



## Christmas 2011

Merry Christmas from Leesburg, Virginia where all the women are strong, men are good looking and the Santa hangs lifeless on our Courthouse lawn getting above- average national publicity. We prefer the manger scene. It has been far too long since we've provided the annual round up and hope this update finds you well. With our youngest about to drive and oldest now in college, we are in an interesting and exciting phase of family life. Here's the scoop.

Josh is two weeks from turning 20. One of my fondest memories was when Josh was when he first saw the ocean he asked "I wonder what's behind it?" It seems fitting that he chose to go Christopher Newport University (CNU). He's in his second year studying Computer Science and was elected to be a Student Assembly Delegate and also serves on the CNU Technology Council. After playing Lacrosse at LCHS, he has joined the Rugby Club at CNU and is the best shape of his life. During the summer and on breaks he works as a basketball official and a trainer for BigShots Exposure tournaments and also coordinates basketball camps for Joe Harrington, a former College and NBA coach. He's a gifted guitar player and chicks dig guitar.

Ben is a junior at LCHS where he was inducted to National Honor Society two weeks ago. He runs Cross Country and earned his first individual medal this fall, while the team won the Dulles District and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in Virginia. He and I coach the Loudoun Mavericks Special Olympics team with a group of players who love the game as much as we do. He works at Ida Lee Recreation center which is a great gig not only because I no longer have to pay for his dates but he will also get to work there on breaks when he goes to college. Ben's middle name is Paul, after Janet's dad. He has both Paul and Janet's gift for relating to many different types of people and bringing them together. Josh, Amanda and I like to grab popcorn and watch him play Janet like a fiddle.

Amanda works harder at her high school studies than most students I saw in college. She works well ahead of deadlines including breaks and weekends and breaks. Her hard work is paying off as she continues to be an "A" student at LCHS. We are very proud of her efforts and actually have to 'coach her up' on balancing priorities and making sure she takes time to sufficiently enjoy other things (Neither Janet or I recall ever having to have that conversation with the boys!). Amanda competed at regionals and states with the LCHS Competitive Cheer team which was the first LCHS Cheer team ever to qualify for the state competition. She also competes on the Gymnastics team which has a very good chance to win the Dulles District this year. As a freshman, she qualified for Regionals on floor and hopes to improve on that this year. She loves to read (a Harry Potter nut) and also loves to write. We stop at Shoes in Leesburg, just across the street from the creepy Santa, after church for coffee and to play chess after church on Sundays. She obviously picked up her athletic talent from Janet, but she is my emotional and intellectual clone which is an interesting combination.

Janet has returned to work as an elementary school counselor at Arcola Elementary where she has an opportunity to help children problem solve and develop life skills to be successful in and beyond the classroom. In her volunteer life, she is currently a LCHS Booster Club officer and helps out with whatever sport our kids are participating in. Janet remains stunningly beautiful but also suffers a dearth of verticality, but is glad the boys are 6' tall and Amanda has surpassed her (more importantly none of them have my bow legs). She is patient with our dog, Sugar, who is a lovable handful.

I continue to work at Marriott in the Business Intelligence Group where the work is challenging and interesting. In the volunteer world, I still can't get enough hoops and serve as the Director of Loudoun Triple Threat (LTT) AAU basketball which I co-founded six years ago and has grown to 16 teams. In 2011 our teams won 5 Virginia AAU State/Regional Championships and placed 6<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> at AAU DII Nationals.

So that's our story and we're sticking to it. We look forward to driving past the skeleton Santa on a cross to our Christmas Eve service where we will worship the risen Savior who died on a cross and never saw decay to celebrate his birth in a manger.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Isaiah 9:6(NIV)

Peace and blessings from our home to yours and best wishes for a great 2012!

Mike, Janet, Josh, Ben, Amanda and Sugar

