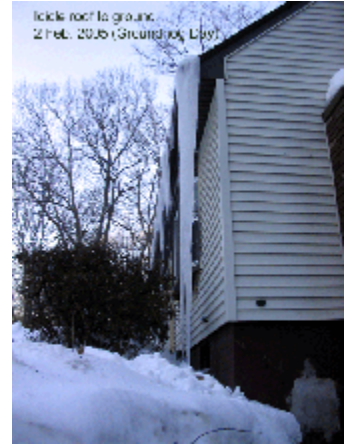


Tanner Family Holiday Letter, 2005

2005 was another transition year for the Tanner family. Ruth is now less than three years to her retirement in 2008. My business has made headway. Mathilda is very successful in her teaching career. Our vacation lodge in Dominica is built, to eventually be expanded and become our retirement abode.

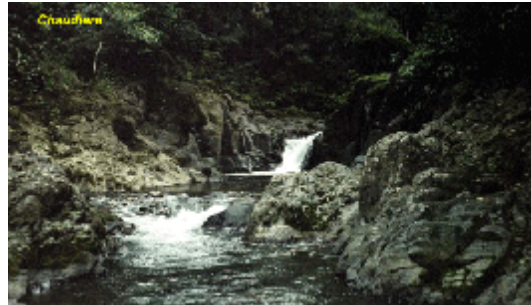
As always, you're invited to visit www.dan-ruth-tanner.com, our family/friends site. To keep tabs on our progress with our place in Dominica, visit www.dan-ruth-tanner.com/seafans to view a slide show that we add to after our visits. We plan to be there from December 21, 2005 to January 18, 2006 so you might want to remind yourself to check it around the end of January. Until 2008 we should be going there twice a year.

And, now, preliminaries aside, with our very best wishes to you for happy holidays, we're pleased to send you our 2005 family news...



Mathilda

Over the summer after her first year of teaching, Mathilda again “vacationed” as artist-in-residence at Chilmark Pottery on Martha’s Vineyard. She’s beloved by the students and well-respected by her teaching colleagues and the school administration. This year, instead of five 9th-grade special-education science classes, she has two of those and three main-track art classes. She also teaches two after-school elective for-credit after-school art classes. With Mathilda as art director, the latter students will create a mural, which will be displayed in the 6th floor corridor permanently. It’s the first mural ever at Harry S Truman High School.



We’re also building a professional artist’s Web site for her, and will be sending out a notice with the URL once it’s published.

Mathilda will join us in Dominica, arriving Christmas Day and departing New Year’s Day. We plan to take her to sites she’s not seen before, such as Champagne (for snorkeling amid coral, tropical fish, and bubbles arising from the sea floor), Chaudiere (the mountain stream and plunge pool), and Hampstead Beach (previously barely accessible, but



the film company shooting sequels to “Pirates of the Caribbean” made a road to it) where there’s a stone arch through which breakers roll and where the Hampstead River permits fresh water bathing as it empties into the Atlantic. She also wants to attempt to trek into

the Boiling Lake, about a 3-hour walk through the rain forest. That will give her little time to make a mural she plans for our vacation lodge wall!

Ruth

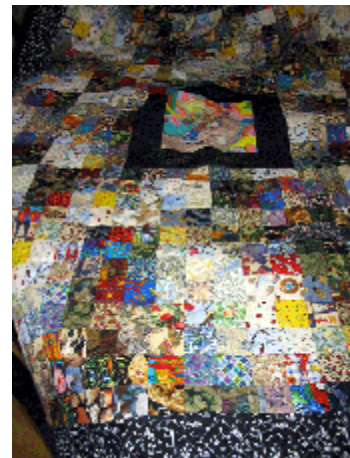
Ruth remains our constant of love & caring, and our family's emotional anchor. She is fully established at the job she transferred to in 2004.

She has also kept up with her quilting hobby. See her quilts at <http://www.dan-ruth-tanner.com/quilts.html>. (Link always available through our family/friends site.) She somehow manages this along with going to work and cooking and supplementing the "help" I give her with housework, and loving our pets (Ranger and Lyla and our cockatiel Lem) and remembering birthdays and baking cakes and getting and sending gifts and all that stuff she does so well and lovingly — and still staying as beautiful to me as the bride who married me almost thirty-three years ago! (I wonder if there's a portrait of her aging hidden in a closet somewhere.)

This (below right) is the quilt she made me for my birthday. It features a harmonica player in the center and has an overall musical motif, front and back.

Dan

I kept busy with ProgresSmart, www.progressmart.com. Income from it principally funded our building in Dominica, and will be used for its expansion. As of December 1, 2005 after starting only on August 13, 2004 ProgresSmart has 35 clients. Many are repeat customers, and my business is growing. I was a tutorial presenter at the Spring Storage Networking World (SNW) conference in Phoenix AZ in April and at the Storage World Conference in Long Beach CA in June. I was also a tutorial contributor at the Fall SNW in Orlando FL this past October. So far, in 2006, I will be presenting tutorials at the Information Lifecycle Management Summit in Irvine CA in February and at the Disaster Recovery Journal "Spring World" event in Orlando FL in March.



