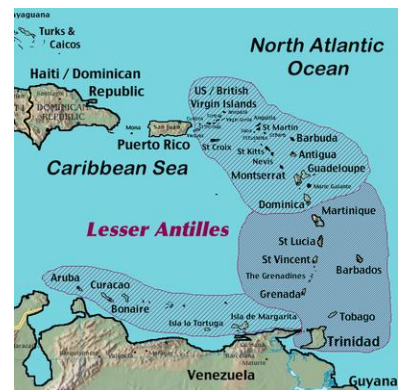


We've had an anniversary of sorts: Shortly after we posted our 2011 Holiday Letter we recalled that we'd arrived in Dominica to live here in retirement exactly three years earlier. When this is posted it will be four years. Our times here have been mainly good, with short, minor annoyances, like tenants from Hell and the need to work on our septic system. We won't dwell on those; ask if you want details. We're in Calibishie, on the mid north coast.



For us the drive to Roseau, the capital, takes about an hour and a half. To the island's second city, Portsmouth, it's about a half hour's drive. Dominica is the youngest of the Lesser Antilles and its "Nature Island". It's between Guadeloupe to the north and Martinique to our south. Note that we are NOT the Dominican Republic, which is the eastern half of Hispaniola, one of the Greater Antilles (Puerto Rico, Cuba, Hispaniola, & Jamaica). This intro's area map is from the Wikipedia entry for Dominica at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominica>. We're including the map and link because people *still* ask exactly where we're living and/or confuse us with the Dominican Republic.



Just before Christmas 2011 there was an unfortunate accident. There's a man who sells fruit from a stand at the bay overlook on the main costal road at the village's western end. He drank so much rum one night that he fell asleep at on the road, at the corner where the Savanne Paille road goes up from the main road. Not long after midnight a nurse returning home from her shift hit him with her car. He suffered five broken ribs. His fruit stand remains closed.



Here we are on Christmas Eve. We had the Wilson family (Herry, Hildreth, Chelsi, Sheiki & TS) and Nathalie & Shane Ferrol over for Ruth's traditional turkey dinner with all the fixin's, Caribbean style: *cool pumpkin soup (like vichyssoise, made by Hildreth), roast turkey with stuffing & turkey gravy, mashed potatoes, Creole-style plantain, spinach casserole, dinner rolls, yam pie (made by Nathalie, her famed specialty), cranberry sauce, and chocolate Christmas tree cake with mint icing & cherry cheesecake for dessert, French red & Argentine white wines, Ruth's homemade root beer, sorrel (made from flower petals, a Dominican holiday tradition) & passion fruit juice.*

Wow! At the end of 2011 we went onto the Zillow web site and looked at the then-current house value estimate for our former home in Westboro MA. It was \$304,300. We sold it for \$345,000. So, in 3 years, the value declined nearly 12%. Meanwhile, the property tax on it went up from \$6000 to \$7000, an increase of about 17%. Thank you, “The One Percent” and politicians.

Early in January the Wilson Family had us over to dinner at their house. We used their new dining room set. The place settings were lovely, and the dinner delicious. We felt loved and honored. When the White House has the Queen of England over for dinner, it’s the taxpayers who foot the bill and public servants who do all the work. But the Wilsons did the work and shouldered the cost. That’s *real*.

On January 10, we went to Titou Gorge. We swam up the stream using precautionary life vests from this entrance, something that can only be done when there has not been recent rain. Otherwise, water would be rushing through it. Even so, although the swim takes only 2 to 3 minutes, the stream is too deep for touching bottom and the gorge’s rock walls are sheer without handholds. Inside, one can see the rain forest canopy through the crack overhead and at the end of the swim one reaches a waterfall and pool. The water is very clear. It’s chest deep in this photo. The gorge’s name means “little throat” in Creole. A young man drowned there in 2011 and another later this year. Neither was willing to spend EC\$5 (US\$1.90) to rent a life vest. I took other photos but our old camera was breaking down and wouldn’t take flash photos and the ambient light shots I took are all blurry because while I was floating I couldn’t hold the camera still during the long exposure times.



