

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 2

the RosenWeld's

2011-2012 Holiday Letter

Happy Holidays

We found a neat trick for getting our year-end letter out earlier for 2012... skip 2011... We're not quite sure how time manages to keep accelerating, but welcome to our new biannual approach for balancing a family news update with information overload.

Before recounting our family's minor challenges and triumphs, we want to say thanks for our generally great health, supportive friends and the welcome political news of November. At the same time we are sobered by the number of friends who were recently diagnosed with cancer, the grave threats facing our environment, and the growing social inequity both in this country and in developing countries we've visited.



Leah greeting Ellie at SeaTac Airport

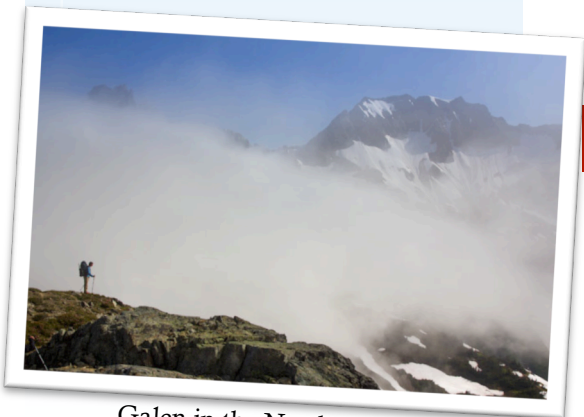


Welcome Ellie!

This year's biggest news: after (doubtlessly insufficient) debate and reflection on how it would change our lifestyle, we found a beautiful Samoyed puppy to join our family. Ellie (short for Ellesmere) is the cutest thing on the planet with incredibly soft fur (which magically seems never to get dirty?!), a proud trot as she chases a thrown chew-toy, and an omnipresent grin that makes it nearly impossible to be sad in her presence. Of course she hasn't quite figured out that poop doesn't belong on the kitchen floor, barks continually, wants to chew *everything*, and keeps trying to play with our glaringly-unwelcoming cats, and needs to be walked even if it's storming rain..., but we love her.

Breaking News!

As we go to press, the word comes in that Margaret's father, Art, has just won the National Medal of Technology & Innovation – to be awarded personally by Obama in February! This follows his recent fall and (successful) surgery for a broken hip! Talk about a roller-coaster life!



Galen in the North Cascades

Australia

In January 2011, we set off for a six-month, sabbatical in Brisbane, Australia with Margaret collaborating with cystic fibrosis researchers at Royal Children's Hospital and Dan a visiting professor at Griffith University. Adam, Galen and Leah attended Brisbane State High School in dreaded uniforms that reminded us of house colors at Hogwarts. We came to love Brisbane, and Leah still wants to move back. People were incredibly friendly (except while driving) and we grew addicted to Long Blacks, Flying Foxes, street-side maki sushi, the Davies Market, Little Greek Taverna, and the city's fantastic transit system (especially the Citycat) that let the kids roam freely. Margaret became close friends with her host, Claire and they've since had fun reunions in Seattle, Paris, Rotterdam and the Everglades.

Before Brisbane we toured New Zealand, which was every bit as stunning as Middle Earth. We walked pristine beaches, explored eerie geysers, hiked the Tongariro alpine crossing (setting for Mt Doom), spelunked limestone caves, tramped the Routeburn track, and

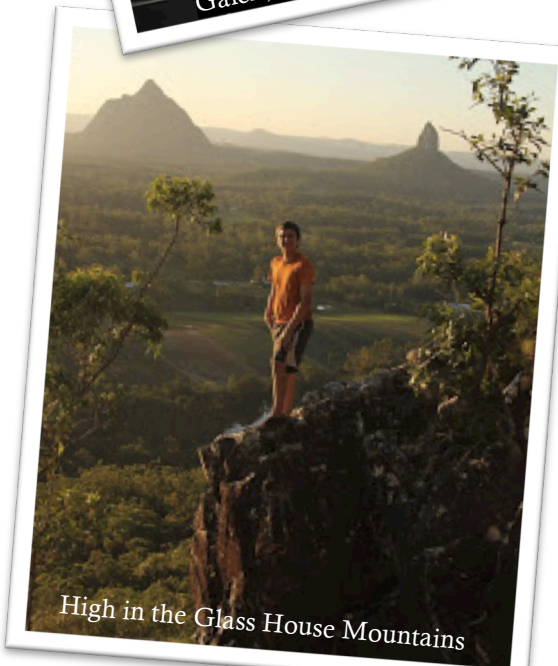
cruised stunning Milford Sound.

New Zealand is a must-return-to destination, for sure. We also flew to nearby Indonesia, visiting Bali, Lombok and trekking through incredible terraced rice fields and rugged gorges in rainy Sulawesi.

