

THE CANNON REPORT

2008 Wrap Up



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December 2008

Once again, the year comes to a quick and hurried end. It seems the holidays are creeping up on me more quickly each year! How does that happen? I didn't even have time to decorate this year. Bah humbug!

2008 was another seemingly inane, innocuous year but ended up being chock full of stuff. As we look back at the year, it's amazing

that so much happened. The year ended quite differently than it started, politics and the economy aside. It was certainly a year of change—some good-byes and some hellos, a hurricane, heart surgery... and yet we managed to come through it all just fine.

There are many people who didn't end up anywhere near

where they started the year; we are grateful for all the blessings we have and those yet to come. We have good health and are still employed, so that's a great start for 2009.

Here's to all YOUR blessings of '08 and '09.

Love & hugs, *S&K*



Manuel Curtis Wallace (Uncle Curt)



Uncle Curt and Betty at our wedding, '97

In February, we lost another member of Keith's family, his mother's brother Curt. Uncle Curt had a long and varied life. He was a World War II Vet, he worked in the produce and commercial fishing industries, and was an active member of the VFW.

Uncle Curt is the family member that Keith most resembles—not only physically but with his "aggravationist" ways! Keith loves to stir the pot just like Uncle Curt did.

I'll always remember his gentle ways, hearty laugh, and welcoming attitude. He will be missed by all who knew him.

And we are also grateful that he brought Betty into our clan. To find love and companionship in our golden years is a wonderful blessing, and we're so glad Curt was able to know that until he passed on.

We are certain that Curt, Horace, and Elsie are having a ball together!



April—Vienna, Austria



This year I traveled to Vienna, Austria for the Comos Customer Days Celebration—a user's group meeting for the software that I am now responsible for supporting full-time.

Last October, I left the Engineering department (oh no!) and joined the IT (now IPS—Information Process Solutions, I think the acronym means) group at KBR. My former co-worker Matt Landes is now my boss, and he'd been trying to get me to "jump ship" ever since he joined the group himself last April. I joined the group to focus on the Comos FEED® program at KBR. I've been there for over a year now

and I do enjoy it, still. I get to train all the users, be in the forefront of development and deployment for the program of choice for Process Engineers at KBR. Not too shabby!

I enjoyed the conference in Vienna and seeing some of the city I had visited twice before. On the way back to Houston, I stopped by the London office (and no, my favorite singer Dennis Locorriere did not have any shows at that time) to check in. They are becoming more interested in my program, so I might get to go back again

in '09. It was a quick visit but productive. I hope to go again soon. There's always plenty going on in London!



Inside the square of the Hofburg Palace—former Imperial Palace in Vienna, where the conference was held

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Go Gators!!

Pet News 1

In March of this year, we lost our beloved Rickie. Her full name was Rickie Lee Bouvier Perry Cannon (ask Keith), aka Rick-Dog, aka Trickacannus Rick. She was 16 1/2.

We knew she was getting up there in years, and Keith kept asking "when do you know it's time?" He kept getting the answer "the dog will let you know when it is time." And she sure did. One Friday evening, she let us know. I said my goodbyes. Saturday, Keith took her in to do the necessary.



1996

We had her cremated and Keith has spread her ashes in a couple places that she would love.

Sixteen is quite a long life for a border collie.

Keith took excellent care of her and we feel that the addition of Honey really helped challenge her—if for no other reason than to ensure that Keith was not left alone with that DOG!

In February before she passed away, Rickie

went on a solo trip with Keith back to Florida for his Uncle Curt's funeral. They had a great time together and Keith will always remember that as their very special time.

She will always live on in our hearts.



2006



Pet News 2

Sadness doesn't live long in the Cannon house. Early July, it was raining one day as Keith drove to work. There was a very friendly dog running up to everyone in the parking lot. Keith's a sucker for strays, so he took the dog to the vet. It turns out he was microchipped and we called the owner. She didn't seem too worried about her dog going missing, and ultimately never did call us back.

So we now have Duke, AKA The Dukester, Dukus, or Sir Duke-a-lot. He's a big love sponge. We think he's a mixture of golden lab, black lab, and Irish Setter. There's a reddish tint to his fur in the chest area.



The Dukester

He is somewhere between 2-3 years old, and was intact—but will be neutered. A dog who likes to get out and roam should not add to the pet overpopulation problem! He is a BIG dog—we don't have to bend over to pet him at all. But he is as dumb as box of rocks. After Rickie's intelligence, we are STILL getting used to it!

The idea was that we'd foster him 'til we could find a proper home. But we brought him home, took him and Honey for a walk, and then let them loose in the back yard. They played like they were best

friends, and have ever since.

Honey is an alpha female, so finding a

companion for her would be a challenge. We lucked out with Duke. He's submissive yet playful and they get along great. He's the playmate Honey never had with Rickie (Rickie was 13 when we first got Honey—a little too old to play like a puppy).

