

Christmas 2012

With apologies to Dr. Seuss.... (Oh, the Places You'll Go!)

**Hooray and Huzzah!
This year was my year!
I went off to Great Places
Both far and near!**

**Oh, the Things that I did
and the Places I went!
The stuff that I saw,
and the Money I spent! (ugh...)**

**Somehow I escaped
all that waiting and staying.
and found the bright places
where Boom Bands were playing.**

**Oh, the places I went!
Where there's fun to be done!
There were points to be scored.
And games to be won.
(Unless you were the Tigers in the World Series - grrr)**

**My preference to go
With friends and family in tow
The magical things that we saw
made it the winning-est year of them all.**

**And did I succeed?
Yes! I did, indeed!
(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)**

So, if you hate Christmas letters or nursery rhymes, you probably didn't make it this far.
That's what I call pre-screening!

Highlight of the year has to be attending two games of the World Series in Detroit with my brother, nephew and cousin. The weather was horrible, my team stunk, but it was a fabulous time. This was a total bucket list item for me. The atmosphere of being at the championship games of my favorite sport, back home, with MY team... priceless! (Well, not technically...) Go Tigers! Wait til next year....

But that wasn't all I did in 2012...

In July, I was fortunate to go as a chaperone on a church Mission Trip to McGahee, Arkansas with about 50 high school kids and adults from our church and another in town. I just had a tremendous time working alongside the kids in Southeast Arkansas trimming

trees in a city park, cleaning a woman's yard, painting and weeding at the local ball fields, and helping load trucks at the food distribution center. I spent afternoons inside (it's HOT in Arkansas in July) sorting clothes at the local Salvation Army and was made Honorary Assistant (to the) Store Manager. Great fun! The people of McGahee were amazing in their hospitality to us. I'm hoping to make this an annual trip.

Over Labor Day, Stacy and Mike Hatfield and I were honored to be invited to Jen (Hellem) and Jason Sharpe's wedding on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. We went out a couple of days early and spent some time in Boston (Sam Adams brewery / Cheers Tavern, Freedom Trail), Salem and "the Cape" seeing the sights before the wedding on the beach. I drank more beer during that week than I had cumulatively in my life up to that point. ☺ The wedding was beautiful, and the trip was a blast. I think....

Then I detoured back home to Michigan to get my sand and lighthouse fix and to attend the Michigan – Air Force football game at the Big House in Ann Arbor. Cousin Lisa and my neighbors from Jackson, Jim and Bill Stratton, Bill's kids and I were entertained by a close game with about 112,000 other fans. I was officially neutral as we sat in the Air Force section, but I sure was happy when Michigan pulled it out.

Earlier, in June, the Waldo Canyon wildfire started and heavily impacted the northwest side of Colorado Springs. We heard from a lot of you who wondered if we were in its path. Thankfully, we were not, although had we still been living in our previous residence, we would have been under mandatory evacuation for several days. Jim and I helped some friends evacuate and we had a house full of folks for a couple of days until their neighborhoods were cleared for return. Unfortunately, we have several friends who lost their homes, including those we helped evacuate. At the time, it was inconceivable that the fire would reach their homes. The devastation is stunning, but some are already rebuilding, and the civic unity shown by the citizenry towards each other and the fire responders is something to be proud of.

In other news....

Jim still has his custom golf-club making business, and continues to work multiple jobs at Dicks Sporting Goods, bus driver for School District 11, and the music director at our church. I still sit in my cubicle at the Department of Corrections trying not to down the computer system with oddly written 4gl code. Despite tearing the meniscus in my knee in January (MRI – no surgery!), I did walk the Bolder Boulder 10K and ride in the Midnight bike ride, as well as walk my Tuesday night 5K. I continue to try to attend every sporting event within about a hundred mile radius of Colorado Springs.

Thank you for being such great friends. Let's go to a game in 2013. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!!

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