

## MERRY CHRISTMAS 2004 – THE VAN RIPER YEAR OF ACCLIMATION

This family picture was taken in Flagstaff January 2003, and we hope to have a new one for next year, as all the family will be in Tucson for the 2004 Christmas Holiday. In the back row, from left to right are Jacqueline (age 26), Kimberly (age 24), Carena (age 21) and Charles on the right. Kneeling are Sandy on the left and Kale (35) on the right. In front are the family dogs, with our Great Pyrenees guard dog 'Sadie' on the left, the Aussie 'Jessie' in the middle, and Kale's super hunting dog 'Kula' on the right.



The year 2004 has been one of acclimation for many members of our family. Carena was selected for the Arizona State University study-abroad program and has spent the year acclimating to a new learning environment at a Spanish University in Barcelona. She is in her final year working toward a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies with minors in Biology and Tourism – hoping to use her newfound Spanish speaking skills for future biological work in Central America. She spent last summer in Montana, working for the Forest Service and USGS, as part of the nation-wide survey of Grizzly Bears. Kimberly remained in Tempe, AZ at Arizona State University and has focused on her Art and math courses. She

continues with her martial arts and now has several advanced belts. Jacque still resides just north of Seattle, Washington, where she had the sad job of closing down the local animal shelter that she was running, as the tribal land on which the shelter was built converted to a casino (a sign of the times!). She has plans to follow up with graduate studies, building on her degree in Psychology. Kale continues his teaching at Delta High School, located in Clarksberg, CA, between Davis and Sacramento. He works closely with his students in the Future Farmers of American Program and is involved in the Yolo County and California State Fairs. Sandy is designing and hosting web sites. She continues selling hand crafted Drop Spindles and wool on the Internet. Her newest project--White Dove Ceremonial releases, is rapidly expanding as more people find out about the business – check out [www.catalinawhitedoves.com](http://www.catalinawhitedoves.com). Charles has spent much of this year running back and forth between Tucson and Flagstaff, but his last graduate student at Northern Arizona University has now completed her thesis. He continues to work with his three graduate students at the University of Arizona, with his research on neotropical migrant birds along river drainages in the Southwest, with a focus on the San Pedro and Colorado rivers in Arizona and Mexico. Charles and his graduate students are also working on bird parasites in the Verde Valley, West Nile Virus problems in Arizona, wintering Great Basin birds, and potential Fire impacts on birds of Zion National Park, Utah.

We continue to cut back on our agricultural actives, but expand efforts in other areas. We finally bit-the-bullet and sold our entire flock of 'wool sheep' (Merino, and Romney), to the 4-H family in Chino Valley, AZ that had bought our Suffolk flock when we left Flagstaff. They even took our guard dog 'Sadie' to help with their new sheep flock. Seems kind of strange, but this is the first time in the past 25 years that we will not have to worry about new lambs in the barn. The horses are still with us in Tucson, where they too have been acclimating to the warm Tucson summers.

Throughout the year the kids seemed to come and go...Kim was home for Thanksgiving. Charles visited Kale for the California deer season, and Kale will be doing an Arizona Coues deer hunt during the Christmas holidays. Carena is flying home from Spain for the holidays, and are looking forward to seeing all the family back together in Tucson this Christmas.

We do hope that this past year has been joyous and memorable for you and your loved ones. All of the Van Ripers wish you a most joyful holiday season and a wonderful 2005. We also invite each of you to please feel free to stop by and visit us at our new place in Tucson.

-----Charles Sandy, Jacque, Kim, Carena, and Kale at 3800 North Homestead, Tucson, Arizona 86749.  
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