

Tax Day 2016

The passing of David's mother, Sarah Green Williams, in December shaded this past year. She had been on the long, downward spiral of Alzheimer's Disease for several years.

With her move to Decatur's Arbor Terrace in June 2009, Loren and Susan had been providing excellent oversight of her care and almost daily companionship. Steve and David visited frequently, but were still at a distance. Her passing brought the extended Williams family together with the Green family to celebrate her life. There were many stories shared and smiles and laughs to accompany the loss (kayakero.net/link78).



Sarah Williams: Robert's baptism weekend; April 2005



Wilderness at the Smokies water-park; March 2016

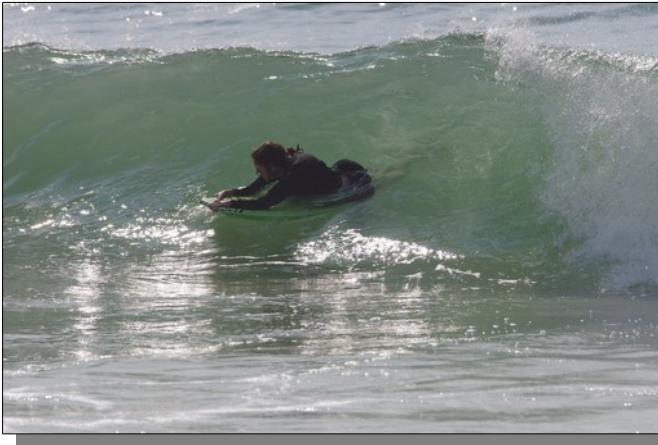
Mountains National Park (kayakero.net/link79). That trip wraps up this past tax year.

The first trip for this past tax year was one we took up to New Jersey and New York in May 2015 for Ian's senior concert and graduation from Columbia (kayakero.net/link80). Ian is doing great as a graduate, living the computer geek life in New York.

Later in May, David took a quick trip down to Richmond for the premiere of *Artists Die Best in Black*, the film based on the novel Martha wrote and screenplay she co-wrote.



Ian Zapolsky's senior concert; May 2015



Sarah in the waves at Assateague; July 2015

She was very involved with and interested in the filming while she was living on the Gulf Coast before moving back to Richmond.

This past July, we all enjoyed camping on the beach at Assateague again; joining up with the same crew who started inviting us a couple of years ago. The weather was more cooperative and the boogie boarding was awesome this year (kayakero.net/link85). We had such a good time at the beach that we ventured down to the Outer Banks in September (just before school started) for more fun in the surf. But not only the surf –

we each took our first hand-glider trips on the dunes at Kitty Hawk! (kayakero.net/link86)

In November, we had the cool experience (courtesy of Sarah keeping an eye on the Johns Hopkins kid's program) of spending a night with the fishies. We checked in to the Baltimore Aquarium just before closing time Saturday, learned some interesting things in a fun evening program, like how scuba divers can't swat away the moray eel if it wants to sit on your head while you're cleaning the tank. Then we bedded down in our sleeping bags to wake up with the dolphins Sunday morning (kayakero.net/link87).



Robert dissecting an urchin; November 2015

In December, Sarah and Robert drove up to



Williamses:back to front and left to right: Loren, Leland, Cornelia; Lee, Susan, Sally, Carolee; Sam, Kate, Sarah Z.; Helen, Aaron, David; Steve and Robert; December 2015

New York for the big 80th birthday party for Harry: a nice hotel, fine dining and a Broadway show were enjoyed by all. David was in Decatur, GA with his mom and brothers. Sarah and Robert joined the Williams clan for Christmas and for the memorial service for David's mom, who passed on Christmas Eve. There was a second memorial service in Boone (where she and Loren retired) in January. Her sisters were able to join in that second celebration of her life.

Earlier in January, we had a substantial snow storm and lots of good sledding (kayakero.net/link88). Fortunately, it melted enough to not interfere with the trip to Boone

later in the month.

In addition to those out of town trips, we also enjoyed the DC metro area over the past year: we all paddled on the Potomac over the summer (Robert in his own kayak now – both a Jackson 1.5 and a sit-on-top that's easier to get out of or off if you flip). We even managed to bring along a friend on some trips. Another summer standard has become



Colonial Robert; May 2015

breakfast (cooked over an open fire).

Of course we celebrated Robert's 11th birthday this year, packing a week with Laser Tag, a Nationals game (*Star Wars* day!) and the traditional trip to the Lego store (kayakero.net/link84).

Now Robert is in sixth grade – middle school (kayakero.net/link82) – still enjoying school and enjoying learning all he can. The transition to middle school was not too rough (perhaps due to staying on the same campus where he has been since 2008: kayakero.net/link8). And middle school comes with a Chromebook! (And a second



Robert on the Masonic Temple hill; January 2016

the ropes

course at Sandy Springs; we climbed around in the trees there a couple times this past year.

The extended family is all doing well, with one disturbing exception: nephew/cousin Aaron is temporarily out of school and being treated for aplastic anemia. He's responding well to the treatment (which just began late last month). We're sending all the good vibes we can his way, and recommending everyone consider signing up to be a bone marrow donor (kayakero.net/link81) – that's not the treatment path for Aaron, but certainly is for many.

The immediate family is doing well. For Robert, the end of fifth grade included a fun school trip to West Virginia where the kids immersed themselves in colonial times. They had special clothes; everyone made and dyed a haversack, and the whole class spent a night under tarps after hauling water up the hill in buckets for dinner and



Star Wars day at Nationals Park; July 2015

email address.)

One of the highlights of sixth grade so far was the sixth grade musical: the kids did a great job putting on *Make 'em Laugh* (the parents helped with costumes, sets and props). It was especially impressive because they pulled it off after missing several rehearsals due to those fun January snow days. Middle school also brought out an interest in running: Robert is on the cross country team and he and Sarah have been in a couple of local races since the fall (kayakero.net/link83).

Sarah continues to work for the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (a component of DHS). She has welcomed some new colleagues there but also seen several fun and helpful folks move to other positions. She's giving more thought to joining that movement and exploring options outside USCIS. She's hoping next year's Tax Day letter will include a new job for her.



*Robert in his immigrant costume;
February 2016*



We set up the zipline in the backyard last summer.

David continues to relish his walking commute to the US Patent and Trademark Office. This will be his eighth year there. As with Sarah, he's welcomed some new colleagues and seen some leave, but the flow at PTO is incoming rather than outgoing. We don't expect any new job updates for David in next year's letter.

We hope everyone has been doing well this past year. If you happen to be coming this way, we're always happy to share our house with friends. You can keep up with our exploits from Sarah's Facebook page (kayakero.net/link76); David's (kayakero.net/link74) or Robert's (kayakero.net/link77) blogs – though Robert's is updated less frequently, or Robert's YouTube channel (kayakero.net/link89).

A final bit of trivia: this is the 20th Tax Day letter; the rest are here: kayakero.net/link90