



Happy New Year, 2014 from Jaye & Chuck

Happy New Year one and all! It's the first weekend in 2014 and this photo just seems to set the tone for right now. We received 3 inches of new snow overnight and like much of the country right now, we're cold. Single digits above and headed to single digits below tonight. The photo is actually from a Kansas State University football game that we attended in late November. We were bundled up and it seemed cold then, but warm compared to what the temperatures are now!

The past year was a good year. Nobody was in the hospital, at least overnight. Our jobs remained stable, in fact most things remained stable for us. In some respects, some people might consider that boring, but stability and lack of surprises is a good thing at times! There were some highlights, once again, and most of them involved travel!

February saw us taking Chuck's sister Ann to Las Vegas for her 60th birthday. Our good friends Fred and Debbie Miller from North Carolina joined us once again and Ann's daughter Carrie was able to drive in from San Diego for part of the time there. Once again we had a great time with good friends.

April saw Chuck on a several day trip to the Washington, DC area for Extension related meetings. Having spent one summer in the DC area during college, getting back to Washington is always a treat and brings a lot of good memories and lots of energy from all that's going on there!

The summer went flying by with 4-H camp, county fair and family reunion in Nebraska. I do enjoy gathering with my Sandall relatives and having all of my siblings present made it a special gathering this year. I've gotten to the age that I realize there is a limit to how many times we all will be able to gather together so I relish the opportunities when we can!

September took Jaye and I to Pittsburgh, PA for our annual gathering of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA). This gathering was different because it was also the joint national meeting for all the Extension professional development associations. It was great fun to see friends from all Extension areas from all over the country. But it was also a huge gathering and in many ways, just wasn't as much fun. Being our first trip to Pittsburgh though we found it great fun to explore a new town and see the sites. Special for us was the opportunity to go to the National Aviary and also attend a Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game. Pittsburgh proved to be a great host and we have added it to the list of cities we want to go back to...some day! Fred Miller was also at Pittsburgh and we were able to share a lot of the time and fun with him. Debbie was not in Pittsburgh as she was saving up her vacation time for an event later on in the year (keep reading).

On the way to and from Pittsburgh, Jaye and I took a little extra time to visit friends and do a little sightseeing. An overnight stop in Lexington, KY allowed us the chance to visit and have dinner with Scott and Kriss Johnson. SJ is a special friend going back to 4-H days in High School and he also sang at our wedding. What made this visit extra special was that it was on the eve of our wedding anniversary. 28 years earlier, Scott was with us at our wedding rehearsal. On

the way home we wandered through Ohio, making an obligatory stop at some Longaberger Basket sites that Jaye and I have been to but Chuck had missed. The one hiccup of the year occurred on the return trip when Jaye developed atrial fibrillation, something that she had dealt with ten years earlier. This time the A-fib did not go away quite so easily and in late October a short visit to the cardiac care unit for a round of cardioversion (electrical shock) was required. One shock and she returned to normal heart rhythm and we are keeping our fingers crossed that it's another ten years before she has to deal with it again!

At the conclusion of the NACAA meeting I returned to the National Board as an ex-officio member serving for the next two years as Policy Committee Chair. While the duties involved are not nearly as extensive as when I served in the presidential rotation, it does add a bit more to my work load as well as a couple more necessary trips for national board meetings. The first of those trips was staying an extra day in Pittsburgh and the second was attending the winter board meeting in early December in Mobile, AL. I always appreciated attending winter board meeting as it gave me the chance to preview the site for the upcoming NACAA annual meeting which will be in late July in Mobile.

I returned from Mobile on a Saturday evening and Jaye and I immediately started getting ready to leave a few days later to drive to Newton, North Carolina to attend the wedding of Fred and Debbie's daughter, Riane. We've known Riane as long as we have Fred and Debbie, so being able to attend her wedding was pretty special and we wish her and Travis all the best on their journey through life.

So that hectic early December is partially the blame for this annual missive not being written until the first weekend in January! (At least I had a real excuse this year!) As we head into 2014 we know that there are some trips that will be taken. And probably some trips that haven't even been thought of yet. We've got some busy days ahead and some important things to take care of, but those are items that will be in next year's letter. Until then, we're right where we've always been and the best way to get a-hold of us is email (otte2@cox.net) or phone (785-238-8800 - home phone. Cell phone numbers available on request....if you don't have them already!)

Have a great 2014 and until our next visit - all our love, Jaye and Chuck



The whole crew at the famous sign!



Chuck and Jaye cruising the river at Pittsburgh!