

Happy Holidays!

This past year was a year of travel for us. We began in NYC in June with Gail, Tom and Marnie Meister, Andy's (Sarah's boyfriend) parents and sister. Jeff drove the Envoy throughout Manhattan, zigzagging in traffic and trying to avoid potholes like a true NYC ex-cabbie. We toured Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, saw a Broadway show, and even attended a Mets game. We also toured NBC studios and Rockefeller Center where the Christmas tree now resides.

In July, we visited Iceland with Anne-Marie and Rodolphe, our French friends. It was overcast and cold some days with the low in the 40s°F in Reykjavik where we needed heavy coats. We relaxed in the Iceland's famous Blue Lagoon thermal waters and drove over cooled lava fields. We took the circuit road around the whole of Iceland to the warmer north (75°F) and were awed by the unspoiled beauty of nature. We saw puffin birds, hot pots, glaciers, geysers, and met many friendly natives. What a joy!

Sarah was on the move as well. In January she joined a bicycle group touring Israel. This summer Sarah and Andy drove west so she and two college buddies could hike a portion of the High Sierra trail in California. The only trouble was the Sierras had received over 200 inches of snow and the passes were still snow packed, so the three of them took various shorter hikes. Before her friends had arrived, Andy joined Sarah for a hike (he was a guest student at the University of California at Davis Hospital while Sarah was hiking) and asked Sarah for her hand in marriage in the high Sierras. They will be married on May 20, 2006 in Madison, Wisconsin. Andy graduates medical school at the University of Wisconsin on May 14<sup>th</sup> while Sarah will finish her first year at the same school.

Adam continued his pattern of working for firms that merge. Nextel merged with Sprint, or really was acquired by Sprint. Seeing the writing on the wall he decided got a job with Washington Gas, the local utility. This is the first job more than a mile from his home; in fact he commutes to downtown by bus and rail. Quite a change for him, but not the only change. On the first of December Adam and Karla got married on a cruise with friends and family. They were wed onboard the Carnival cruise ship Imagination docked in Miami in a lovely ceremony and reception. From there we continued with the honeymooners to Key West where Jeff and Daria kayaked amongst the keys. Then off to Calica, Mexico on the Yucatan Peninsula to see the Mayan ruins of Tulum overlooking the beautiful Caribbean Sea. On the way back we relaxed in the sun, listened to the ocean, caught up on our reading and explored the ship. All in 75-85°F temperatures with clear skies!

Jeff's current program continued still without firm funding from Congress with the possibility that it might even be discontinued. In the interim, Jeff applied for and was offered a new position. Part of the final phase is a drug screen (cutting some of what little hair he has left), background check and fingerprinting. If all goes well he should begin in January. He's excited about the position and the fact that he'll be able to walk to work.

Socks, our 15-year-old female kitty, died in May from liver cancer. Daria mourned a while and then got an eight-week old kitten from the vet, Sammie (Samantha) in August. She's a joy, even when she's being bad. She joins Charlie, Ike and Bradley.

May 2006 bring health and happiness to you and your families!