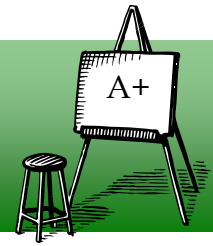


The ARTicle



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This edition of The ARTicle is a variation of the publication that I send out to the families of my students.

Career Happenings



The biggest news of the year may very well be that I lived through my first year of teaching at [Montgomery Elementary](#). The classroom seemed a breeding ground for illness, and I used up most of my sick days. However, I was lucky enough to be healthy for my Praxis III observation and I passed with flying colors.

My second year has been far less taxing, and I still feel lucky to be in such a great district. With a better knowledge of the kids and some lesson plans under my belt, I'm able to keep up a little better on my sleep and spend more time with Kevin.

Speaking of Kevin, he's still enjoying P&G. His team saw some major changes this year after their core work was outsourced to HP. In fact, he had the opportunity to further develop his leadership skills as the Project Manager of the transition. It was a big success and became the baseline for others' subsequent projects.

Slowly, leadership is becoming a focus for Kevin. In addition to building his Project Management skills, Kevin contributes time to an IT group at work called LeadIDS - a group dedicated to building leadership skills in

P&G's IT employees. He has also become certified to teach a one-day course called Situational Self Leadership and plans to do so quarterly for P&G.

Perhaps his most exciting leadership activity this year has been in recruiting. He has been collaborating with former P&G CEO John Pepper, who will be speaking at a UC recruiting & leadership development event that Kevin is helping to lead. Okay, so they had one 20-minute meeting, but Kevin was pretty excited to be working with such a prominent leadership icon.

Travel & Leisure



This was a year for SkyMiles. We cashed in 150,000 of them for travel. It started out with our [Spring Break](#), when we flew out west to meet our friend Katie and her boyfriend Joe (now fiancé) in Yosemite for some snowy tent camping, hiking, and snow-shoeing. We spent the second half of the week in Russian River Valley, a coastal California wine region, west of Sonoma and Napa Valley. We visited 16 wineries, tasted 108 different wines, and came home with 45 bottles! The beautiful vistas and fresh air proved a theme throughout this vacation.

Our next big vacation wasn't until August, when we strapped the kayaks on top of a rented

conversion van and drove with my family to Ocean Isle Beach, NC. We ended up further from the beach than we had hoped, so we all went in on a golf cart and cart-pooled to the beach.

In late October, Kevin had training in the [San Diego](#) area, so I took a personal day, cashed in a few more SkyMiles, and spent the weekend with him in Temecula - a wine region about an hour northeast of the city. The dry, sunny weather was great. We visited 11 wineries and shipped home another 35 bottles of wine. We would, however, easily recommend the Russian River Valley over Temecula.

Our final SkyMiles jaunt of the year was to Atlanta two weekends later for the wedding of two of my Ensemble Theatre intern friends. The wedding was beautiful and while we were in town, we saw the Louvre exhibit at the High Museum of Art.

Sports & Activities



High school theatre remains my favorite extracurricular and, this year, I helped blaze some new trails. In January, I was the assistant director for Sycamore's winter comedy, *Rumors*. In February, I produced and directed Sycamore High's first Improv Comedy Show. In April, I choreographed *Footloose*, which was nominated for 15 [Cappies](#) and won 3! Over the summer, I choreographed

Sycamore's first Summer Theatre production, *Beauty and the Beast*. In the fall, I was responsible for the choreography and staging for *Once on This Island*. I also choreographed a couple of numbers for my mom's fall musical, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, at my alma mater (Oak Hills High School). I even tried my hand at teaching basic theatre skills to my third and fourth-graders as part of an After School Enrichment program and to third through eighth-graders as part of the Summer Theatre program at the high school.

Kevin's primary extracurricular continued to be softball. He cut back to one league at a time this year, but had his spring season interrupted for 6 weeks with a major ankle sprain. I guess he's getting old. With some intensive physical therapy, he did return in time to help his team to the championship game. Fall ball wasn't quite as successful, but he finished the year healthy.

House & Home



The Carroll home underwent a few changes this past year. If we visit you, chances are that it will be in our newest vehicle - a fully loaded 2006 Nissan Pathfinder. Most importantly, it's an automatic. Kevin's ankle sprain made it difficult to drive either the Wrangler or the Camry, both manual transmission vehicles. We're considering letting the

Camry go if you know anyone in the market for a car.

Another change you'll notice if you visit *us* is a 600-square-foot [Patio Roof](#) on the back side of the house. Kevin started it last November, thinking he and his dad could get it done over a long weekend. *That* didn't happen. After putting in weekends here and there, Kevin finally finished it up this November. This was just in time to shelter our latest purchase, a 1994 Starcraft pop-up camper. Kevin found it on the P&G bulletin board and got a great deal. We're looking forward to traveling with the dogs and camping with the additional comfort.



The biggest change of the year for me was my 7" haircut for Locks of Love in April. I was happy with the first haircut, but a new girl cut my hair the second time around and insisted on straightening it first. I wasn't happy with it, but when I went back, it only got worse from my perspective. I cried all the way home. Kevin said it was cute, but I didn't like it quite that short. The pictures above show my original cut, the straight trim, and the straight trim fix.



Pets

We reported last year that Chief had a seizure right before we left on our Christmas cruise. Although

his blood tests were normal, he has since had several more seizures. The last one was only 3 weeks after the prior one, so we finally started him on medication. At first, Chief was miserable and off-balance. At the vet's recommendation, we backed off his medication a bit and he seems to be doing much better. He has been seizure-free now for almost 3 months (knock on wood). Kolder remains healthy and spastic as usual. Both are adjusting well to life indoors.

Love & Marriage



In the past couple of months, our wedding and engagement dry-spell has welled up. At the end of the summer, our friends Stacey and Katie each got engaged to their boyfriends and just in the past couple of weeks, our friends Jeff & Lindsey and Vipul & Jenny announced their engagements!

Although many of Kevin's friends from high school are expecting second babies, we have only one birth to announce. Kevin's sister Erin and her husband Mike had their first baby at the end of July. [Emma](#) has such a happy disposition and endless smiles!

The only wedding in our circle this year was the previously mentioned wedding of my friends [Jared & Kristy](#), who tied the knot in November. It looks like there will be many more in the next couple of years, though.

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