On January 12 we returned to the area to ride the Rainforest Ariel Tram and take the zip line part way



down. It was the Southern Caribbean’s highest zip line, with an 840-foot long line suspended over the 350-foot drop of Breakfast

River Gorge. These photos were taken by the site operator for visitors. We had fun! Mark Huhn, a nice fellow from Wisconsin, sent us the photo of us on the tram. That’s him and his wife behind us. Another couple, friends of theirs were on a cruise ship in Dominica for a day. We’re glad we went when we had the chance. The tram went out of business on May 30.

On Feb. 5 with guests Lynn & Joe, we watched my beloved **NY Football Giants** win the super bowl!

Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

February 8, was my 71<sup>st</sup> birthday and Lyla, our black female miniature schnauzer's, 8<sup>th</sup> birthday. (Or is it whelp-day?): I did our income taxes online *in a half-hour* using free edition TurboTax. *No taxes withheld & none to pay.* We filed electronically. The *IRS accepted our return in under an hour!* Ruth made a turkey dinner & our friend Dawn was a dinner guest. Ruth also made me a chocolate birthday cake. And better than simply saying that they like Sea Fans Apartment, Lynn & Joe, who were to depart on Feb. 9, extended their stay for 3 days.

2012 was a US presidential election year. We couldn't vote because the absentee ballot system doesn't allow enough time for us to receive & return ballots. In a choice between the ineffective or the incorrect, why care? This editorial cartoon sums up how we felt.



February 12 was Ranger, our salt & pepper male miniature schnauzer's, 12<sup>th</sup> birthday.

February 13 wasn't a Friday, but for a short time I felt unlucky. It was with plumbing, the bane of every homeowner. I had just finished blocking an air vent pipe that was spitting drain water and then all the water went off throughout our house. I checked our absent neighbor's "pipe water" and it had pressure. I thought that perhaps DOWASCO, the water company, had incorrectly shut us off at the meter, so I went and turned our rainwater tank pump and there was still no house water. I pondered: How can blocking a drain vent cut off pipe flow? It turned out to be coincidence. DOWASCO has just shut down the entire street's supply for maintenance, and in so doing first put through a pressure blast that caused our pump relay to detect and thus not turn the pump on. I re-checked our neighbor's hose and it was slack. I checked a friend's "pipe water" and it was out, which was when I learned that DOWASCO had shut the supply off. I'm glad I didn't undo my work or call the only plumber available\* all the way from Roseau, a 1½ hour drive away!

\* My favorite *New Yorker* cartoon shows a man in a suit carrying a briefcase walking up the path to his door. A plumber's van is parked in his driveway. He looks heavenward & says, "Please God, let her be having an affair."

On Valentine's Day, February 14, I took Ruth to the Veranda View in the village for a surprise dinner.

On Friday, February 17, I saw something that to me was heart-wrenching. I'd gone to the Marigot fishery to purchase some fish. People there, including police sitting idly by, were watching fishermen haul an over 6-foot long leatherback sea turtle up the boat ramp and killing it. The species is critically endangered and taking it is prohibited within many nations' territorial waters, including Dominica's, but the fishermen claimed they'd taken it in international waters. Awful!



Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)



Religion and ignorance again! On Ash Wednesday, one person stated that the ashes are to commemorate the volcanic eruption on Montserrat! A woman “corrected” him by saying that Ash Wednesday is mentioned in the *Old Testament* book of Job. Of course it is neither. It’s an invention of the Catholic Church.

The electrically-operated windows and door locks on our car stopped working. That’s important, because one must shut out the rain and secure things inside the car when we go to Portsmouth or Roseau. The problem turned out to be easily & cheaply solved but not before a typical Dominican adventure: I called my oldest friend here who told me his mechanic’s name and where he lived, which is in a particular section of Portsmouth. But with his dialect, I thought he’d said the name of a village, Ville Casse, along the very hilly and curvy Northern Link Road, quite out to the way. Because this is a small country, people there straightened me out. When I got to Portsmouth I was told that the man wouldn’t be the best person to solve the problem and someone else was suggested. I went to the place where I was told he’d be and he wasn’t there. I was able to get a phone number for his uncle. When I called, the man was in the room. Then I had to find the house. But once there, the fellow fixed the problem (a bad pin in a plug in a cabling harness) and charged only EC\$25 (US\$9.33).

