



## Happy Holidays, 2010!

*(An attempt by Chuck to recount the year in 2 pages or less!)*

Christmas is a week away. Most of my shopping is done, most of the parties have come and gone and I'm looking forward to a nice quiet Christmas at home! Compared to 2009 we didn't do much traveling and we didn't have a lot of excitement, and that was okay with us! 2011 is going to be an interesting year so having a "quiet" year was probably a good idea.

Naturally we made several trips to Nebraska this year to check up on my parents. Good Lord willing they will celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in March - stay tuned after the first of the year for details on that. They still live in the retirement community in Omaha with my brother and sister close by for support. We don't know how long they will be able to stay there, but we are thankful just to still have them!

Jaye's Mom still lives on the farm north of Junction City. We spend a fair amount of time out there and enjoy helping her keep her independence. This past year the old farmhouse got a new coat of paint and central air conditioning. With the summer as hot as it was, the AC was a good choice! I try to garden a little bit, as time allows, keep the grass mowed, or try to, and have a few fruit trees. This year the apple trees had a super crop - the apples were sweet, relatively insect and blemish free and we enjoyed them well into the fall as did Jaye's Mom, her brother and most of the folks in my office!

Jaye continues to work at Central National Bank and will celebrate her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary there in October. I'm still at the Extension Office and will hit the 29 year mark in January. One of our Extension Office secretary's will retire the end of the December after 23 years in the office. She was a great team mate and I will miss all those lawn and garden calls that she took care of that I never even knew about!

In May we went to north central Kansas with our birdwatching group for our annual spring get together. We always enjoy these gatherings and look forward to them more and more every spring. May of 2011 will find us gathering in Elkhart which is in the extreme southwest corner of Kansas. A good time will be had by all!

In July we attended the National Assoc of County Agricultural Agents annual meeting in Tulsa, OK. It's always a pleasure to see old friends, meet new ones and gain some knowledge along the way. Next year the Kansas Ag Agents are hosting the National Meeting in Overland Park, KS (suburban Kansas City) in early August. We have been working on this for nearly 3½ years. It is a major undertaking and continues to eat more and more of my time. It'll be fun, it'll be a lot of work, and I'll be really glad when it is over!

In August, once the county fair was behind us, Jaye and I took a ten day trip to Montana. We started with my Swedish relatives in Nebraska at the annual Sandall reunion, and then headed up into South Dakota, across the corner of Wyoming and the into Montana. We made stops at the Little Big Horn (Custer's Last Stand), the little towns of Livingston and Ringling (Jimmy Buffett fans will know the connection here), an afternoon with a good county agent friend of mine in Broadwater County and then on to Glacier National Park. Our two day stay there coincided with reported sightings of prison escapees from Arizona, but fortunately we didn't see them. Our two day visit was also just enough to make us realize that we HAVE to go back there for more of a visit in the future. A day of hiking around Glacier also manifested itself in a torn meniscus in my right knee - more on that later! Fortunately, we had a nice and quiet three day trip home from Glacier.

Over Labor Day we took my sister Ann with us on a 4 day weekend to visit cousins in Colorado Springs. A quick trip and a lot of fun as we reunited with family we hadn't been around much for far too many

years. I can see that other trips to Colorado are certainly going to be in order soon, both to see family and dear friends we haven't visited in some time!

Late in September I finally got in to see the orthopedic surgeon about my knee with the resulting recommendation of arthroscopic surgery to deal with the problem. The surgery was done on an outpatient basis the very end of October. I went in at 6:30 on a Friday morning, was home by noon, stayed off of it all weekend and was into rehab by 7:00 a.m. on Monday morning. I worked half days the first week after surgery, took off mid-afternoons the second week after surgery, was released by rehab and the surgeon the third week after surgery and went back to working full days. I'm still going in and working on rehabbing the knee, in fact Jaye and I are both planning to work out through the winter as we try to offset, or at least slow, the effects of "not getting any younger!" The knee is back to about 85% and I can tell improvement on a weekly basis.

A quick trip to Omaha for Thanksgiving and a large family gathering pretty well brought the traveling for 2010 to an end. Jaye and I find ourselves doing well as we head into the end of the year and the start of 2011. We feel fortunate to have our health our family and our friends and that means a lot to us especially at this time of year. I hope this letter finds you in good health, I hope that you have a great holiday season, and if you are ever in this part of Kansas, let's get together! (I hope you enjoy a few photos below from this past year!)

All our love - Jaye and Chuck



Us with good friends Fred and Debbie Miller from North Carolina near Tulsa.



At the National Severe Storms Lab in Oklahoma City.



You know who at you know where!



One of many awesome views at Glacier!