Unfortunately, Duke does not get along with cats so our feline babies are now relegated to the upstairs. But they're doing great. Spotte will be **20** in March, and Matches is a strong and healthy 9. So we are once again a clan of 6. If you don't count the ~20 fish!



They "are" playing, really! Despite the evil look in Duke's eyes!



Extended Family Additions



The family expanded this year when 2 cousins married. The 2 older Uhlir boys, Danny and Christopher, married in August and December respectively. I was fortunate enough to attend both weddings. My new cousins Jen (married to Dan) and Alex (married to Chris) are a wonderful addition to the clan. And I got to spend some time with Dad and his side of the family, which I hadn't done in quite a while.



Chris & Alex Uhlir, Dec 6 2008

Hopefully next time it won't be so long between visits.

Another cousin, Jason Faber and his wife Sarah had their first child—Michael. Uncle Rick and Aunt Ethel are now grandparents! I know they will be great in their new roles.



Michael Richard Faber, born August 2008

Welcome to the family!



Dan and Jen Uhlir, August 16 2008



We don't like Ike!!



In September of this year, we had a rather unfriendly visitor—Hurricane Ike. He barreled through Houston September 12, Friday evening. We (Susan) ended up being off from work from the Thursday before (to help prepare for the storm) until a good week after!

The storm knocked out power downtown and created some unsafe conditions getting to and from work, so our company actually closed the office for nearly the entire week following the storm. Our building had minor damage; only one floor (of 40) needed repairs. The big damage shots in the news were from north downtown, and we're at the southern end. Keith was off work for quite a few days as well, but his company suffered no damage.

We were VERY fortunate—we only lost power for a few hours the night of the storm. We lost land phone for a few days, but our cell phones worked just fine.

have some downed fence and as you can see in the photos, some downed tree limbs. But you know, the animals were not all crazy before the storm so we took our cue from them and didn't worry too much. Then we sent the storm up to Cleveland so our relatives could see what we deal with on an annual basis!



Before



And After

Some friends lost power for nearly a week, so we had them over so they could get their "internet fix!" Another had roof damage so his condo wasn't livable; we let him come over and shower. We did

There are some really good shots of Hurricane Ike from space at: <http://yawoot.com/post/1433#6>. It is truly amazing that we had such little damage from such an incredible storm.



Livin' the Blues



Keith got to travel to the Delta twice this year—in June for the BB King Celebration at Club Ebony in Indianola, MS and he followed up at the Highway 61 Blues Fest in Leland, MS. In October he returned for the traditional [King Biscuit Blues Fest](#), now called the Arkansas Heritage Blues Fest. He had a great time at both.

The trip in June was to see the BB King Homecoming Celebration in Indianola, MS. It was special, my first time in [Club Ebony](#), where several acts have performed over



Club Ebony in Indianola, Mississippi

the years: BB King, Albert King, Little Milton, Ray Charles, James Brown, Count Basie, Bobby Bland, Howlin' Wolf, Ike and Tina, Bobby Rush, Denise LaSalle. The catfish plate was awesome, and there is something magical about seeing BB in a small club. Several times I got goose bumps, no lie.

The next day was the Highway 61 Blues Fest in Leland MS. It was a hot freakin' day but I stuck it out for the whole thing. It was a small festival for sure, but the cool thing is that most of the performers were hanging out in the crowd or walking around after their sets. I was hanging out a lot in front of the stage. I had kind of a surreal?/paranormal?/psychic? moment. Ask me about it, it is too long to go into here. I might go to the festival again, if I am in the neighborhood.

The [King Biscuit](#) in October was, and is always, great. Three "daze" of BBQ, soul food, sweet potato pie, cheap 24oz. beers, down home Delta folks, and friendly visitors; an ideal setting for me.

I got to meet more local folks that I will try to drop in on if I am there again. I once again stayed at the [Shack Up Inn](#), in a shack of course. Some dude was crashed on the porch swing of my shack Sunday afternoon – a lightweight amateur probably. The party was going on till 2am the day after the festival. I drove home a little "under the weather" but grinnin' from ear to ear.

Contact Keith at kcannon1@aol.com for access to more pictures from both trips.



Keith with his new Dutch friends and a local woman at Bullock's Café in Helena, AR (October).



Florida, Florida, and More Florida!



Florida sure saw a lot of us/me this year! First, Keith traveled to Florida for his Uncle Curt's funeral in February. He took Rickie along for the ride, and the two of them had some great quality time together before she passed on herself (see page 1).

Keith and I then ventured back to the homeland in May for niece Ashley's college graduation. She is Keith's sister's daughter. Ashley graduated from the University of Central Florida Summa cum Laude (!) with a degree in education, and we are all extremely proud of her. She now works for Knights Elementary, the same elementary school that she attended as a student! It was great to celebrate a joyous occasion.