I did a little fixing of my own on March 2. We were never satisfied with the poor job done with our kitchen ceiling fan and light, and I replaced the old, rusted unit with a much nicer Westinghouse brushed pewter and finished wood unit that is installed better and matches the décor. Later we wire-brushed the old fan’s blades down to bare metal, gave the unit four coats of white Rust-Oleum enamel and installed it in the Wilson’s living room. Now they have a nice living room fan and overhead light.

On March 3 Ruth and I celebrated our 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary with dinner at Beau Rive ([www.beaurive.com](http://www.beaurive.com)).

From time to time we have tenants in the apartment that we built first and lived in below while we built our upstairs villa, and some of them become friends. In past years there were Adrian and Doina from near Toronto Canada by way of Romania who loved little Fluffy and nature lovers Birgitta and her daughter Jenny from central Sweden. This year we met Joe and Lynn from northern Idaho. They all read this too. Hi, folks!

Some things here have changed, and not for the better. The wonderful Heaven’s Best Restaurant in Savanne Paille near Portsmouth is up for sale. The Escape Grille at the beach at the Red Rock Haven closed for a while and reopened a few months later featuring barbecue. River Rush, which once offered a fantastic Sunday jazz brunch with fresh water bathing is closed and for sale. When its owner Mo left Dominica for a while her place was promptly robbed and vandalized and her friendly, harmless dogs killed. The Pagua Bay restaurant closed, but its owners have opened a newer one within their hotel grounds. Silks Hotel & Restaurant at Hatton Garden has not re-opened. Its manager, said to have been involved in the drug trade, was the intended target of thugs and hid out with the unsuspecting Pagua Bay owners. He was murdered and they were savagely beaten in the same incident. A decent restaurant in Roseau, the Talipot, has also closed but was replaced by a better one called the Tao. The former Adage Restaurant in Portsmouth closed, then reopened under new ownership and shut down again. Construction has halted at the huge Atlantique View hotel resort in Anse Du Mai, amid rumors of Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

financial malfeasance, and has been on and off since. And the Business Links payment service in our village, once a great convenience, shut down and now the only place in Calibishie to pay utility bills is the Credit Union. In March the EatWell Restaurant, which also had the Business Links service for making utility bill payments, shut down because the building's owner wanted the premises. Rena, the wonderful proprietor & great cook, said she'd store her tables, etc, and leave Dominica for at least six months.

Sweet vindication! Last year in November we had the tenants from hell. No kidding, it was like the movie "Pacific Heights". The people did a bit over \$2,000 worth of damage to our property and then lied to their credit card company about ever being here so as to get their rent refunded. That was after we'd given them a partial refund, unaware that the conditions they complained about were caused by their deliberate sabotage. So, in asking their credit card company to refund all their rent, they actually attempted to make a profit! But early in March we received word from PayPal that a dispute we filed was finally resolved in our favor. We'd pay for tickets to see the looks on these creeps' faces when they receive their next credit card bill. They also added insult to injury, damaging our reputation on TripAdvisor so badly that we can't present our apartment on that site any longer, and by lying about Dominica by claiming that they contracted dengue fever from being here.

Lovely night sky! On March 13 and March 14 Jupiter and Venus were next to each other in the western sky at 8PM and the moon had not yet risen. Even with a lousy telescope, on the 13<sup>th</sup> I was able to see two of Jupiter's moons and on the 14<sup>th</sup> (game night at our house) I was able to show our guests Jupiter with three moons. The 12<sup>th</sup> would have been the best night to see the two planets within 3 degrees of each other, but that night here was cloudy. I wish I'd not "saved" money on the lousy Chinese-made 3-inch refracting telescope we have and bought a decent 4- to 6-inch reflecting telescope. Still, the views are beautiful. And Mars, just 11 days past opposition was in view in the east. If we did not have hills east of us we could also have seen Mercury. There's little light pollution here and the Milky Way is also visible before moonrise.

