

Happy 2013 to Friends and Family Everywhere,

Here are our highlights for 2012, later than ever. No excuses, just time getting away from us.

Travel: When we retired in 2005, we thought we would take one domestic vacation, one foreign vacation, and one cruise each year. 2012 was the first year in which we finally accomplished that goal. In June, we followed a visit to Northfield, Minnesota for Hal's 45th Carleton College reunion with several days vacationing in Door County, Wisconsin (kind of a Midwestern Cape Cod – heard of *Fish Boils?*), where we reconnected with Hal's cousin Pam and her husband, and a 50th HS planning reunion meeting in Valparaiso, Indiana, where Hal grew up. Less than two weeks after returning home, we embarked on a 15-day cruise-tour in Alaska, where we visited the Inside Passage (reprising a 2004 trip), the Kenai Peninsula, Denali, and Fairbanks. (*Pictured below: Mt. McKinley in glory, Hal getting too close to bears eating salmon, a glacier in Glacier Bay National Park; 40-below photo.*) In August, we spent our customary anniversary week in Las Vegas. Finally, in October, we spent a fantastic 3 weeks in southern Africa, visiting 5 safari camps in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, and finishing with a couple of days in Victoria Falls. Among other things, we saw herds of elephants, lions mating, a pack of wild dogs hunting impala, and more kinds of antelopes than you can possibly imagine. A side benefit was being completely out of touch for the 3 weeks prior to the election! (*So many photos to choose from, we're trying a collage – see bottom of next page. It's a slideshow in the web version.*)



Geocaching: We continued our active pursuit of geocaches this year, and literally geocached from A(laska) to Z(imbabwe). (For those who missed the detailed description in last year's letter and have no idea of what we're talking about, you can find out more at www.geocaching.com.) Hal decided to take the plunge and hide caches as well as seek them, and now maintains about 25 in our neighborhood, as well as one in Providence. We have become part of the local geocaching community and met many interesting geocachers in our area along the way.



Omnilore: We also continued our involvement in Omnilore, our unique learning in retirement organization. Hal is the equipment manager, webmaster, and coordinator of the very popular Shakespeare group. Ruth serves on the Curriculum Committee. We continue to take an eclectic set of classes and continue with the monthly hikes.

Family:

Alison continues to work for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles. In October, she and her boyfriend Jay moved into a cute (but tiny) beach apartment in Hermosa Beach, only a block from the ocean. She left her tuxedo cats, Drew and S'More, with us so that they have more room to roam, but takes them to her place for short visits.

Erika had a tough year in Providence, as she lost both of her beloved cats in 2012. Josh's death was not unexpected, as he outlived his terminal diagnosis by more than 2 years, but Mouschke's death at the hands of a speeding car was devastating to her. After a few months of grieving, she adopted two adorable kittens, a torby (tortoise-shell with tabby markings) 6-toed female named Porsche, and a black longhaired male named Jaguar. They both spent the holidays here with Erika and tortured our own resident animals. Sadly, we also lost two of our three cats in 2012, beautiful long-haired Siamese Boris (*left*) to old age and rescued long-haired Fluffy (*right*), who disappeared the day after St. Hart's Day, and showed up dead in a neighbor's yard 6 weeks later. Panu would enjoy being an only cat but interlopers continue to appear!



Ruth's mother Helen celebrated her 92nd birthday in October! We visited for a few days before leaving for Africa on her birthday, and Ruth also visited in April, following a visit to Providence to see Erika and meet up with some long-time virtual friends.

Miscellaneous:

Hal: Golf once or twice weekly; never broke 90. Habitat a couple days a month. Poker – net wins. Some exercise...

Ruth: Too much time on the computer. League of Women Voters. Yoga. Book clubs.

