

The Barfields at Christmas 2011



The last wedding - The year's big event was the June 18th marriage of **Megan to Brandon Hash**. So our youngest and last daughter is now married, making it three weddings under 12th months. For more including links to pictures, see our web site at Dcbarfield.org (as well as our favorite recipes, and more).

With that, we have arrived at **the empty nest**. How has it been? Cathy admits crying for parts of the first week. But Megan and Brandon called from their honeymoon which helped. It also helped that the second half of the year has been as busy as the first half. As soon as the wedding was done, we headed north for our annual vacation in Wisconsin with Cathy's brother and more. Immediately after that Cathy taught, for the first time, a two-week Biology review for those planning to take the CLEP exam; then it wasn't long before the new school year was upon her.

The nest is not quite empty –

While our final daughter left the house, **we gained a dog**. While not our plan, that makes two now. We adopted our Bingley, an English Setter, from the Humane Society about 2 ½ years ago. During early 2010, Megan and Brandon found Bear (a Schnaupin, a mix of Miniature Pincher and Schnauzer) abandoned. He was to be their dog but when they married, they rented a home that does not allow dogs. So now Bear is ours. It is good thing he is so cute and snuggly because he is still finding trouble.



David - Besides the wedding, work has dominated his life this year. He knew the chief engineer job would be a big one when he accepted it, but this year was the busiest of his career. Much of Kansas was in a drought, which keeps a “water czar” (an unofficial title the media uses) and staff busy; our new governor and administration have a keen interest in water issues, esp. tacking our Ogallala aquifer over-development; and the U.S. Supreme Court accepted Kansas case against Nebraska regarding the Republican River Compact (again). It appears 2012 will remain busy.

Cathy continues to teach science to local homeschoolers (biology and advanced biology) as well as a biology class at Veritas Christian School. This fall she is upgrading her technology, starting with her advanced biology class: she bought a projector and using PowerPoint. She hopes to expand this as time goes on to her other classes.

Cathy has also been working on a backlog of photo projects that has been building with weddings and more.

Taking care of ourselves - Both of us are keeping in good shape with regular exercise and healthy eating. We do all of our exercise at home as it works best for us. We just bought ourselves an elliptical machine since our house has plenty of room. We highly recommend Eating Well Magazine and their cookbooks (see their web site).

The “girls” and their men are doing well, all living in the area:

- Betsy and Matt – Matt will graduate with a degree in Drama before the year is out. Betsy has been subbing and building a business of teaching piano and tutoring, gradually dropping subbing days as her business grows.
- Amy and Josh – Amy continues to teach elementary music and Josh continues to take classes at KU in sports management and work.
- Megan and Brandon – Megan will graduate from Washburn with degrees in both Music and Mass Media in May. This year she is one of the news editors for Washburn’s college newspaper. Brandon is working hard in the energy industry.

If you want to keep up with various family members, it is not difficult. David and Cathy are at www.Dcbarfield.org; David is at www.Dbarfield.org; Betsy writes “Romance on a Dime”; Amy is the Happy Tulip; and Megan is the August Poppy.

We are fortunate that they are all living in the area at the moment. While coordinating calendars to get everyone together is always a challenge, we are looking forward to going to *A Christmas Carol* at the KC Rep and some time together on Christmas.

Close - We hope next year will bring some calm before the next “storm” of David’s career, trial of Kansas v Nebraska. While we don’t expect to make any big changes, we are hoping things settle down a bit so we can do a bit of thinking on adjustments we want to make in this next chapter of life.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

David and Cathy
(with Bingley and Bear)

Book recommendations:

Fiction: The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society; The Help
Non-fiction: In Defense of Food

Movie recommendations:

Captain America; Thor; Courageous; Secretariat