St. Patrick's Day (called March 17 here) we attended a slide show about the new Forestry Department book "Playing with Plants" (<http://onelovelivity.com/childofnatureblog/playing-with-plants-in-the-nature-isle-%E2%80%93-a-new-nature-book-and-exhibition/>). It was enjoyable. We bought the companion book "Dominica's Birds" ([http://www.nhbs.com/dominicas\\_birds\\_tefno\\_149561.html](http://www.nhbs.com/dominicas_birds_tefno_149561.html)).

Plumbing again! Later in March we became the owners of an EC\$200 (US\$75) stone. It was in our bathroom & powder room sink drains. We tried drain cleaner and a plumbing snake. Finally, water pressure in the drain solved the problem. The builders hadn't covered the exposed pipe open end and cement dust must have gotten in. The snake pushed the obstruction down (it could do nothing else). Water pressure pushed it further, to the elbow below our washing machine drain, which goes to our roadside garden, and of course flooded the laundry room and downstairs hall and large bedroom floors in the process. Then we dug up the pipe in the yard after figuring out where the obstruction had to be. It was a cement stone about the size and shape of an egg!

Also in March, Dominica made the news for being politically incorrect. A "gay" cruise stopped at Roseau (the island countries of St. Vincent, Jamaica, and the Cayman Islands won't let such cruises dock) and a Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

pair of the passengers decided to “get it on” in the nude on deck in full view of the people at the bay front. Police boarded the ship in response to complaints and arrested them. An indictable charge of buggery was dropped but they were convicted of misdemeanor indecent exposure. Held overnight for magistrate’s court, the two were also fined EC\$2,400 (US\$896) each and deported to the US by air (missing the rest of their cruise.) It was big news here and even on MSNBC.com. A lot has been published about this all over the Web. Once they returned to the US they claimed they’d been victim of discrimination and had done nothing. But later a photo of their action appeared on the web.

Another miniature schnauzer in Dominica! We’d thought we had the only ones, but while on our way home from our monthly shopping trip to Roseau we saw a Dominican man walking a nicely-groomed male along the road near Canefield Airport.

Another power outage here on March 27 destroyed our Canon PIXMA MP 250 multifunction printer. We claimed the loss with DOMLEC. Meanwhile, I reconnected our old ScanGear flatbed scanner (it works fine) and bought the cheapest available HP DeskJet 2000 printer. The printer cost EC\$129 (US\$48.13). Black ink for it costs EC\$190 (US\$70.90)! What a rip-off. Thanks HP.

We’re including this as a service for anyone who has had gallbladder removal. It’s from a doctor friend, after I’d written him about how Ruth was suffering years afterward: *“You should be a doctor. You’re right on the money. I’m surprised that a doctor didn’t know about this and diagnosed Ruth with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Diarrhea following cholecystectomy is quite common, and has been reported in 5 to 12 percent of patients. In many cases the diarrhea will resolve or significantly improve over the course of weeks to months. The diarrhea is related to excessive amounts of bile acids entering the colon. This is what happens: Bile which contains bile acids is normally stored in the gall bladder, and gets released into the intestine to help with the digestive process. A part of the small intestine called the terminal ileum, which is just before the colon, reabsorbs the unused bile acids and returns it to the gall bladder, thereby preventing excess bile acids from entering the colon. In the absence of a gallbladder, bile drains directly and more continuously into the small bowel, which may overcome the terminal ileum’s re-absorptive capacity. The increased bile acids in the colon lead to diarrhea. Patients often respond to treatment with bile-acid binding resins such as cholestyramine.”* He prescribed Cholestyramine as “Questran”. *Ruth has been fine since!* Note: You must avoid grapefruit in any form and should take a multivitamin.

