

Christmas 2014

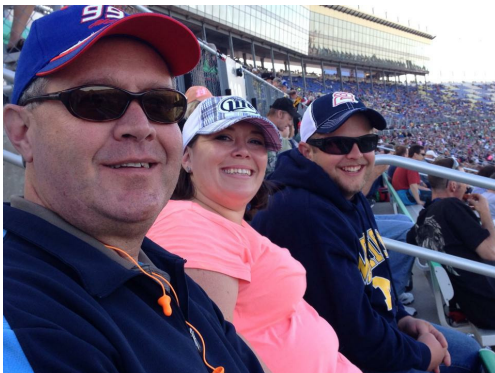
Things that turned 50 in 2014: Jeopardy, Buffalo wings, the Ford Mustang, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Plasma Screen TVs, Liquid Crystal Displays (LCD), 8 track cartridges, Lucky Charms cereal, BASIC programming language, The Jackson 5, Gilligan's Island, and....Me! Some of those iconic half-centurions have a bit more staying power than others (the Lucky Charms marshmallows may still be original) but it's nice to be in good company.

Having said that, I'm not going to bore you with any aches, pains, colonoscopies, or talk of retirement (well, that's a lie), as there isn't any time for that nonsense! There is too much to see and do. So here is the 2014 review...



Of course, you all know how I love to travel, so I kicked off the year helping my friends, Tim and Natalie Matthewson complete their move to St. Cloud, Minnesota. We unloaded the moving truck in -11 degree weather (and snow) and went to the last Vikings game in the Metrodome. Since it was -36 that day, domed stadiums ROCK! Looking forward to a nice 120 degree swing when I go out for a Twins game in the summertime...

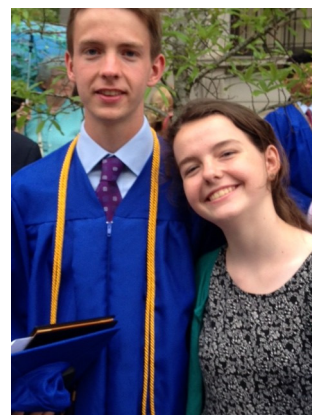
In April, I traveled to Muskegon, Michigan, as my Aunt Kay died after a bout of pneumonia. Over the years, I've enjoyed visiting her and my cousins in West Michigan and the strength and grace she showed during her illness was amazing. Having the Horton's together again even for such a short and sad occasion was so good, and leaves me wishing we weren't so busy and spread out around the country.



Summer was chock-full of fun, family, and friends. In May, Jim and I, along with his nephew BJ and his wife Audrey drove out to watch the NASCAR race in Kansas City. The weather was wonderful; the barbecue was tasty; and the accommodations and visiting at the Killingsworth's exceptional. I think Audrey is hooked.

← Jim, Audrey, BJ

The graduate in the picture is my youngest nephew Peter who somehow made it out of high school in 2014. As we did for Thomas' graduation last year, the Hortons and Ilgenfritzes gathered for the celebration with the added benefit of Memorial Day weekend in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. Peter is running cross country for Amherst College in Massachusetts this fall. Anna is smiling because 1) she is proud of her brother and 2) with Thomas at the University of Chicago; she gets a bigger room and the house to herself.



About the only advantage to having your friends and family scattered around the country is that you can always go and visit. When Mike and Stacy Hatfield and kids moved to Alaska, a trip to see them was definitely on the agenda. What a full agenda! We camped, fought off roving bears, fished, shopped, ate, and went to a wildlife sanctuary and a boat tour, where we saw whales and otters, and eagles, and sea lions. We saw the fireworks at midnight in half daylight in Anchorage (weird!) and walked to a glacier in Seward.



Me in Alaska... after eating Mike's fabulous fish dinner 😊

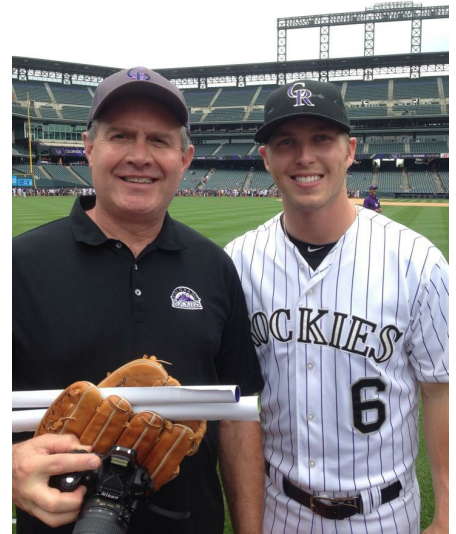
Just a tremendous trip – so much fun.



So from one extreme to another... but both extremely fun...

For my birthday I accompanied my brother and his family on a trip to New York City! We stayed at a brownstone in Harlem, and walked ALL over. I'm not stupid enough to say I saw all of NYC in four days, but it was pretty darn close. The Tigers were playing at Yankee Stadium, so of course, we had to represent. NYC is insane! In a great way

Along with his other four jobs (Dicks, choir director, school bus driver, custom golf club maker) Jim has developed a seasonal toffee and peanut brittle making enterprise that keeps the kitchen humming each December. The picture is of Jim and Rockies outfielder Corey Dickerson. I will let you vote on who is the professional athlete.



I complete my 24th calendar year at the Colorado Department of Corrections at the end of the year, and talk about retirement so much, it drives everyone crazy. I am very lucky to work with a great group of people and spent most of the winter and spring of this year rewriting the staff overtime rules in our payroll program (twice!) after legislative changes and a nice front page article in the Denver Post. That's always nice – NOT...

For those who ask, I found a great cellphone app that tells me exactly when I retire... 😊 I am not obsessed.

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My brother and I in the backyard in Bethesda



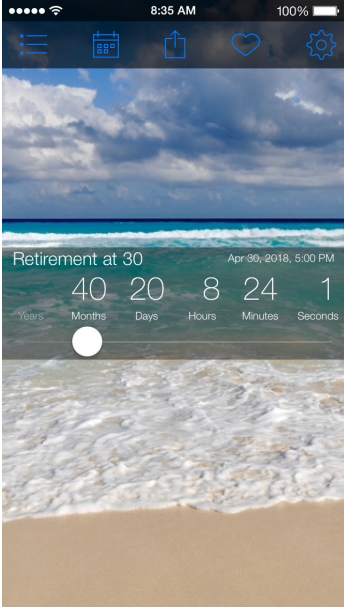
Kool and the Gang... I mean Uncle Bill and us in Trenton. Thomas, Bill, me, Peter, Anna, Mark (Nan taking picture)



My brother Mark and the NYC skyline



Me and Scotty (BJ and Audrey's son)



NOT obsessed about retirement...