

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Great New Year 2009

Christmas puddings are cooking; fluffy snow is falling; the house is buttoned up for winter; cards have arrived from England: so it must be time to write our Christmas letter!

Trips In the depths of last winter, we fled to Mexico for the sun, history and culture of the St Miguel Allende area. John's part time work continues and made possible a business trip, with Frances, to California, Oregon and Washington. The fun part started with Michael and Barbara in San Francisco. We continued by road to Mt. Shasta, Crater Lake, Spokane, Mt. Rainier and ended in Seattle. Another business trip for John (this time alone) included six days in Honolulu. While John was swimming at Waikiki beach, Paul was on a mission for the US Government to the South Pole. We are sure that the visit provided useful information for his work, but he sent us an amusing postcard which informed us that **Antarctica is very cold: it has a lot of ice and he saw some penguins!**

Clare and Lucy and their families did not get to the South Pole, but they all got to see Mickey Mouse at Disney World, in Florida. Our summer vacation started on Cape Cod with Lucy and family to celebrate John's brother Charles' birthday and then continued, with Charles and Ania, in Colorado, where we enjoyed the wonderful mountain scenery and some great hotels and restaurants.

What we do, Frances, now retired, can help with grandchild care, which was useful when Lucy ruptured her Achilles tendon playing soccer with the boys. Lucy will be off crutches soon. Frances is a little too busy with traditional church activities and even busier with Voice of the Faithful, a group working to reorganize the church. She remains the "Web Weaver" for the Winchester League of Women Voters and now publishes an on-line newspaper "The Bulletin" which can be found by Googling, "LWV Winchester" or directly at www.lwvwinchester.org/ John continues to play chess "way, way too much" and also plays a little poker, mostly Texas Hold'em. Some of his chess photos can be found at the chess page on his web site www.shawx.com/ - you can also link to the ever growing archive of Frank Runacres paintings, of which quite a few were added in 2008.

While most of what happened in the family in 2008 was good, towards the end of the year we were shaken and saddened by the death of our nephew, Ben McCaffry, in a motorway accident. Clare and Frances went to England for the funeral

Grandkids: We are proud of our five grandchildren and impressed by the job their parents are doing in helping them to grow and mature nicely. **Here are the famous five:**



Annika, age 13



Sarah, age 10



Ean, age 9



Max, age 6
Oliver, age 6

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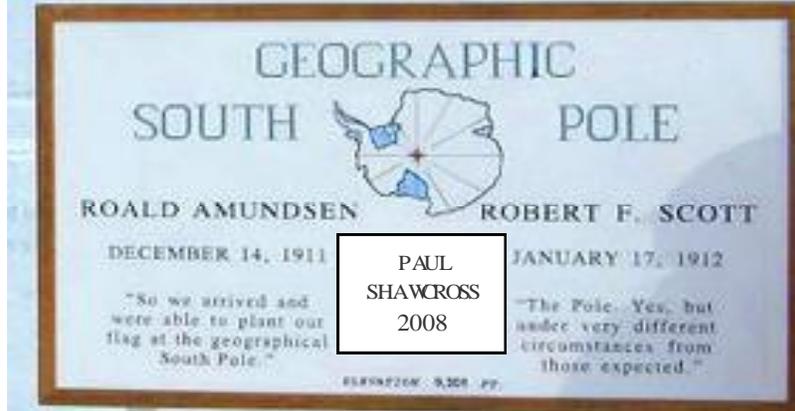
John at Crater Lake



Paul and Andrea



Lucy and John



PAUL SHAWCROSS 2008



At Estes Park, Colorado

Charles

Ania

Frances

John



Living room, 63 MVP on November 30, 2008. Photograph by Mike Nosal



63 Mystic Valley Parkway,
Winchester
Happy Christmas
from John and Frances