On Easter weekend we and our friends Dawn and her grandmother Louise went pedal-boating up the



Woodford Hill River, into the mangrove flats in the lower meandering part of that river. Dawn took the photos here. It was a pleasant hour and low cost – EC\$20 (US\$7.60) per boat, whereas tourists pay US\$20 per passenger. The operator also cleaned up the beach nicely at his section of the bay and cleared the



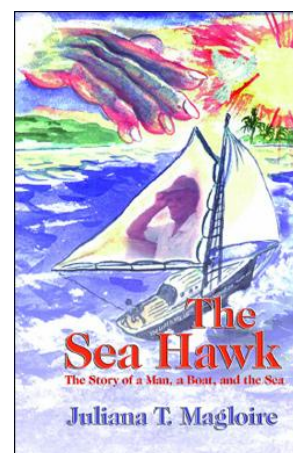
riverbanks. We enjoyed the shade under the canopy. It was cool and pleasant (no mosquitoes). We enjoyed seeing varieties of small crabs on the riverbanks and on the beautiful, graceful buttress mangrove roots and spotted a heron in the branches above.

Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

On Easter Monday holiday, April 9 we had a nice Batibou Beach picnic with Hildreth, Chelsi, Sheiki & TS.

On April 12 we got a call from SAT Telecom informing us that it has finally extended cable Internet service to Calibishie. It was first promised by SAT “in about 3 weeks” back early in 2008. The nice thing is that we got it without taking the SAT television, which is even worse than Marpin’s. We don’t take TV service because can always stream most of what we’d watch anyhow. Cable Internet let us get rid of our landline phone from LIME, required in order to get LIME’s ADSL Internet service. The phone + Internet package gave us 1.5 Mb/sec Internet and a phone that we almost never used (we have a local cell phone each) for EC\$130/month (US\$48.50). SAT gives us 3 MB/sec Internet for EC\$69/mo (US\$25.75/mo). In the process we saved EC\$61/mo (US\$22.75/mo) and reclaimed our EC\$500 (US\$186.57 deposit) from LIME. That saves us even more, about another EC\$57/mo (US\$21.26/mo). To get US Netflix (US\$7.95/mo) and some US TV content streamed we use a US\$53/year VPN, StrongVPN.com.

On Aril 15 Juliana Magloire, author of “The Sea Hawk” visited us with an invitation to a cocktail reception on Saturday the 21st at The Cabrits National Park near Portsmouth to promote and raise funds for a feature film “Rising Caribbean Tides” to be made entirely in Dominica and locally produced. The Prime Minister attended. The web site <http://www.seahawkpublishing.com/> features the cover art at the right. I’d like to see if I can assist her somehow.



At the end of April we had to bring Ranger, who turned 12 in February, to the veterinarian in Roseau to have a large tooth, upper right, extracted. It had decayed and was painning him. While he was there and under sedation the vet also removed a large marble-sized lipoma from hear his right hind leg. He recovered very quickly and well, becoming frisker and no longer sensitive to touches on his muzzle. The vet, Dr. Reginald Thomas, is chief of the nation’s veterinary agricultural department. In mid-November poor Ranger had the same problem & procedure upper left.

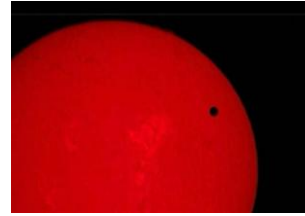
On Saturday night May 12<sup>th</sup> Ruth and I had a great barbecue dinner at the Escape Beach Bar at the Red Rock Haven. We returned there Saturday May 26 as a guest of our friend Coral O’Dwyer, whose dog Ben we cared for while she vacationed in Wales, her homeland. Ben, 14, had to be put down in October.

A YouTube video of our daughter Mathilda on TV: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5qlxyCUyXM>.

Late in May we began to harvest delicious pineapples from our garden. Pineapple/mango smoothies are great. We had limes in June and grapefruit and tangerines in October.

On June 2 Ruth departed for the US both to visit our daughter Mathilda and get medical treatment for painful sciatica due to lumbar region problems. Because of appointment scheduling, she was away until the end of July. I really missed her! She had the spinal injection just before the contaminated product came into use!