Our Activities

We celebrated our 32nd wedding anniversary in March, enjoying a restaurant dinner with good friends David and Irene Hill. David used to work with me at Aberdeen, where I was from 1999 to 2003, and now he's also on his own with a home-office consultancy. We often collaborate on projects.

Ruth and I took three weeks vacation in Dominica in May. Mostly it was a working vacation, devoted to opening and outfitting our new vacation lodge. We cleaned up a lot, bought some furniture, had a bed with storage drawers made for us, and worked on our yard with the help of our gardener, Patrickson Nixon. We used only our final six days to squeeze in some snorkeling, etc. But we did get to the beach at least at the end of most days, and we made some new friends and enjoyed time, music and dinner with old ones.

Another American who is building a house in Calibishie, Dominica returned in October and sent us this photo of our yard. Nixon has got it from bare earth to blooming in barely five months!



We also managed to take a week in July for a vacation on Martha's Vineyard, a highlight of which was a visit by our dear friends Roger and Rita Rekus. It was the second time they visited us on Martha's Vineyard, and now that we're going to be vacationing in Dominica all the time, they've decided to rent the cottage for themselves in 2006 (and we may be able to squeeze in a visit with them). Roger and I got some good fishing in, and had some great eating from our catch.

In September, we had the pleasure of visiting our friends and former neighbors Fred & Millie Dunfee at their new place in New Hampshire.

We're all looking forward to Christmas dinner at our new place. Ruth will cook her wonderful turkey dinner. We've invited our friends Nathalie and Vern & Debbie, and we also expect drop-ins by other friends and neighbors. On December 26, there's a Boxing Day party on Hampstead Beach which we plan to attend with nearly the entire population of Calibishie. We'll barbecue and make merry with our own music.

Will we have a good time? Does a wild bear...



More Pix

Here're some more photos from events that marked our year. In March we were pleased to be guests at Roger and Rita's son Greg's wedding to Nicole, in Lakewood, NJ. Ruth made them a wedding quilt, and we received a lovely thank-you note for it.



The following month we motored to near Hartford CT to see my brother Bob's new grandson Luke, the first child born to his and his wife Suzanne's daughter, our niece Sarah and husband David. In case the name in the caption confuses you: My parents were divorced, and both remarried. My two brothers are my late father's sons and have the Schwartz surname. My surname came from my late adoptive father, who is the father of my two sisters born to my mother. Bob and Suzanne's son Tony and his wife Denise also had a daughter Ellie (their second child) on April 6 (Mathilda's birthday!), 2005. But this missive includes only photos from our own trips (plus the one of our garden in Calibishie taken for us in October).



When Mathilda stopped off at our home on the way back to her apartment in Brooklyn NY and her school-teaching job after her summer at Chilmark Pottery, she brought with her for her mother's birthday a gift of a dragonfly planter made from a mold of her work. Reproductions of her work are a breakthrough. Previously, Chilmark Pottery had to charge high prices for unique pieces she made, most of which had fine incising. Now a mold-maker works at the pottery, and Mathilda makes mainly *bas-relief* and statuary pieces, which are then reproduced to sell at popular prices.



A Note for the Future

In January the US Postal Service will raise first-class postage yet again, to 39¢. And greeting and holiday cards now cost a fortune! (I remember when I could get my mom an ordinary Mother's Day card for 5¢ or splurge for a fancy one with a stuffed satin-covered heart infused with perfume for a dime! That shows my age. Those days are gone forever.) And, when we've relocated to Dominica, not only may cards be hard to come by, but also the postage will be at a much higher international rate, and we'd have to mail our Christmas cards by mid-November to expect timely delivery. We plan to go to sending only electronic holiday greetings, possibly as early as next holiday season. If you are one of the few folks now receiving this newsletter in print, please if possible give us an e-dress we can use to send you future "cards" and "letters".

Our home phone number in Westboro is 508-366-7980. We use Vonage, that is, the Internet, not the phone company for phone service at home. When we resettle in Dominica, we'll keep the same phone service. If you call us at our home number it will be just like calling us now as far as rates are concerned. We also have a cell phone in Dominica. The number is (767) 277-3958. We can receive calls on it when we're in Dominica (it's turned off when we're in the USA). It's an international call, so if you plan to call us in Dominica, you can use 3U Telecom for cheap international rates. In Dominica, receiving a cell phone call is free, and we use a pre-paid card to make calls.

Until we've relocated, we won't be returning any but the most exceptional or emergency calls. Sorry about that! Please contact us for info about either Vonage or 3U.

So Long, Until Next Year...

It's winter in New England now, but we'll leave you with this photo of our "kids" taken in our front yard in autumn.

Love & Peace,

Dan and Ruth Tanner

