

# Woods Tribe Tribune 2000-2001

**Two for the price of one!! We had a series of unfortunate events overtake us December 2000, so for the first time in over 10 years, the Woods Tribe Tribune didn't make it out the door. No you weren't removed from the mailing list (as much as you may have wished! Bribes can help make that happen...)**

## Handsome takes up Residence

Denise's father Larry (AKA "Handsome"), came to Houston for Bryce's Birthday party in December 2000, but has ended up staying much longer than he ever planned on. We ended up taking him to the Hospital, and after being checked out by a team of 20 Doctors', they found an abundance of problems, but have not found the root cause. He suffers from nerve damage, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD), gas in the stomach, a mild heart attack, cysts, and worst of all an occasional bout of "bad hair"! We spent the month of December, with family members (Colleen Sr., Colleen Jr., and Peter) keeping an eye on him in ICU. Peter and Colleen Jr. stayed to keep an eye on him through a portion of the spring. Since then we have been running a 24/7 "nursing home" of sorts. He requires a breathing machine and continuous oxygen during the day. We have learned to suction out his lungs, give him breathing treatments, and many other medical procedures. We know this has been frustrating for handsome, who has always been in very good health; for us a major "speed bump" in our lives. Meanwhile life goes on, but with a different pace. We have survived with the help of many loving family members and great friends.

## International Space Station Residents take up Residence!

These past two years have been an exciting time at work for Donald as the first crew of the international Space Station took residence in their home away from home. I will let them speak for themselves:

The exploration of Space is a powerful symbol of the promise of a new year, and the possibilities of a new millennium. We are a small part of the large international team which has in the year past established this new outpost off the planet. The age where humans have a presence away from Earth has already started.

To mark this New Year, the crew of "Alpha" would like to honor ... this unprecedented space effort, bringing together the best of human technology, science, and engineering, expanding our knowledge and capabilities--defining us as a spacefaring civilization.

Let the real 'Space Odyssey 2001' proceed.

*Sergei Krikalev -- Bill Shepherd -- Yuri Gidzenk  
(First Crew of the International Space Station)*



In April there was a failure of the Station's new primary computer; but don't despair Dad's computer saved the day. We didn't call it "mighty mouse" for nothing! Meanwhile Denise continues teaching and hugging her 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. Many of her students have parents who are astronauts, and several have made trips to the Space Station. The entire family got to see the first space station crew on their return to earth. We live in exciting times!

## Children on the Loose!

**Alex** grew taller than Mom in 2000! She was also a flute star, number one in the top band, and elected band president! The Woods Tribe's first politician, as well, our first family politician, I guess its all down hill from here. She also qualified for regional band (more on that later). She is also in Soccer, cross-country, and on the tennis team. But most importantly she is the kind of kid you wish there were more of; save the dolphins, save the world, start a petition to keep the good teachers, kind, polite and funny!

**Tasha** the Oboist also enjoys Tennis and runs Track. She likes running her Dad around the tennis court. She is turning into a real "60's girl"! Freckles, our dog, keeps a guard on Tasha at night. She and Alex went to Girl Scout camp together. Tasha is the only person left in the family with any organizational skills.

**Bryce** has become a great fan of Submarines, and World War II. He has been studying submarine design and hopes to build one soon. On a somewhat less ambitious scale, Bryce and Dad did manage to build a clubhouse (No Girls Allowed!).



The family visited the Sea-wolf sub in Galveston and the Houston air-show where they had 100 WW2 planes in the air at the same time. Bryce thought this was great. Bryce also started wearing glasses, which along with his little scar on the forehead, has caused people to start calling him "Harry Potter". Bryce has big dreams and plans!

## Back to Nature

The Woods tribe enjoyed several camping trips with other adventurous families. Floods, mosquitoes, getting lost, what could be more fun? We all returned with the same amount of children that we left with, and in some cases they were actually the same ones we started with. The Hill country, Perdaneles Falls, Enchanted Rock, Lost Maples, Huntsville, and Garner state park will never be the same. We also attended a "Movie premier" for "Don't Say a Word", in which Mom's former student Sky Bartusiak, plays the kidnapped daughter. Skye spent a weekend camping at "Chain-O-Lakes" with the Woods tribe, and other friends: the Suffredinis, Borns, and

Purdums. We also enjoyed rafting the Rio Grande through Big Bend National Park during Easter 2000.

