



December 2013
Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!!
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May the blessings that surround the birth of the Christ Child be with you and your family this holiday season. Join us as we pray for peace on earth.

We stayed in the United States all year! But we stayed busy with family, church, volunteering, geocaching and generally enjoying retirement! Phil continues to tend to his native plant gardens, sing in both the men's and chancel choirs at church and tries to keep Barb in line (ha!).

Susannah's thirty-something-year-old turtle that she got for her birthday when she was little lives with us. Since it is our only pet, we decided to bring it along with us when we go to our North Georgia cabin. Studs Turtle is now well-traveled. She did make the plane trip to Texas when we moved from New York in 1988 but had only gone from our house to Suze's in Austin and then back to us in the ensuing years. Now she (or he) has been to several hotels where she hangs out in the bathtub and has stayed with our Georgia neighbors who insist they taught her to roll a ball back and forth to them!

Susannah's now elderly cats did move to California from our house last year and we enjoy seeing them when we visit. Gwyneth and her family adopted an abandoned dog shortly after Thanksgiving and we welcome the addition of Phelix to our gatherings.



Gwyneth with Phelix and Gazoo

Barb's brother Jim was inducted into the Wauseon Ohio High School Academic Hall of Fame which led to her going to Ohio and getting to see two of his kids as well of lots of Barb's friends.



Jim and Barb at their parents' grave, with Jim's kids, Keller and Joel

We've enjoyed two big family get-togethers with our girls and their families. In April Gwyneth, Rob and the girls went to San Francisco where Phil and I joined them to visit Susannah and her husband, Luis Rivera.



Chloe and Susannah in San Francisco

Then again in July all of us shared a lovely summer house on Lieutenant Island off Cape Cod near Wellfleet. We all were able to go to Phil's sister Belle's in Carver, MA to join in Old Home Day festivities with Belle's family including two of her great-grands from Washington State!

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Susannah, Camille, Gwyneth, Luis and Rob at Carver Old Home Day Bake

Much of our time in Georgia this summer was spent hiking to waterfalls – all the spring and summer rain made them spectacular.



Phil, Camille (now 15) and Chloe (11)
 Barb continues with computing education professional volunteer service: traveling to meetings in Denver (got to see brother Jim and Marty), Portland, Chicago, San Francisco and Wisconsin among others. Although she started as a volunteer driver for the elderly she's not home enough to do much of that. She also became president of the Friends of Georgetown Parks and Recreation which blends with her occasional water aerobics teaching gig. A friend from church tried to teach Barb to sail in a Sunfish this summer – the capsizing lesson went well – Barb can right the boat but it is really hard to get back into it!

We spent Thanksgiving at the cabin – just the two of us and Gwyneth, Rob and their girls. We'll fly out to California to spend Christmas with Susannah and Luis.



Random Pictures from 2013



Phil and Barb at California Academy of Science (December 2012)



Phil's sister Belle, her son Steve and his wife Gay in Massachusetts



Marty, Jim and Barb in Steamboat



Camille and Chloe Butera and Luis and Susannah Rivera at Lieutenant Island



Belle's daughter Ruth and husband Neal, Luis and Susannah, Chloe Butera and Phil at Belle's in Carver, MA



Camille and Barb at top of Tybee Island (GA) Light on girls' weekend at the beach



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