

Happy New Year

January 2005

The year is off to a good if confusing start. Dan continues with his studies and hopes to find time and money to travel to all the places he longs to visit. Elizabeth is in her last stretch of school as a Theatre major at NYU and starting to worry about what next? George is (aren't all Professors?) running 6 projects with really only time for two. And I am trying to figure out what I mean when I say I am going home. More about that in a moment.

2004 was good to us with one very sad exception - my brother Russ passed away after a valiant battle against cancer. His wife Maria, and Rich, Lynn, Ray, Brianna and Johnnie all join us in missing Russ. Fortunately George and I had a lovely week long visit with Russ and Maria at our Minnesota cabin last July, we all were restored by the beauty and peacefulness of Lake Vermillion.

It's been a year of change. Looking over the rapidly escalating real estate prices, I decided it was time to sell our former home on Tyler Way. We were quite sentimental about that home, our kids were babies there and it held a lot of fond memories. However, the inflated housing market and the fact that we've been in our "new" home for 12 years made the decision easier. Just as I was considering what to purchase in its place, along comes Elizabeth saying she'd like to rent an apartment in NYC and possibly stay there for a few years after graduation. Can you see the light bulb over my head? So George and I had a very busy January through May travelling to NY and scouting out apartments. With good luck we bought a small apartment which Elizabeth and roommate Donna now rent from us. In the process, we grew more attached to being in NY with each visit, it seemed strange to be in CA driving a car instead of hopping on the subway. George and I always dreamed of a point in our lives where we could live part time in NY, CA and of course, since we are dreaming...PARIS! Now it was beginning to look like we might have a shot at the first two locations.

So, just like in the movies, I went back to work at Caltech and was intrigued by an announcement of an Ombudsman position in NYC. Should I apply? "See what happens" said George and Dan and Elizabeth. "Get your name out there" said my neighbor Harold. As of August 16, 2004 I am employed as Alliance Capital Management's first Ombudsman! George and I are, in my friend Carol's words "practicing bicoastals". He is in NYC one weekend each month and I return to CA one weekend each month. So now you understand why I have to stop and think what "I am going home" means.

The year also gave George and me the opportunity to visit Australia, the first time back for me since George left his post-doc there to start work at Irvine. We were happy to find friends and places as lovely and welcoming as we remembered. Over Christmas, the four of us traveled to Mal Pais in Costa Rica. It was a beautiful place, with the one drawback being just how delicious the bugs found Elizabeth.

We look forward to a year of settling into our new routine. We send our love and best wishes for a year of peace, health and happiness. Now you have twice as many opportunities to visit us! Hope we see you in 2005.