retirement has kicked in. Social Security and Medicare are on hold, especially because his TIAA-CREF retirement account with the University of Kansas has lost its luster with the stock market in the dumps. If it doesn’t get any better, he’d better start practicing “Welcome to Wal-Mart” (though he wonders if they’ll let him wear a bow-tie with the blue vest).

- Joyce turned 59 (or, as Malcolm puts it, “you’re in your 60th year,” which always gets a grimace from Joyce). As you can see on this page she got a surprise present that eliminated one of her “bucket list” items. She has a few other items she wants to do before she kicks the bucket, so more surprises are in store.

- Jennifer is 36 and still doing well with Adam, who turned 10, in Chelmsford, Mass. She continues her work as a pharmacy technician (though we hope she doesn’t get too attached to any of her patients — they’re all prisoners!)

- Ian turned the big 3-0 this year. If he had any anxiety about hitting that benchmark, it

Continued on Next Page

Aussie Ian, ‘surfer dude’

Ian’s job with State Street financial services in Kansas City presented him with an opportunity to work in Australia.

So, in March, Ian packed up to set up a new homestead in a company-paid apartment a block from Bondi Beach in Sydney.

He’s worked hard, but he’s also taken advantage of being there, visiting many Aussie spots, including diving at a coral reef. And he’s made trips to Fiji and New Zealand.

Ian came home in June for Malcolm’s 65th birthday and spent the Christmas holidays in San Francisco. His Sydney assignment is scheduled to end in late February, when he’ll return to the K.C. office.

When asked if he was cooking while “down under,” he said, “No.”

“The surfboard’s in the kitchen.”



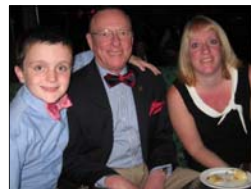
Ian and surfboard on Bondi Beach in Sydney, Australia.

Cruisin’ Caribbean for the holidays

Joyce and Malcolm gave auctions. On shore, all toured Jennifer and Adam a special the shops and enjoyed local present for Christmas and Ha-cuisines in the Cayman Islands nukkah this year — a cruise to and Cozumel.

the Western Caribbean. Dinner times were special,

In mid-December, Malcolm and Joyce drove to Tampa, picked up Jennifer and Adam at the airport, and jumped aboard the Carnival Inspiration for a five-night cruise to the Cayman Islands and Cozumel, Mexico. Jennifer and Adam spent a good deal of time at the pool and Jacuzzi; Malcolm and Adam said: “I wish this was the first day.”



Dressed for dinner!

with lots of great food to eat, including lobster tails one night. (We each had three!) And we all dressed for dinner, with Malcolm and Adam in bowties, of course.

Adam summed up the feelings for the trip. The day before we docked in Tampa and the week-long cruise, Malcolm and Adam said: “I wish this was the first day.”

Continued from Page One

didn't show. Though it'd be hard to feel sorry for him because he celebrated it in Australia, where he's been since March. He's taken full advantage of being there, traveling around Australia and the region, including Fiji and New Zealand. He'll be home in late February.

- Malcolm and Joyce celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary. It was a quiet affair.

- Malcolm's Mom, Marge, turned 93 and still has more energy than any of us. Malcolm's Dad, Tom, is 86, and he had a slew of medical problems (back surgery and an aortal repair), but he's recovering well. They're still thinking about moving to Kansas. Malcolm and Joyce hope to get 'em to Kansas for long visit once the weather gets warmer.

In other news:

The Cruise: As you've likely read on Page One, Malcolm, Joyce, Jennifer and Adam spent the pre-Christmas/Hanukkah holidays aboard the Carnival Inspiration for five nights in mid-December. Leaving from Tampa, they had ports of call in the Cayman Islands and Cozumel, Mexico. But it wasn't the stops that were special. It was spending some quality time with Jennifer and Adam, both of whom often took advantage of the on-board fun. And Adam, though no heavyweight, ate like one. After docking in Tampa, all spent a couple of great days with the parents/grandparents/great-grandparents — Marge and Tom in Dunedin.