On June 5 with friend and neighbor Dawn I went to Douglas Bay just before sunset to see the planet Venus transit the sun. This photo from msnbc.com is exactly what I saw. This won't happen again for until 2117. We were fortunate to see it at all because Dominica was on the very edge of from where on earth the event could be seen. The transit took seven hours but we got to see only a few moments of it before sunset. But there was compensation – immediately after sunset we saw the beautiful tropical “green flash” over the sea. Another nice thing: the sea is returning sand to the beach along Douglas Bay. When we first went there in 1987 the beach was broad. Then a storm obliterated the beach. It's great to have it back.



On June 10 I saw a Sisserou parrot on a limb about 50 yards from our house. It sat there for at least 10 minutes and I got a good look with 10X binoculars. The Sisserou is Dominica's national bird and an image of one is at the center of the Dominican flag. It's found only in Dominica and is the world's largest parrot capable of flight. There's another, the Jaco, often seen in our village but the Sisserou normally is seen only at the highest and least accessible locations. Seeing one from our veranda is like seeing a bald eagle from our deck in Mass.



On Father's Day, June 17, I was invited over to lunch with Herry & Hildreth while Ruth was in the US visiting Mathilda and getting medical attention for a spinal problem. The lunch and hospitality were great. We had baked chicken with pineapple sauce, tania & potato with cheese topping, rice with peas, beans, pineapple juice and pineapple upside-down cake.

In our 2011 holiday letter we mentioned that our daughter had a fiancée. That relationship has ended. We won't go into details, naturally.

There's an annual music and arts street festival held in downtown Asheville, North Carolina called “Belle Chere”. It's biggest of the tourist season and according the Wikipedia has been going on since the 70s every last weekend in July and it's largest free festival in the southeastern US attracting over 350,000 people. Last year (2011) the photo below of Mathilda doing face painting was taken and it appeared in the July 2012 issue of “The Laurel of Asheville”. About half a dozen professional photographers took photos of her at the 2101 Belle Chere festival too.



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Here's Mathilda at the 2012 Belle Chere festival, with Ruth. She's painted her own face and put dragonflies on her mother's collarbone and arm. While in the US, Ruth got us a new Canon PowerShot G12 camera. This photo and the rest were taken with it.



Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)



While visiting, Ruth snapped this photo of a bear cub at Mathilda's house.



August 21 was Ruth's birthday. She'd murder me if I wrote here which birthday it was. I took her to the restaurant at Sunset Bay. Here we are (below) sharing dessert. That was after a dinner of the chef's special lobster flambé and a pleasant afternoon swim earlier.



The next day we had to batten down the hatches for the direct hit by Tropical Storm "Isaac". The forecast was dire: The eye of the storm was to pass right in front of our house, in the Guadeloupe Channel connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean Sea between Dominica and the Guadeloupe island group. And it did. But, curiously, we got neither the high winds nor torrential rain (although we did get a good amount of the latter, on and off) that was predicted. Because of the forest, Dominica's Prime Minister took no chances and virtually shut the island down on Wednesday, August 22. At the end, all he could say was "better safe than sorry". There wasn't any loss of life, injury or property damage, no significant flash floods or landslides. "Isaac" was a "good" storm in Dominica.

Saturday, August 25 was a bad news day for us. Ruth's epidural injection for lumbar problems failed to halt her pain enough to allow us to go on our planned vacation in France/Italy/San Marino/Switzerland. We had to cancel and arrange instead for her to go to North Carolina for surgery. But then we later learned that her epidural injection came just before the contaminated batch was sent out!

On September 3, US Labor Day, I repaired our bread-maker. The "sea blast" had caused a bit of metal to fall in between the toothed belt and main reduction gear, jamming it before the belt came off. It's not meant for consumer repair, but here one must try or pay triple the price or try to bring in another. It later broke down for good.



September 8: Goat triplet newborns. Two rest while a third nurses. The first two wake & look for mom.

Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

We had a heat wave most of September, which turned out to be the driest here on record. Here's how Coco coped:



We received preliminary good news on September 24. After about a six month bureaucratic delay, our applications for permanent residency in Dominica went to the Prime Minister's cabinet, where, with positive recommendations from our parish's MP and our region's Senator were assured of approval.

