



THE HODGE-PODGE GAZETTE



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Hodges Family Flooded with Gratitude

2013 will be remembered in Boulder history as the 100 Year Flood where 18 inches fell in 5 days, compared to our usual annual rainfall of 17 inches, causing rivers and tributaries to rise and flow where they had never gone before. President Obama declared Boulder and nearby areas a natural disaster which allowed several hundred FEMA agents to descend within hours and promptly assess damage and provide government assistance to grateful homeowners. Even though four lives were lost, there is much to be thankful for.

Jean and Jack and all the Hodges families were relieved to be unscathed and safe. John was hired by FEMA to helicopter into two different mountain communities where residents had evacuated and washed out roads prevented their return; his job was to winterize plumbing in several abandoned homes.

Government intervention was not a welcome event for Ben, IRS employee, who was on furlough for 12 days when a lack of a vote by Congress to approve funding measures shut down the government. He was glad that he didn't have an entry level job and a family to support. A much happier occasion happened on June 15 when Ben and Wayne celebrated their 17th Anniversary by obtaining a Civil Union license, a result of Colorado legislation that went into effect on May 1. A Civil Union is still second-class status as far as federal laws are concerned, so PFLAG Mom Jean will be working



for a future vote on Marriage Equality in Colorado.

Beth still hopes to register for affordable health care and is grateful to be employed as a Customer Service representative for Apple Products. Adjusting to her empty nest without Kris is her big adjustment this year. She's grateful her work schedule now allows her to attend her UCC church in Longmont where she has many friends and is involved in church activities.

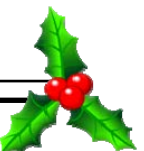
Family and Friends Celebrate Birth-A-Versary

To celebrate Jean's 80th Birthday in July, Jack's 85th in Sept, and their 58th Anniversary in August, J & J decided to have a party on Aug. 10th while they both could enjoy it. Jack's sister, Jo Nelson and daughter Sheryl, flew in to join the "Birth-A-Versary" Party where some 50 friends gathered at the Villa Del Prado Party Room.

The photo shows all sixteen of the Hodges Gang, including Kris's girlfriend Corrie and Rae's boyfriend Tavius.



"In this Season of Light and Love Reborn, the Hodges Family wishes you Shalom, Salaam, Peace!"



Grandchildren Are Moving On and Moving Up

May was a time of graduation celebration for Rae Hodges and Kris Vowell--Rae from New Vista High School in Boulder and Kris from Skyline High School in Longmont. Grandma Jean and Uncle Ben took both of the graduates to New York City as their reward. Their marathon tour included a VIP tour of the NY Stock Exchange and evening adventures with their intrepid uncle. They say their highlight was seeing the musical, "Kinky Boots" and a midnight visit to Times Square to see the Naked Cowboy and a painted lady. "This would never happen in Longmont," exclaimed an amazed Kris. Rae agreed.

This fall Kris followed Grandpa Jack and Uncle Ben to the University of Colorado where he is on the rowing team, in addition to classes and working 20 hours a week at a pizza shop. Rae is taking a "gap year", was trained as a Certified Nursing Assistant and is currently employed in a rehabilitation facility for elders where her mom works as a speech pathologist. She hopes to begin classes at Front Range Community College in January.

Kate and step-sis Rhiannon, both decided to improve their education by transferring to New Vista High School as ninth graders. Step-mom Denise who also is in college working on a degree in Psychology, drives the girls most days on their mountain commute into Boulder. Thursday nights they usually spend with Grandma and Grandpa.

Travel Increases Understanding, Decreases Fears



J&J in Caesarea built as a seaport by Herod the Great in 10 BC.

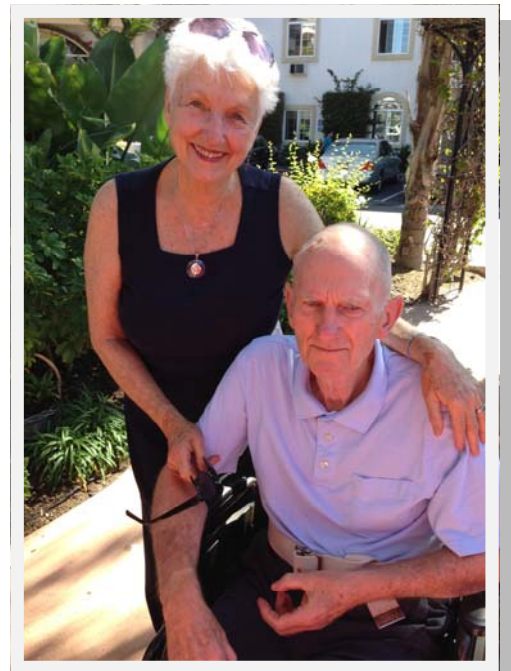
When Jo Krauskopf called Jean to suggest that they go to Cuba in February, the two friends of over 50 years left uninterested spouses at home and went with Road Scholars to learn about the culture of this island nation where trade and travel by U.S. citizens have been embargoed since Fidel Castro's communist government took control in the 1950's.

What did they see? Smiling dark-haired people who loved singing and dancing on street corners and in parks; charming

Spanish colonial architecture; colorful vintage cars. Most disconcerting: government control of salaries, food rations, and travel.

Palestine was another third world country about which they knew too little, so Jean and Jack were among ten persons from Boulder's First United Methodist Church to join with thirteen others from across the U.S. who travelled together to Palestine and Israel this fall on a spiritual journey to connect with places and people of the Holy Land.

Sponsored by Pilgrims of Ibillin, (www.pilgrimsofibilin.org) they visited biblical holy sites, but they also met with peacemakers in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Nazareth. Their intent was to hear stories beyond what makes it into our major media, and to learn what life is like for Arab Christians and Muslims. They met no Palestinian terrorists, just people eager for peace.



Jean's last visit with her brother, Don Whiteside, who died on Nov. 22 after 2+ years of multiple strokes. He is loved and missed.