We took Honey on her very first long distance trip for that visit (we had just her at this point, other than the cats). She seemed to do well, but wouldn't relax in the car. The photo to the bottom left is on our return trip where she fell asleep sitting up. The poor thing! Surprisingly, just after our trip she was just as excited about "going for a ride" as before! Ah, the blind faith of pets in their owners.

Then I returned for the week of the 4th of July. The kids were out of school, and I was able to take the older 3 (photo upper right) to [MOSI, the Museum of Science and Industry in Tampa](#). I used to work there—but I hardly recognized the place! It sure has changed a lot. I think the kids had a lot of fun, though it was very crowded that day so they probably didn't learn as much about science as I would have liked.

We had a fantastic 4th with tons of fireworks. Matthew didn't like the noise much (photo center right). But toward the end of the evening, he was lighting off some fireworks himself—under close supervision of his Mommy & Daddy of course!

I returned for Thanksgiving week. Keith

had a gig that week and couldn't make it. It was a nice week and I got to see some old friends as well as family. Mom's turkey was fabulous—probably because of my stuffing! We once again took the kids' height measurements and compared to last year and the spring. It's always amazing to see how much they grow in such a short time!

As I write this, Keith and I are preparing to head back once again for the week of Christmas. We'll drive there and back (Keith still doesn't like to fly, especially coach) so let's hope for good traveling weather.



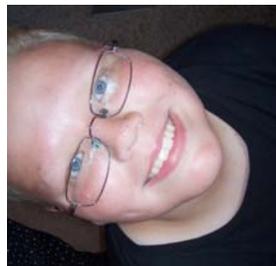
Gators taking over Alabama—foreshadowing perhaps?



Ashley at her graduation party



The kids at MOSI



Tyler!



Matthew didn't like the noisy firecrackers.



Honey—Asleep sitting up on the return of her first big car trip to FL

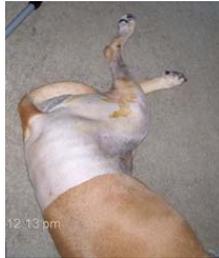


Thanksgiving Shenanigans with the Hooligans



Honey Bear Improvements

This October, Honey had to undergo some major surgery to repair a torn ligament in her rear left leg. The vet says that it's a pretty common thing to happen to "big" dogs, and there were a few options. First was to do nothing, but seeing a strong otherwise-healthy 4-year-old dog in pain was NOT an option. There was a smaller, less invasive procedure, but it wasn't recommended for the long term.



Post-surgery

joint does not hurt the dog any longer. It sounds scary, and when she first got home, it looked scary, but she recovered amazingly well and is now on full activity—no more restrictions.



A forlorn and sad puppy right after the procedure.

So we opted for a Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy, or TPLO. There is a great explanation on the website: <http://www.vetsurgerycentral.com/tplo.htm>. Basically they separate her tibia bone, reposition it, and reattach with a plate and screws in a better position so the

It was quite difficult keeping the new best friends (Honey and Duke) apart during her recovery, but we managed. We chose that option so that she may have a pain-free life as long as possible. She's still arthritic (even at 4 years old) so if she's been laying a long time, she limps a little... but that still may fade in time. She

is SO happy to be able to go for walks and rides in the car again!!! She had a bit of muscle atrophy during recovery, so we are working on rebuilding that slowly so she will be back to her old strong self.

"Mommy" Improvements



Keith continues to be perfect and not need any help whatsoever.... But this was a good year for those of us who did need a little touching up.

(Okay, hon, there it is in print—now hand over the remote and no one gets hurt!)

One of the biggest accomplishments of this year is that I had Lasik surgery in August! I opted for the Intralase procedure, where they use a laser to cut the flap before they open the flap and let the laser reshape the cornea. I went to the Berkeley Eye Center, one of the most respected and experienced centers here in Houston. I



had worn contacts since 1984, and glasses before then, and decided that it was the year to do it. I am glad I did.

I had very minor side effects, like the "halo" effect at night and minor dryness, but they've all cleared up now. I still need readers, unfortunately, but at my age (!) that was expected.

If you have an interest in the procedure, there is an excellent description on the web page: <http://www.berkeleyeye.com/laservision.html>. Or ask me!

I started having trouble with my fast heartbeat again this year for some odd reason. Don't you love getting older? Anyway, it's an issue I had dealt with since I was at least a teen. I attributed it to a sensitivity to caffeine. When I had too much, my heart would just start racing. I would lie flat and it would resolve itself in less than a minute.