The Big Apple: In May, Malcolm led a couple of sessions at the College Media Advisers convention in Manhattan (N.Y., not the “Little Apple,” Manhattan, Kan., home to KU's in-state rival). Between gigs at the convention, he and Joyce took in some shows, including the Metropolitan Opera (a high point for Malcolm; Joyce enjoyed and endured). Arthur Sulzberger, publisher of The New York Times, was gracious enough to escort them on a tour of the new Times building. And Malcolm and Joyce hooked up at the Times with old friend Don Parsons (who visited their Kansas homestead in the summer during his tour of major league ball parks). Jennifer and Adam joined Joyce and Malcolm in NYC for part of the week. And all hooked up with Todd Weeks, who continues his successful acting career there, and his girlfriend (and our new friend), Kate Blumberg, who hails from one of Malcolm's favorite places, South Africa.

Wedding bells: Malcolm officiated at two more weddings this past year, one for a former student and another for a good friend (and their handyman who helps with a lot of home projects). The Rev. Malcolm is slated to do two more (that'll make six!) in '09 — both in Lawrence for former students. It's a lot of work, and the pay stinks (he does 'em for nothing), but Malcolm loves doing them (and the food is always good).

Florida forays: Malcolm and Joyce (and a solo Malcolm once) made trips to Florida. Right after Joyce got her brand new Chevy



Top left: Malcolm and Joyce made several visits to see Mom and Dad in Dunedin, heading for breakfast on Clearwater Beach, whenever possible. Above, Jennifer and Adam take Malcolm's MG for a spin during a visit in April. Below left, in March, Joyce, Adam, Malcolm and Jennifer spent a week in New York City and got with old friend Todd Weeks and new friend Kate Blumberg, who's originally from South Africa.



Left, while in NYC, Malcolm and Joyce met up with Arthur Sulzberger, publisher of The New York Times, who gave them a tour of the new building. Far left: Good friends Ann Brill and Larry Schmitz “gussied up” for the Chancellor's Ball. Malcolm had a meeting in Alaska in May. It included a glacier tour. And Joyce got a new HHR, which has logged a lot of miles. “I love it,” Joyce says.



HHR, they broke it in by driving it more than 2,500 miles to and from Dunedin to visit Malcolm's folks. Then, a couple of months later, Malcolm flew down for Dad's back surgery. Then, they were down Tampa way to take the cruise. Back on shore, they stayed a couple of nights with 'em, and they all hooked up for dinner with Uncle Bill (Quinton), whom the out-of-towners hadn't seen in years. He looked great. Before heading northwest toward home, Joyce and Malcolm spent the night with great old (in every sense of the word) friends, Charlie and Carol Robins, as well as their son, Les. The group (minus Les) made their traditional stops at all the thrift stores looking for hidden treasures. None found this trip, but the stop for Cuban sandwiches and Spanish bean soup was rewarding.

Back to schools: Joyce is back working at the libraries at two elementary schools, abandoning (gleefully) her duties at the school

district's headquarters, where folks expected a full day's work in half-a-day's time (and half-a-day's pay). She's much happier now.

Home improvement: Had you visited in August, you'd have found a huge crater in the family room floor downstairs. Everwidening cracks had appeared in the floor. So contractors came in and dug a mini-Grand Canyon, put in some metal rods, and then poured gobs of concrete (bucketful by bucketful passed through a window) to fill the hole. Everything's on the level, at least for now.

St. Louis, St. Larry: In August, when Jennifer and Adam visited, they all hopped in the HHR for a long weekend in St. Louis. All went to the top of the arch, among other touristy activities. Malcolm's favorite moment was the tour of the Anheuser-Busch brewery. OK, the tour was interesting, but the highlight (for him) was the two free beers at the end — and not watery, light-yellow Buds, but two

of its specialty brews — dark, of course. Both were quite good.

In late October, Joyce and Malcolm began making almost weekly trips to St. Louis to be with Ann and Larry, who has been hospitalized with pneumonia and its after-effects since then. They spent Thanksgiving together, as well as Christmas. Larry is on the (slow) mend. He's scheduled to be transferred to a Topeka rehab unit as Malcolm writes this. Prayers for continued recovery are welcomed and appreciated. They are two very special people.

Visitors: As noted above, Jennifer and Adam visited twice, once with good friend Chris in April. And old and good friend Don Parsons, who works at The New York Times, stayed the night on his successful quest to visit every Major League baseball park. Let that be an example to all who read this: Malcolm and Joyce welcome visitors — especially you.

Happy New Year to all!