

## *2015 Holiday Greetings from the Bryant Family*

2015 has been another year of adventure for us with some sad news to begin: Rommel (the wonder dog) died in March at the age of 11 1/2 years. He had a good, full life and was happy until his very last days. After a few months we began the search for another dog and met a nice White German Shepherd family. Ranger was born in July and came home in September. We're re-experiencing all the challenges of puppyhood. Teething seems to be diminishing at last, but we're still working on his ability to walk nicely and to avoid jumping up on the bed to engage us at 5 a.m. We are all learning new skills at puppy training classes. Ranger's an active guy with a strong, friendly personality and a slightly less aggressive nature than typical German Shepherds.

As always, most of our news is about the boys. Sam is now a sophomore at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He spent part of his summer with an F&M professor and small group of students studying in Russia. They visited St. Petersburg, Moscow, and a small rural village. He had a great experience and learned a lot about Russian culture in his interaction with Russian college students, even spending an evening with the family of one of them. He also had a week of intensive physical training in Miami learning Krav Maga with an Israeli Commando instructor Dave knows. Sam went with a high school friend and came back with new, practical self-defense skills. Sam continues to perform with the F&M concert and pep bands. He's also playing Ultimate Frisbee on the club team at F&M. They had fun at a Spring Break tournament in Myrtle Beach. He was home briefly at Thanksgiving and we're looking forward to having him for the longer winter break.

Ben is now in a very active part of his junior year at Freedom High. Marching band took up much of the fall and now overlaps with wrestling, where he competes at 170 pounds. He continues to be active in Scouting and is spending more time with a Venturing crew, a co-ed branch of the Boy Scouts for older scouts. His girlfriend Kelly is also active in this crew and they are both leaders in the National Youth Leadership Training program that will happen over winter break. Sam will also help to conduct this program, which they took a few years ago. Ben made two big trips with Scouts this year. Last summer, he was a delegate to the National Order of the Arrow Conference at Michigan State University and went on a 10-day backpacking expedition at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico where they hiked over 70 miles. Ben got his regular driver's license and was surprised with a new Jeep. Unfortunately, after only 3000 miles, he was hit from behind, pushed into another car, and then rolled on his side. Thanks to seat belts and air bags, there were no injuries. Ben was not at fault and the other insurance company is repairing the Jeep.

Dave celebrated 10 years with the Brooksville Police Department and continues his private business doing polygraph exams for various attorneys and psychologists and on sex offenders for the state Department of Corrections. He was just elected Sergeant at Arms for the Tampa chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, enjoyed Bike Week in Daytona with the Blue Knights Motorcycle Club, and attended a week of training with international law enforcement firearms instructors. He delivered two programs at the Mensa Regional Gathering, one on firearms and the other a humorous street wine tasting.

Judy received a Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development. It recognized her teaching and research accomplishments. She finds it hard to believe that she is the senior member of the Psychology Department at the University of South Florida, now in her 35<sup>th</sup> year. In May, she and Sam met their cousins Ruthie and Ron in Iowa City. They spent several days at the University of Iowa's Women's Archive examining documents and artifacts to learn more about the family's life in and departure from Germany in 1939. In October, Judy, Ron, and Ron's daughter Amanda went to Arizona to see their Aunt Eva and Ruthie to gather more family information.

Dave and Judy's summer trip was brief. They spent a day in Savannah en route to DC for a reunion of Judy's side of the family and then up to Pennsylvania to pick up Sam when he returned from Russia. While in DC, they visited the George Washington Masonic Memorial, Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Holocaust Museum, and Spy Museum, and enjoyed the music, drill and ceremony of the spectacular Evening Parade at the Marine Corps Barracks.

Although our unseasonably warm and humid weather make it difficult to believe that it's December, we are preparing for the holidays and looking forward to winter break and the New Year. We hope you are as well.

Dave

Judy

Sam

Ben

Saphira (the uromastyx)

Ranger (the puppy)