

St. George Island December 2013

Christmas with Ursula & Gordon at the Beach



We had our annual beach week over Christmas, from the 22nd to the 29th (Sunday to Sunday). We stayed at Gulfside Oaks, a cozy one-level house with everything we needed.



Monica, Toby, Benji, and Elgar joined us Sunday afternoon, after a long drive from Austin. The weather was cool but sunny, and we didn't waste any time getting out onto the beach.



December 22

We brought a play table with us. As soon as I assembled it, Benji started playing with it.



The little car and train pieces were able to travel on other surfaces as well.



Ursula did a lot of cooking, even though she couldn't eat much.



Monica practiced some Christmas songs, and Benji and Toby explored the room.



Benji didn't enjoy bath time, but put up with it.



Getting his teeth brushed was marginally better.



December 23

It was colder the next morning, but we still went out on the beach.



Benji wasn't sure he wanted to walk on that strange surface.



Sometimes just standing there is enough.



The quiet road in front of the house was more to his taste.



Going for a ride on Dad's shoulders was even better.

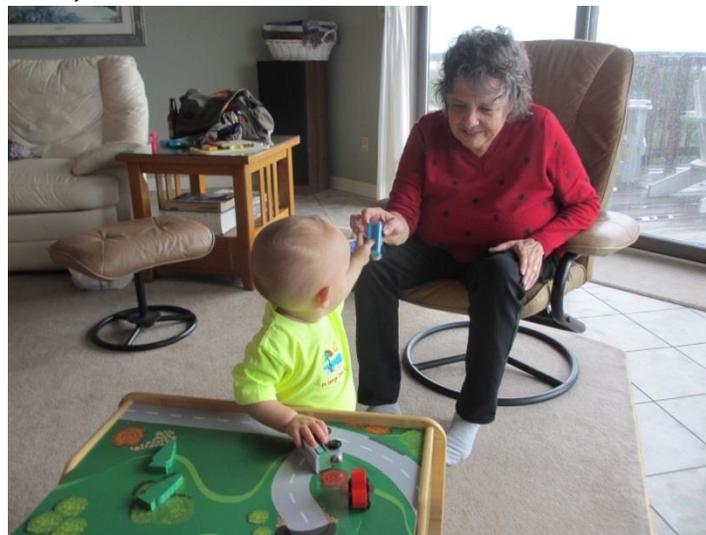


December 23

Back inside, the play table continued to be fun.



Benji even shared some of the fun.



Benji liked to join the fun with cell phones. The fact that this was an old TV remote didn't stop him.



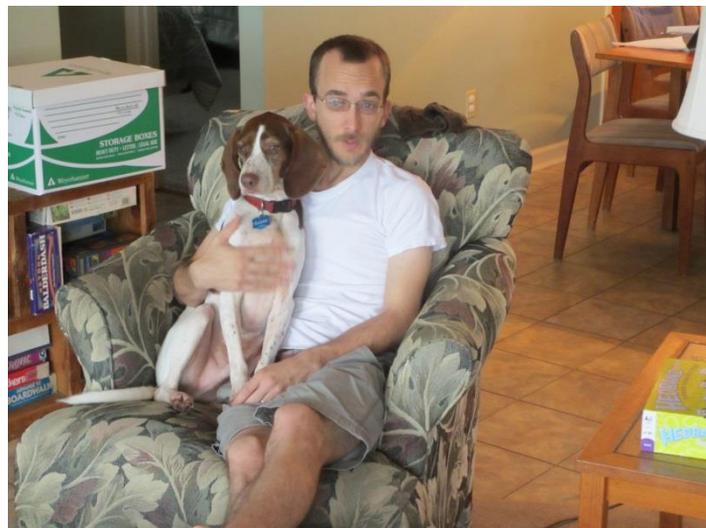
Reading is a favorite family activity. Benji points to pictures he likes.



He likes to point to animal pictures. He knows his Dad will let him hear the sound the animal makes.



Elgar also got some quality time with Toby.



December 23

While we kept Benji occupied...



Monica and Toby could relax a little.



Benji knows how to relax, too.



Our friend Elisabeth was renting a house nearby, and came over to visit.

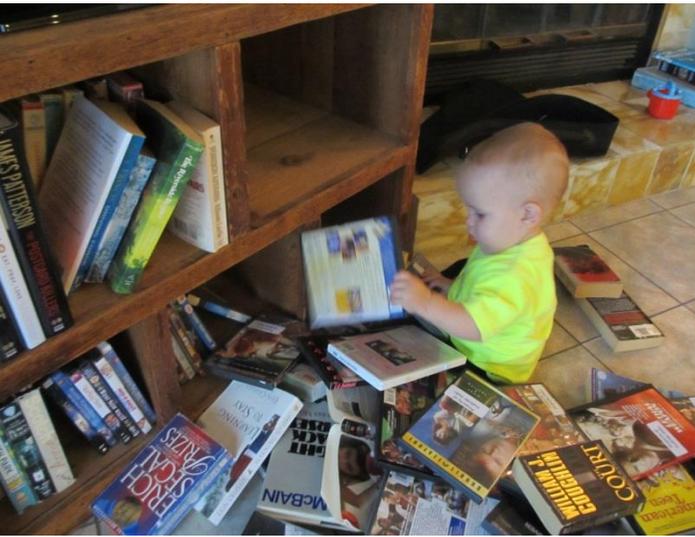


Benji wanted to play with the big kids (Genevieve and Riley), but couldn't figure out how.



