

Diana and Tom Burton

Holiday 2012

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I'm not sure what to do for an encore nor what more to say since our life is pretty much an open book through my trip reports at www.LibertyLadies.weebly.com and Photo Shows at www.TomsKoi.com plus our staying in touch via email. (We might be the only folks on the planet who have ignored Facebook so far.) We remain grateful that Life is Good and have clarity that I give TMI (as in Too Much Information) but if nothing more I want to continue the tradition of a holiday letter as a summarization of our year.

We were recently reminded that life isn't always perfect when Hurricane Sandy came our way. It was only 14 months ago for Hurricane Irene which caused me to be 'stuck' in Seattle five extra days following my Mt Rainier hike. This time I scurried home, getting through a series of canceled flights and skipping a marathon and caught maybe the last plane to land in Newark before it closed down. Our luck held but luck is sometimes assisted by good planning; Tom had installed a full house automatic natural gas generator so we didn't endure the 8-10 day lack of power that others did. We had enough power to share with neighbors. But big trees did fall, minor teahouse roof damage and lots of stress and now six weeks later we are starting to look normal again though the streets are still piled with rubble and some adjoining shore towns will never be the same.

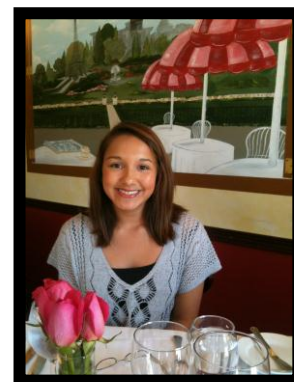


Tom at 17 & 77

Diana at 17 & 67

Alayna at 7 & 17

The year was full: I can count 36 trips/visits by one or both of us this year all of which are reflected on our web sites. I can count up 36 times of being grateful that we can do this physically, emotionally and financially. Tom had a health scare or two resulting in a scare to me and a trip or two canceled but it all turned out okay. Both of us stay active with Tom walking and using weights most every day and me hiking or running whenever I can and catching weight training in between. My marathon numbers reduced -- but really, after topping 25 during my 65th year, there's no way but down. My hiking vacations increased to seven this year with marathons maybe in the 15 range depending on if I finish them all. Also, Marie arrives for our big deal extravagant trip to Vienna for the holidays. It was Tom's idea to take music-lover Marie (age 14) to the music-capital of the world for her first trip to Europe. We can't get Daughter Alayna or Grandson Joseph to go anywhere with us though we've tried. Couldn't even get a current picture and that's why you see ages 7 and 17 above instead of 47. Smile.



It's not possible to ignore marathons in my life though I admit that I'm getting a tad bored with them. However I wasn't any bored for Stockholm and it'd be hard to top this 100th anniversary of their Olympics especially since it was also my 100th marathon finish. Add to that the coincidence that it was my 10th international marathon, my 10th marathon of 2012, my 10th anniversary of my first marathon ever and 10 days ahead of my 67th birthday which I then celebrated with a marathon around Australia's Ayres Rock 10 days later. Maybe I burned it out? Yet I went on to Buenos Aires, and then a few more (if this is sounding overwhelming to you, it is to me too.)



Our big deal trip was Switzerland's Grindelwald, Lake Lucerne and Zurich in September but guess you can't just sneeze at Buenos Aires in October, or Las Vegas in March, or Paris in April, or Sydney in July. Above you saw Tom when he went on to Hong Kong from Sydney in August (guess who goes first class?) and here he is dining in a small Swiss village in September (not exactly coach class either.) The bottom one is fine dining in Rouen. Tough life.

My cream-of-the-crop trip was a Peru adventure in November which included hiking the Inca Trail into Machu Picchu. But that too, while spectacular, wasn't the only hike as I'd had two Hawaiian Islands in February, the Smoky Mountains in April, Beartooths of Montana as well as the Canadian Rockies in August, then Point Reyes National Seashore in CA and finally Tucson's four directions of mountains and parks in November.



A big event was my Sister Beverly getting exercise-religion and joining me first at Kripalu Yoga Retreat in January (she loved it) then on a tough hike in the Canadian Rockies in August (she loved that too.) She took this hiking picture of me. This is new as we didn't do much together as children. Here we are at maybe 2 and 8. Beverly is the cute blonde blue-eyed charmer. (I hated her for it.) She's now booked for a hike in Glacier National Park in August and is coming again in January for another week long Kripalu visit. If she had her way she'd happily volunteer there for a month's stay.



We finished 2012 with the Vienna trip to introduce Marie to Europe. She reports it best: *For a first trip to Europe I would have to say this is just amazing. I don't think another trip will match up to this. I know for a fact four and a half years ago I wouldn't even have thought about being on an airplane much less being in business class and going to Europe. This was the best Christmas present I have ever had. Some of my favorite things were the Sisi museum, the Mozart apartment, and the Schonbrunn palace. The best restaurant we ate at was the one Katherine Switzer suggested to us after The Third Man tour.* Overall if I had to grade my trip it would be A+.



From us to you, we wish you a very happy and healthy new year and the hope to hear more from you too.

Since this picture is Tom's favorite from Grindelwald, Switzerland and it didn't fit into the two page holiday missive, I'll add it as a 3rd page focus for the web version. It's out our window towards just one of the glaciers and peaks.



Then to fill out the page, Tom and his girls in Vienna.

