



THE HODGE-PODGE GAZETTE



The Family Newspaper

Edition XLVII

Christmas 2006



HODGES BELIEVE CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

For the first time in 40 years, the citizens of Colorado have elected a Democratic governor as well as a legislature controlled by Democrats. J&J Hodges anticipate that the next two years will see some positive changes in greater support for higher education, health care for young and old, and passage of bills to support two-parent adoption by same-gender couples and inclusion of sexual orientation in employment non-discrimination statutes.

That is the bright side of a stinging defeat of the opportunity for our state to be the first to have its citizens decide in favor of domestic partnership benefits and responsibilities for same-gender couples. Most rural areas in this mostly agrarian state, voted to oppose this Referendum I and voted to add a constitutional amendment that bans same-sex marriage despite the fact that there is already a state law to that effect. Some prejudices take decades (must we say millennia?) to change.

The Hodges' hope for change lies with the younger generation. As 7 year-old Katie said to her two surprised uncles at the dinner table before the election: "You deserve the pursuit of happiness!" She may have been listening to her sister and Grandma Jean discuss the issue. In July when they were getting a petition signed on the downtown mall, Jonna said: "I wish I were old enough to vote. I'd sign that petition!" When meeting a young man who commented that he was not a registered voter because "it doesn't matter," she

retorted, "Well if you don't vote, you can't complain!"

After deep immersion in this contentious issue, it was Jean and Jack's pleasure and relief to have time with their children away from local politics. In June there

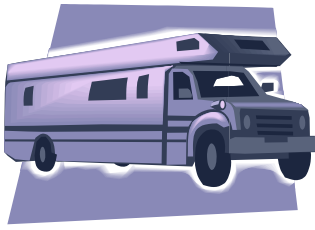


Jack, Beth, Wayne, Jean, Ben, and Kris in Mazatlan, Mexico

was a long-awaited trip to introduce Kris to his first foreign country. A week in Mazatlan with Uncles Ben and Wayne, Mother Beth and his grandparents introduced Kris to shopping in a native Mercado, trying to speak Spanish, swimming all day in both a pool and the Sea of Cortez, making friends with non-English speakers, building sand castles, and enjoying Mexican cuisine.

J & J journeyed in July with close friends, Wally and Mary Finley, to camp and explore Chaco Canyon, N.M., the remote sacred site of the Anasazi natives, circa 700. In August, after John's adventure working on construction in Alaska, he joined the rest of his family, along with Jean and Jack in their RV, for a trip to Durango and Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado. For J&J it was a chance to take Jonna and Katie on their first train ride on the narrow-gauge steam-powered Durango to Silverton excursion. Breathtaking views from mountain's edge overlooking the roaring Animas River competed with beauty seen by the Hodges anywhere in the world. Traveling to the refreshment bar for soda refills was a joyful, jiggly part of the girls' day-long train adventure. The next day's hike to cliff dwellings of the Anasazi Pueblo Indians was a chance to climb ladders and explore many stone-lined rooms and imagine what it meant to survive without ready water and food. Yes, change is incremental over time!





Pacesetter In City Goes Regional

Much to her surprise, Jean was deeply honored to be named Boulder County Pacesetter for "Quality of Life" on Feb. 2, 2006 at a grand community luncheon. Friends and families gathered to celebrate this annual event where ten individuals were selected for their outstanding contributions in areas such as: education, the arts, environment, science & medicine, and business. Jean's nomination by two former Pacesetters was primarily for her work to improve "quality of life" for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons as well as to her lifelong contributions as theatre artist and social activist to the community.

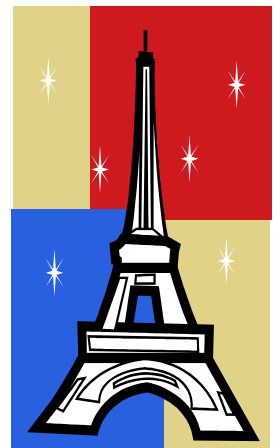
Her PFLAG work has expanded to cover five Mountain West states: Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Wyoming. Her volunteer job includes advising new chapter leaders, offering workshops, linking local chapters to national resources and general cheerleading. In the spring she traveled to Albuquerque and Phoenix to lead their respective state council meetings. August took Jean and Jack on an RV trip to tour Wyoming chapters in Cheyenne, Jackson, Casper and to Sheridan to help start a new chapter. Several days camped in Grand Teton National Park was a renewing time for hiking and just sitting in their wooded hillside campsite to enjoy the majestic Tetons and Jackson Lake. Two national meetings of regional directors meant trips to Washington, D.C. and Chicago as well as two teleconferences continue to keep her in touch with the PFLAG network of 9 RD's and national staff for some 500 chapters across the country.

A fall highlight was setting up National PFLAG Executive Director Jody Huckaby's first trip to Colorado where he met with the Colorado Coalition of PFLAG Chapters and visited members in Boulder, Denver, Colorado Springs and Ft. Collins within one weekend.