On September 26 I had a wonderful phone call from Ruth who had had spinal microsurgery the day before. It was so good to hear her voice! Later that afternoon while I was over at 92 year-old Simeon's shop playing dominoes with him (he's sharp!) there was a brief rain shower. I looked at the eastern sky (where our weather comes from) to see how long the rain might last was rewarded with a beautiful sight. The sky was clear and a full arch rainbow spanned north to south with the moon 3 days before full beneath it, and a double of the rainbow above. I wish I'd been at home where our new camera was to take a photo.

Ruth came home on November 11. Here she is (right) with Mathilda (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) at a Halloween party on NC. Meanwhile, Hurricane Sandy was hitting the east coast.



This is where our friend's daughter had lived with her husband and their infant son. The prior year a Hurricane Irene landslide wiped them out in a nearby



town. Fortunately, they're all right and had insurance. Here we are in the Caribbean and we got no storms this hurricane season, but NJ and NY were hammered.

My brother Bob sent me 16mm home movies our father shot. My earliest memory is the Hurricane of 1944. We lived at 39 South Broadway, Long Branch NJ, about 100 yards from the ocean. His movies showed me right here seven miles south in Asbury Park during the clean-up. Seven years later I'd have my first job there in the summer at the pony ride concession. (Photo from Web.)



We're making garden improvements. Here is the start of our "Uncle Wiggly" path that will let one amble among the flowers. Earlier we made a path from the gate to the compost bin in the orchard garden above the retaining wall at the top of the photo. Our orchard garden has grapefruit, tangerines and limes, plus a young orange tree and coconuts. It also has sugar cane, lemon grass, anise, lima beans, pineapples and bay leaves.

Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)



We received the sad news that on November 16 that Clare Albert, once married to Dan's Uncle Ben and mother of his cousins Susan and Steven passed away suddenly that day in Asheville NC. She was a dear, and will be sorely missed. I took this photo of Clare with Ruth and Mathilda in Asheville in August 2011. It was a great honor to be asked by her grandson Jason to write a remembrance for her memorial service and another honor when he asked Mathilda to read it at the service. Then Steve requested Mathilda make an urn for Clare's ashes.

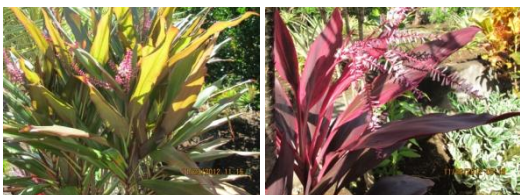


We'll have a traditional Christmas turkey dinner and our usual guests the Wilson family and friends Nathalie and Dawn.

Ruth brought some of Mathilda's pottery home to Dominica:



And, she completed a needlepoint of a Welsh farm. She had bought the canvas in 2010 while we were visiting Wales.



Two of our Hawaiian ti plants bloomed late in November. (Thanks to botanist friend Steven R. Hill for identifying them.) They're related to asparagus.



Tanner Family Holiday Letter (2012)

We helped Hildreth celebrate her 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday on November 30. Ruth made a rich chocolate cake with chocolate icing that we all enjoyed along with ice cream and fruit drinks.

We met two new nice couples this year. Alder & Amy live in PA and plan to return. Lee and Dana live here, up in the north central hills in a tree house and have a shop, "Big Blue," in Roseau.

Here's our 2102 utilities scorecard (Jan1 to Dec 3): 31 days of Internet outage, one of 8 consecutive days & plenty of poor and/or slow service; 12 days with electric power failures; 16 days without "pipe water" once taking a week to get pressure back; 9 bi-weekly trash collections missed. And the central mountain cross-island road construction is 6 month behind schedule. It was a typical year.



Ruth made this nice Christmas quilt. The back is on your left, the front is on your right.

For years now we've begun our holiday letters by describing our prior year's Christmas celebration. This year we end it by describing our plans for the present year's celebration. We'll have dinner for eleven: ourselves, the Wilson family, Nathalie & her son Shane, and Dawn & her grandmom Louise.

**We wish you a happy holiday too.**

