



Warm Solstice Greetings from the Hesterbergs

Adam is in his second year at Princeton University, and is loving every minute of it. He revels in the quantity and quality of the math classes available to him, and only regrets that a day only has 24 hours. Back in mid-September he called me and said, "Today I dropped 4 classes." "What!?" I replied, knowing that a full load at Princeton is 4 classes. Had he dropped out? Had an evil gremlin taken over? "Leaving me with only 6," he deadpanned. I'm pretty sure he never actually intended to take 10 classes in one semester, but I do know that he wanted to. He's also very involved in the College Democrats and did lots of campaigning for Obama throughout the fall. Last summer he barely touched down in Seattle. After 2 short weeks to fill up on my cooking, he took off for points east, south, and even easter. First to Nebraska to work as a grader for the Math Olympiad Program, then to Portland, OR where he had a research job at OHSU doing computational linguistics in the Center for Spoken Language Understanding. Finally, it was off to Bulgaria to participate with Princeton's team at the International Mathematics Competition and to help coach the US team at the International Linguistics Olympiad.

Nathan is a junior at Garfield High School, but never goes to class. Not a delinquent -- he's enrolled in the "Running Start" program, which allows high school juniors and seniors to fulfill their high school requirements at the community college. He enjoys the more serious atmosphere of the college courses, yet still manages to get together with his high school buddies and roam the neighborhood dressed as a pirate (I'm not kidding). Much to our surprise (and great delight!) his request for his 16th birthday was for a trip to visit his relatives in Pennsylvania and Minnesota. Ok, everyone, think back to what you wanted for your 16th. . . yes, I wanted a car, too (but didn't get one). Nathan did get his wish. He flew out to Pennsylvania for a few days to visit my mom, brother, and sister, then flew to Minnesota to visit Tim's parents and siblings. After his time there, he climbed aboard Amtrak and rode the rails home to Seattle. Another means of transportation is now in his head, as he's just begun a driver's education class. Yep, with me in the passenger seat, my teeth firmly clenched and knuckles stark white, he's driving the streets of Seattle. He's still fencing, and has qualified for the Junior Olympics tournament that'll be held in Albuquerque next February. En garde!

I (Bev) keep myself busy working as an administrator for the Eliot Institute -- a Unitarian Universalist family camp based in the Pacific Northwest. The "soccer-mom-with-van" image has fallen by the wayside, and I'm happily tooling around in a new red Prius (my kids never really liked soccer anyway). We hadn't been in the market for a new car until a sleepy driver t-boned our Odyssey one early morning. Luckily no one was hurt, and Tim's new employer kicked in \$1,000 for buying a hybrid vehicle. I also got to deal with 2 basement floods this past year. The cold one caused by a rain deluge, and a hot one caused by a water heater failure. We've decided that eventually water always wins, so we've rejiggered our basement to accommodate occasional water influx. Time marches on and brings travels with it -- I attended by 25th Stanford reunion in October, and am heading out to Philadelphia in January to celebrate my mother's 80th birthday.

I (Tim) have a new job at Google, as an Ads Quality Statistician. Google is different. It is very successful, which gives it the luxury of doing things that are best for its users, not just what makes the most money in the short run, and doing good. It puts money toward good causes, matches employee charitable contributions, and supports employees volunteering. It is very colorful, funky, and quite non-bureaucratic. A little chaotic, perhaps. Distractions abound, from interesting talks, to interesting projects, to office mates talking. And there is way too much email, and long hours.

At home, Nathan & I did some pruning of a big maple in back, cutting off two big branches, without a chainsaw -- really good exercise :-). More recently we had an arborist out to look at our trees, and talk about planting more. She was, umm, not very happy with the pruning. It may eventually kill the tree. I guess I don't know as much about trees as I thought :-). I also repaired our wooden gutters this year. I walked around to find other wooden gutters, to ask the owners for pointers, but couldn't find any! I guess to keep wooden gutters, you have to be meticulous and take care of them every year. It gives me an appreciation for the previous owners of this house.

I continue to be involved in other activities -- Sierra Club, Statistics Education (I gave a revolutionary talk at the last Joint Statistical Meetings to a huge audience, about replacing old rules of thumb in statistics with modern simulation-based methods; though I'm afraid the revolution may take a while), and Technology Services Corps - the nonprofit in which students refurbish donated computers, then take them to developing countries. There's a trip to Guatemala this February. Nathan and I aren't going, but we'll probably go there this summer, with Habitat for Humanity.

With all our love and a little laughter,

Bev, Tim, Adam, and Nathan