

Christmas 2013

Hope your 2013 was just spectacular, and your 2014 will be even better. Mine was... fun, but up and down. Between the fires and floods, here's what happened.

One of the fun things I got to do since last letter was go to the Rose Bowl and Parade in Pasadena, California over New Years. My good friends Tim and Natalie Matthewson and I went out to see the sights in LA: Dodger Stadium, Santa Monica Pier, the Hollywood sign, and watching the parade floats being constructed before getting up at the crack of dawn for curbside seats at the Parade and finally, the Grand-daddy of them all, the Rose Bowl. Our team (Wisconsin) lost, but the whole thing is quite a spectacle, and I have been spoiled on parades for the rest of my life!



At the end of December, I will have worked for the Colorado Department of Corrections for 23 years. Like everyone else, I complain about my job at times, but I am incredibly proud of my agency and the work I do here. In March, our CDOC Executive Director was murdered answering his front door at his home by a parolee. It was a weird and tough couple of weeks here at work as investigators tried to determine what had happened and who could be in further danger. The aftermath has seen a lot of changes in personnel and the way we do business, but I am proud to be a member of the DOC team.

Of course I took plenty of impromptu and promptu(?) trips this year! Over Spring Break, I returned to McGehee, Arkansas with our church kids to do service projects and try new foods. I repaired bikes and hooked up printers, worked at the Salvation Army store and had a fabulous crawfish dinner with all the fixins. Once again, the people of Southeast Arkansas outdid themselves with their hospitality and kindness.



In May/June, I attended my nephew Thomas' high school graduation in Maryland. It was a fun time as everyone from both sides of the family gathered for the event. Thomas started at the University of Chicago this October, and I hope he works a bit harder in college than his Aunt Beth did. ☺ Next up is Peter, so a return trip to Maryland is in the cards for 2014.

Part of the problem of living in such a transient town is that you end up saying goodbye to a lot of friends as they move for better opportunities. In January, Jim and I opened our house to a young soldier who had just returned from a tour in Afghanistan. Dan lived in our basement for about 5 months until he discharged from the Army and got a great new job in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I immediately volunteered to help him drive a U-Haul full of his things back to the Holy Land and a quick visit with my Aunt and cousins out there. In June, my fabulous friends the Hatfields moved back to Alaska as Mike got promoted to Battalion Commander and Lt. Colonel. I miss my “little sis” Stacy terribly and realize the reason the 2013 letter is boring as heck is because she isn’t here to whisper ideas and reassurances into my ear. ☺ A trip to Alaska in the summertime is being pondered. In September, the aforementioned Tim Matthewson got a great new job which necessitated a move for them to St. Cloud, Minnesota (great walleye!). I’ve been to Minnesota twice to help move and visit already. Obviously, if you want a promotion and a new place to live, hit me up in 2014.

Colorado Springs was in the news a lot in 2013 for yet another devastating wildfire in Black Forest and flooding in Manitou Springs. None of these events directly impacted us, and although this community is resilient, it would be nice to have a quiet 2014.

Jim is still working 4 different jobs, custom golf clubs, Dick’s Sporting Goods, driving a bus for the school district, and music/choir director at our church. I still do some genealogy, and was amazed to find myself cited in an article in the Smithsonian magazine from 2012 this year (no, they didn’t let me know). The link is:

<http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/history/2012/06/the-ax-murderer-who-got-away/>

This next year is a “milestone” birthday for me, so I hope to do some fun things around that. Keep in touch in 2014. Have a Merry Christmas and great 2014.

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Go Broncos!



Rally Cap



Me and Uncle Bill!