December 23

Benji developed a taste for books and DVDs with cover art. He got very good at pulling them out, but wasn't interested in putting them back.



Elgar liked to sit with Ursula. The fact that she frequently gave him treats may have had something to do with that.



We had our regular beach Christmas tree ready to go.



But Benji was just as interested in the mobile we brought along for the mantel.



We hadn't lit the candles to heat the air to push against the blades on top to make it turn...but air from the ceiling register was blowing on it, making rotate. Benji made sure we noticed that.



If Benji could talk...

December 24

"Look, Elgar, it's Omi outside!"



"I can turn the pages myself!"

"It's warm enough here inside, in the sun, for a guy to get really comfortable."



"It doesn't get much better than this."



"Okay, this is even better."



"Outside again? Well, at least that's sand on the ground and not snow. And Mom can take some more pictures."



More from Benji...

December 24

"Hmm, where should I play this domino?"



"That should do it."



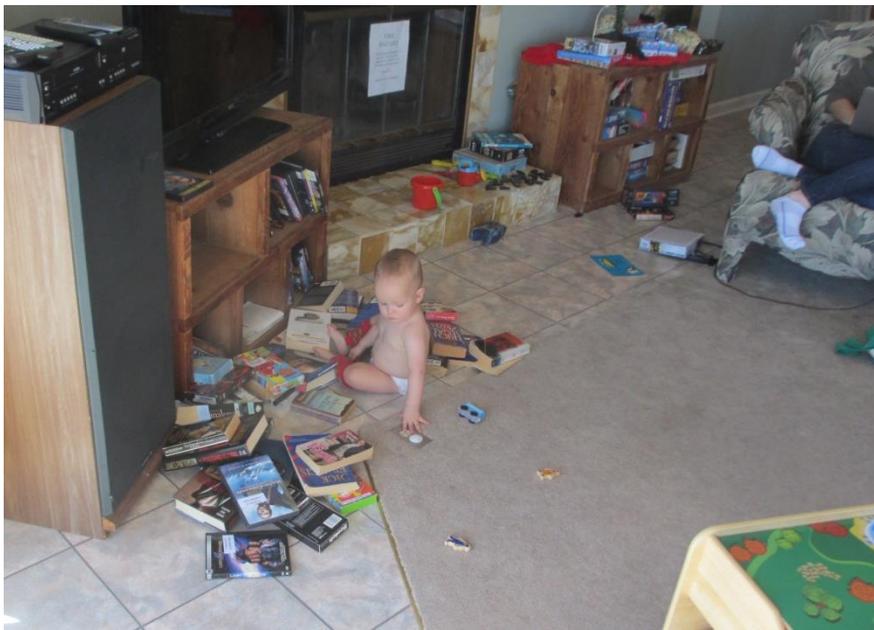
"See, Dad, you put the tape on like this."



"I'm tired of eating this. Do you want it, Omi?"



"So many pictures to look at, so little time!"



December 24

Christmas Eve dinner: sausages and potato salad.



Benji wants something to drink.



Benji waits patiently. Will there be presents?



First some Christmas ukulele music.



Ah, now the presents!



Benji loves books...

Looking at them,



Hearing about the pictures,



pointing out what's interesting,



and reaching for the next one.



Christmas morning at the beach.

December 25

Dawn from our picture window.



Benji's favorite breakfast: still-frozen waffles.



The rest of us had eggs, sausage, and French toast.

Benji liked the French toast too.



We all had plenty to eat.

A few minutes for some more light reading...



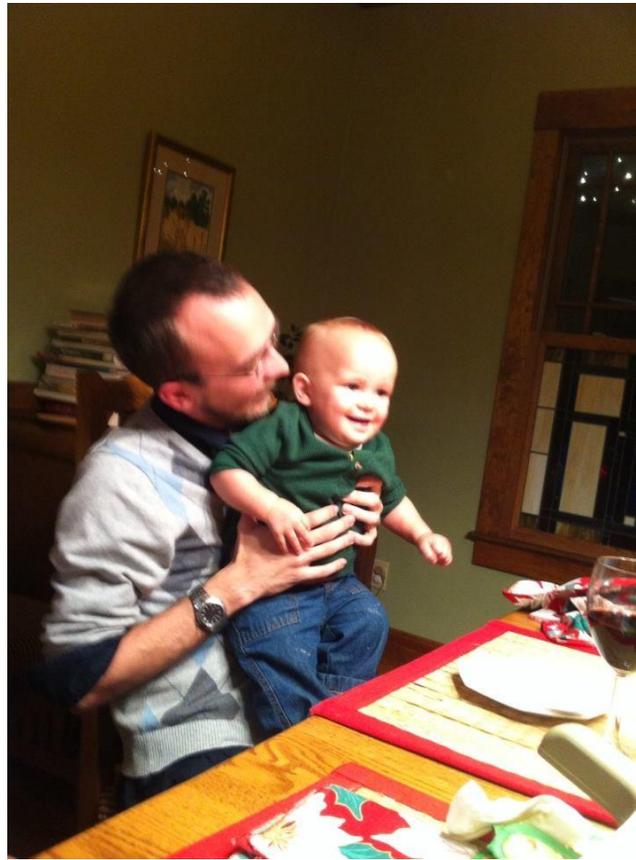
...then the three of them left, for more adventures with their Noni and Papa in Tallahassee.

Bonus: Christmas at Noni & Papa's House in Tallahassee
Pictures from Sue's Facebook Page.

What a tree!



What's next?



Banjo lessons.



All dressed up.