I watch my caffeine intake (don't drink coffee, for instance) and hadn't had an "episode" in many years. But this summer, they started again. Only they didn't stop. One night after 20 minutes I had Keith take me to the emergency room. They took good care of me and gave a name to my condition—supraventricular tachycardia. WebMD gives a good explanation of the condition [here](#). In the most basic terms, it's a short circuit of the heart. I tried medication at first, but it just kept me up at night. I had more episodes (really scary when Keith isn't home!) and decided that wasn't going to work.



I contacted my heart electrician (cardio electro physiologist) and said "Let's fix this!" So in September I went in for a catheter ablation procedure. Officially, it was an



electrophysiology study. They actually incited an episode, then determined the short circuits my heart was taking. Then they inserted catheters in my legs (from the groin area) and used radio frequency waves to blast the short circuits.

Voila! Good as new.

Since then I have discovered just how awful the healthcare system is.... I'm STILL getting bills from all that mess!

The final touchup was that I had some moles removed. We checked for skin cancer and they all came back clear. Yeah! I hadn't suspected any, but we checked anyway. I'm very fair skinned and have gotten "spotted" over the years from all the sunburns I got when I was younger. Mom had a skin cancer removed from her belly this year, and my dad is extremely fair skinned. My risk is pretty high. It's better remove them now before they get cancerous.



I see the end of 2008 in much better shape—on the inside anyway—than at the beginning.



Go Gators!!

Keith's Bands

Keith continues to gig with his bands. He is part of Whiskey Brisket, The Levee Busters, and the Ed Maly Band. So far, he is doing a good balancing job between all three. They're not yet getting enough gigs for him to quit his day job, but it keeps him out of trouble. I can't complain! And it is great to have live music in the house. The bands all have web sites:

www.edmaly.com

www.leveebusters.com

www.whiskeybrisket.com

So if you're in Houston, come out and see the Ed Maly band play New Year's Eve at the "Out of Africa" shindig. The restaurant is located at Sugar Creek Boulevard and Highway 59, just behind the Chevron Station.

The restaurant is offering an Open Bar (!), champagne toast at midnight, and a good breakfast at 12:30 am for \$130. Reservations are required. Keith and I ate there the other night and the food was scrumptious.



The Ed Maly Band



A Real, Live Guitar Hero!

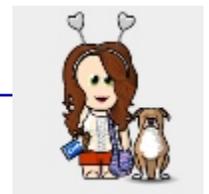
Orange and Blue? Why not green & red?



My sincerest apologies to my Ohio State family members, but I had to honor a great football team this year—the Florida Gators! They are once again playing for the National Championship on January 8, 2009, this time against the Oklahoma Sooners.

It was a rough year. Losing to Ole Miss really put a hurtin' on our hopes for a winning season. But Tim Tebow pulled it off, after promising he would, and we pushed on ahead of Alabama to take the SEC Title. If we win, that's our 3rd National title... but if we lose, well, it's still an incredible year for the Gators. No other teams—particularly any others from Florida (you know who I mean) are playing for championship.

Gooooo Gators!!!!



Year-End Wrap Up

Keith and I are both fortunate to remain gainfully employed during this "economic downturn." It will be very interesting to see what happens in 2009. KBR is still busy from all the extra work that came out of the glut of early 2008, but I expect we'll get hit hard enough around mid-year when that work dries up and there isn't much to follow it. We shall see, and keep our fingers crossed.

I continue to edit the South Texan, the newsletter of the South Texas Section of the AIChE (my professional organization). You can see my work at the site:

<http://sts-aiche.org/newsletterArchives.htm>

I have been the webmaster as well for the past couple of years, but the organization may be taking a different path with the website, and not require me to volunteer any longer. That's okay—my own website is in dire need of updating, and I would love to get back to stitching (cross stitching, crocheting, or knitting) again. I've been away from it for too long.

This year was an interesting year for our Facebook and MySpace pages. Keith (Kdoodah) and I (WeebleSue) are on MySpace, but I haven't gotten him over to Facebook yet. I'm

on Friendster and LinkedIn as well... so I shouldn't be too surprised when friends from the past find me! But this was a banner year. Several old friends became new again. I know first hand that it does not always end up that way—sometimes things buried in the past should stay buried. So it's curious when someone you haven't heard from in 10-25 years pops up and says Hi. It's nice when you can start a conversation and compare how life has treated each other. And if you're able to "re-friend" after that long time, well, that's a fantastic bonus. So hello again to all my old friends!

The final bit of news is that it snowed in Houston on December 11—even "out west" where we are in Stafford! It snowed much more to the north and east near the coast. We have friends who sent pictures of the accumulation on their lawns, even lasting til morning. All we got was a light dusting, and minor accumulation at the fence line (photo right). But I have videos! Check them out on my MySpace page!!

So all the best to you & yours, and here's wishing a fabulous and prosperous 2009!



What's this white stuff? MAN that's cold!! (In Columbus in December)



Snow accumulation in Stafford, Texas