The more we learned about Australia, the more places we wanted to see. Although we barely scratched the surface, we did get to visit Sydney and descend some of the slot canyons slicing the nearby Blue Mountains.

Outside Melbourne, Margaret and Dan hiked through arid gum forests in the Grampians, startling wallabies and emus from the bush. When Adam & Galen's friend, Luca, visited, we went scuba diving on the Great Barrier Reef and backpacked in Tasmania. Leah and Margaret's friends visited as well taking us north to eroded volcanic plugs known as the Glass House Mountains. Dan's sister, Kathy, and Sheldon also made the long antipodal flight; together we traveled to the red interior, scrambling up the stunning Uluru (aka Ayers Rock) and backpacking a portion of the Larapinta Trail. After the kids' school got

out we made a final trip to Australia's north



High in the Glass House Mountains



Galen, Adam & Leah before school



Galen, Leah & Adam, Milford Sound



Margaret, Dan, Kathy & Galen at Uluru



Galen, Adam & Margaret, N Cascades



15' Manta Ray approaching Galen, Hawaii

Back in the USA

It was strange returning to Seattle after what was really a transformational trip, because reentry was so easy that Australia seemed almost a surreal dream. School started and we hosted a French intern, Julien, who was teaching at Bush, Galen's high school. His sense of humor, cooking skills and fierce Foosball

rivalry enlivened the household. Leah was a strict

The Twins

Adam and Galen are juniors but at separate high schools, Northwest & Bush. By coincidence, their schools' Ultimate teams played each other on their 17th birthdays and they went mano-a-mano in the chilly, pouring rain. In addition to their joint interest in the disc, both are on the Seattle Bouldering Project rock climbing team, and of course, they are both faced with US History and the prospect of college applications.

Adam

Adam spent a month last summer taking a NOLS course in the Wind River range of Wyoming. His photos of Gannet Peak, bathed in alpenglow, make Margaret and Dan desperate to visit those mountains. Back in Seattle, Adam continues his love of tinkering. Whether it's building mobile robot with RGBD camera stalk, replacing the house thermostat, deconstructing an ancient avalanche beacon, or repairing his airsoft gun, Adam's passion is puttering with electro-mechanical systems. He's learned a huge amount from the Internet, but

his focus on the screen can drive his parents crazy as he seemingly doesn't hear their repeated requests to clean up his projects.



coach, forcing Julien into longer and longer sets of pushups. A year ago at Christmas we joined Margaret's family in Sedona and the Grand Canyon, soaking up the desert sunshine. In February, we joined friends on Hawaii's Big Island for sun, hiking and phenomenal scuba diving! Both summers we traveled east to Dan's Mom's house on Saint Regis

Lake in the Adirondacks for hiking, swimming and



Leah

Leah is finishing 8th grade at Evergreen and eagerly looking at high schools towards next year's transition. She has a dizzying number of extra-curricular activities - Blackout Demo Team for her karate school (Tuesday & Saturday), gymnastics practices (Monday, Wednesday & Friday) and competitions (Sunday), and piano and voice lessons (Thursday). Phew - when's a girl to sleep? In her off time, Leah likes to organize class-wide, formal dances at our house; Leah and the other girls are dressed to the nines, but the boys tend to show up in jeans and T-shirts.

Galen

Galen continues his interest in urban transit and volunteers at the Seattle Subway project. He bikes the 10 miles return commute to school, despite rain and dark, sometimes carrying downhill skis strapped to his pack. Last summer he took an intense two-week, full-time course to be a Wilderness First Responder (first-aid on steroids, indeed just one level below EMT). Soon afterwards, he discovered that no other kids had signed up for his summer alpinism class in the North Cascades, so it converted to a (slightly shorter) 1-1 guided instruction, where he learned to build anchors when leading rock and climbed the steep North Ridge of Mt Baker, a classic ice-climb that defeated Margaret and Dan many years ago. After months anxiously monitoring the ski resorts websites, Galen has seen a blissful snowfall and been skiing his brains out. He's especially psyched to try backcountry skiing, but plans to learn avalanche safety first.



Dan

Dan still loves working with his great group of PhD students at UW; they got another DARPA grant to work on machine reading, and he is also interested in the topic of crowdsourcing. Over the summer, Dan knocked off three more of Washington's hundred highest mountains (with Galen), bringing him to 92/100. He also made some memorable canyoneering descents in Utah, including a wonderful October trip to Zion with Adam and Galen.



Margaret

Margaret continues to be excited and fulfilled by her work at Children's Hospital, perhaps because by juggling so many things (clinical care, research, mentoring, administration) she never has time to get bored with any of them. She went to her 25th medical school reunion in May. It was just amazing to see what everyone was up to (think medical school deans, world-famous researchers, ...oh, yes, and *nice* too!). She did lots of cycling and hiking this summer, including a week-long Ride Around Washington (with Galen).