### Thanksgiving Eastern Trip

We went back east to visit Aunt Nancy, after the loss of her long time companion, friend and husband. Uncle Bob will be dearly missed. The log cabin he built and the surrounding area of Craig County without a doubt must be one of the calmest and quietest places still left in the USA. While back east we also visited Grandma Colleen in Washington DC, and exposed the children to the center of the US government. I know, I know, but we thought they had better see it first hand with parental guidance, instead of learning about it from their friends on the street.

### Winter in the Desert

We wound up 1998, with a week in Palm Springs California visiting with Grandma Kay. We had fun playing tennis, visiting cousins and family in San Diego. We also visited the San Diego Wild Animal Park; they wanted to keep the kids for observation, but we were able to sneak them out.

### Pensacola - "home away from home"

We visited Pensacola several times. In 2000, we were visited by the Born brood, and Mom's sister Lisa, and her son Blake. Our gulf front condo was great, with a nice breeze. We took Handsome there for Easter 2001. In the summer of 2001 we spent two weeks there and invited friends and family, such as the ever-adventurous Purdum clan, Newells, and repeat customers Lisa and Blake (some people just don't learn). After we left, the sharks were so disappointed that they started biting people.

### What's that Noise!

The girls have evolved into star musicians! They went to a Band camp concert at Stephen F. Austin University; where the girls placed in the top band out of 600 other attending musicians. The girls qualified for "Region band" proving themselves to be among the best Junior high musicians in the South Houston Region. Alex, was a champion winning the bronze medal in the "region" competition against 120 other flautist. Not to be outdone, Natasha actually won region, which means she is the best Oboist in the Houston area; she placed higher than many older and more experienced 8th grade Oboist (she is still in 7th grade)! These placements qualified them to play in the region orchestra; where only the top 2 or 3 musicians for each instrument are invited to perform. Mom and Dad have no idea where all of this musical talent came from, but we are blaming it on the genes on Mom's side, which were passed down from the composer Wagner. Its beautiful to come home and hear them practicing together on their duets. They have brought their own music in to our lives, and we are appreciative, thankful and amazed.



### Thanksgiving in Paris!

Mom and Dad celebrated their "un-official" 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary over Thanksgiving in Paris. This was a lot of fun, and having a week with no children schedules, Doctor visits, cell phones, pagers, e-mail, faxes, was pure heaven. Many thanks and combat pay go to Denise's sister Lisa and Suellen Purdum who kept an eye on "Handsome", back at the "Ranch", and to Randi Born who bravely kept the Junior partners of the Woods tribe in line (we heard the straight jackets helped).



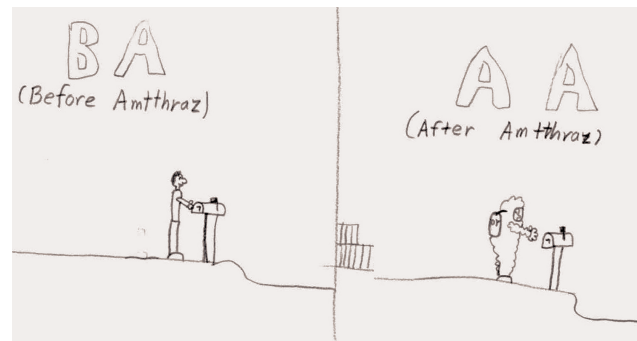
The parents also celebrated their official 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Born's Beach house, and their 16<sup>th</sup> at the Galleria area. The ideas was to get in a little relaxation, I would say it was closer to collapsing!

Denise turned the big "4-0", but is still as full of adventure and zest for life as ever. The kids enjoy teasing her to no end about being "over the hill".

### That's all folks!!

Well two more years have run into the past as the memories that make up the fabric of our lives. We've probably forgotten more than we remember, but we have tubs of photos we will sort through after the children have moved on to their own adventures! We survived the Houston floods (by 1.5 inches), and terrorist attacks (see Bryce's summary below!) We certainly hope you escape unscathed as well.

Have a wonderful 2002, and come visit if you are out our way. The welcome mat is always out, the new sofa bed is real comfortable and we will leave a light on! Give us a few days warning, so we can hide the skeletons. Until next time!



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