Travel Adventures Noted

Ben is grateful that his work with the IRS allows him great benefits and enough vacation to travel as often as he can. His job as a Senior Web Analyst has taken him to New York and D.C. for training opportunities. His non-profit group, Denver Asset Building Coalition (DABC), received grants to continue training volunteers to work with the indigent and elderly to get tax refunds. Life is good for these two entrepreneurs!

Jean and Jack joined long-time friends Jo and Charley Krauskopf in a tour of Northern Spain last spring. They went three days early to Barcelona to see more of this elegant city of art and architecture. Traveling by bus to Montserrat, then along the coast of the Bay of Biscay, they enjoyed sea resorts and medieval mountain villages. A visit to the famous Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao was a stark contrast to the rest of this industrial city on the sea. One of the unexpected aspects of the tour was to join the spiritual quest of pilgrims visiting the city of Santiago de Compostella. Since medieval times long treks from distant places have brought pilgrims to this beautiful city in a remote corner of Northern Spain. An unexpectedly ceremony in the crowded cathedral off the central plaza of the Old Town held us captive while we watched five monks pulling on a rope that lifted a large, ornate silver incense burner high into the transom where they began to swing it in small arcs that grew larger and larger until it swept from end to end nearly hitting the ceiling and finally returned to the center to be lowered to rest before the priests who continued the mass. The blessing of incense wafted over the hundreds of people crammed into the cathedral. It was theatre of the highest order intended to touch us with the mystery and power of that which has no words.





Back At The Home Front

Change is in the air for Jean and Jack on the home front. Following the advice of long-time friends, "Move before you have to!", the Hodges are seriously considering moving from their beloved mountain hillside haven into town to a condo and eventually to an outstanding local retirement community. Less driving, more convenience and less maintenance are the reasons. Stay tuned for an address change.

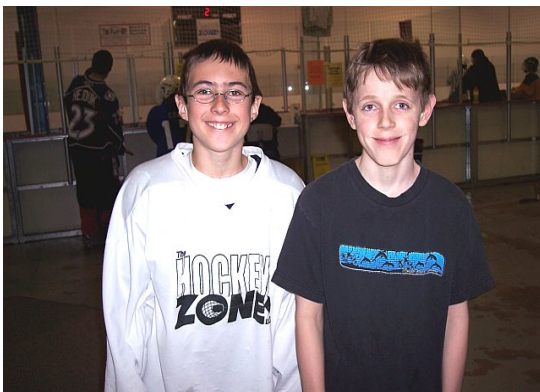
Jonna "Strikes a Pose" before volleyball



Some make changes without moving. John and Liz totally redesigned their miner's cabin to accommodate 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and an enlarged kitchen for easier entertaining. John has added a snowcat to his turkey-chicken-rabbit habit. He enjoys his forest backyard by pulling out entire Jeep Clubs stuck in the snow and taking friends on tours. The farm has also grown by two horses this year, Dallas and Morgan. The whole family enjoys riding and learning more about horses. This year the horses made Elk Camp an even bigger adventure for John and his father-in-law Ray! Katie's favorite Big Cousin, Fletcher visited this summer and quickly became part-cowboy and part-hard rock miner! Both girls are doing well in second and sixth grade

respectively. Katie is looking forward to January's science fair and Jonna is a voracious reader. The girls have joined the Peak to Peak Swim Team. Even though they groan when rising for the 7:30 meet in Denver, they swim hard and win ribbons! Jonna also played Middle School Volleyball this fall and participates in Choir. She and Grandma Jean sewed a special dress for the Holidays. She has entered the phase of budding femininity in a lovely way but is still able to roughhouse with her energetic sister who remains a delightful, joy-filled child. The whole family is eagerly anticipating Ski Season and Mountain Country Plumbing and Heating loves frozen pipes - So Let It SNOW!!

Katie and cousin Fletcher enjoy Colorado



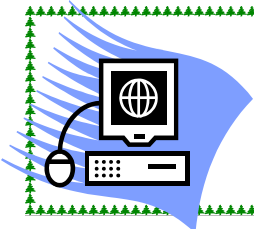
Kris & best friend Sam at hockey practice

Kris has entered sixth grade in the new middle school where he has added choir and band to his elective classes. His best subjects are science and math where he is in honors classes. His passion is still in-line hockey which he has played for six years. His team, The Thrashers, was #1 in their division. Kris is now almost as tall as his mother, and wears the same shoe size. Mom gets Kris' hand-me-downs! His after-school pastime is computer games (especially WoW) which keep him immersed until his mom gets home from work. A trip with his dad to visit his Arizona cousins, Nana, and Great Grandma Alice was a big thrill for Kris during Thanksgiving weekend.


Beth is happily starting her tenth year at Corporate Express where she continues to add responsibilities to her job as a Network Systems Analyst. She recently joined the First Congregational United Church of Christ Church in Longmont where she feels very much at home and is valued for who she is.

Visit the Hodges Family website for additional 2006 news and subscribe to receive the Hodge-Podge Gazette electronically every year:

www.HodgePodgeGazette.com



Jack and Jean Hodges and Family
6177 Olde Stage Road
Boulder, CO 80302



*“May this Season of Sharing bring
you abundant joy and high hopes.”*

*Happy Holidays
From The Hodges Family*