



Happy 2009! We've had a full year and hope that this letter finds you well. We started 2008 while on a whitewater rafting vacation in Veracruz, Mexico. Later that winter, we drove to Whistler with the Cummings and enjoyed a few days of great weather, skiing down the Blackcomb Glacier and surveying the resort's construction of a new 4.4 km gondola (Galen's obsession), connecting its two peaks to facilitate the next Winter Olympics.

During spring break, we flew to Utah, took the kids down some beautiful technical canyons, and backpacked through the Needles of Canyonlands National Park. Here we endured a strong hailstorm which launched a small flash flood down the canyon we were ascending. (Those of you who recall our near

disaster several years back in Africa, may question our apparent wish to drown, but this 'flood' was much smaller - only 6" deep - and we were able to shelter under an overhang while it subsided.)

In the early summer we enjoyed a Rosenfeld family reunion in Carmel, CA with some great hikes and fun tennis matches. Later we headed east for a Weld family reunion on Upper St. Regis Lake, where sailboat racing occupied most days. Summer seemed to skip Seattle, however, and we missed the anticipated sun. As a result, we didn't manage even one full-family backpack this summer - a shame. We did enjoy a visit from our Dutch friend, Harm, and his daughter Chiara. Thanksgiving saw grandparents Anne, Art and Ros visiting Seattle, and afterwards some of us explored the lush waterfalls of the Columbia River Gorge.

When school let out in December, we braved a freak Seattle blizzard to meet Art, Ros and the Hansens in Costa Rica, where we have been exploring, hiking, swimming, zip-lining, white water rafting, sea kayaking and enjoying the sun. We've seen zillions of animals from Anteaters, Coatis and Iguanas to Squirrel Monkeys. Rare-colored birds abound. One hike took us deep through the cloud forest to natural hot-springs beside

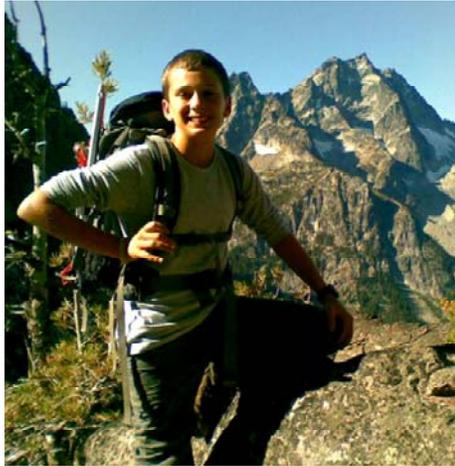
an azure river flowing from Volcan Tenorio. Another evening we watched erupting lava tumble red-hot down the desolate slopes of the Arenal Volcano. We are lucky to visit such a beautiful country, though it has felt a bit unreal and we've learned less about the country than we would have liked.



Work-wise, Dan has enjoyed the year and research is going well. His "Intelligence in Wikipedia" project has led to a large grant proposal on Machine Reading. He loves his group of seven graduate students. His only regret is accepting a job running a conference, which has resulted in too much work. However, he did manage a wonderful weeklong technical canyoneering trip to Utah in May with friends Dave Smith and Marcel Hawiger.

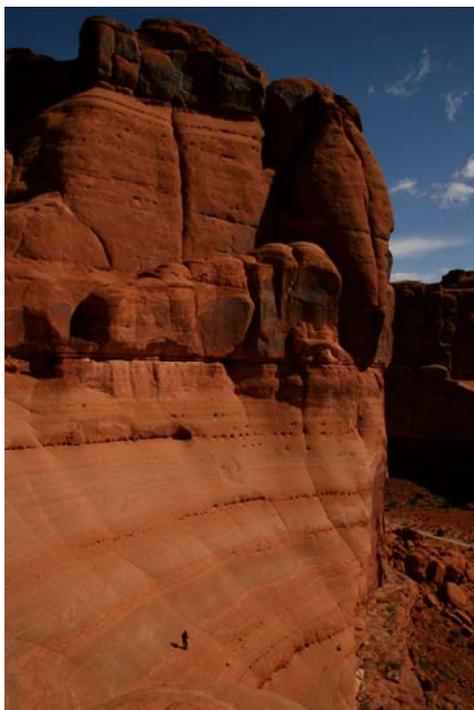
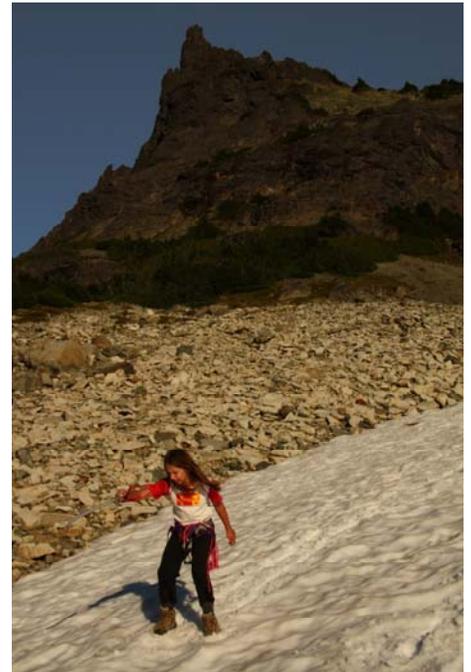
Probably the major feature of Margaret's year was, after 16 years, having more eye surgery for her glaucoma. The procedure went well and was very successful. The enforced month off from work was a blessing, refreshing and reinvigorating her, reminding her to live her priorities and to put safeguards in place to prevent burn-out at work.

Adam and Galen turned thirteen this fall, basking in their teenage sophistication. Seventh grade has been treating them well, despite the increased homework. In



a summer Boy's Weekend they descended several technical canyons with Dan, rappelling through waterfalls and swimming dark pools. Both boys love computers, proselytizing Ubuntu and Open-Source philosophy. Adam especially loves hardware hacking, and has built several robots from scratch. Galen flew to California for a three week engineering camp, which got him even more jazzed about the subject. He also climbed two more of Washington's hundred highest mountains in a marathon ascent with Dan: starting before dawn, crossing glaciers with crampons, roping up technical rock, and only reaching the car at midnight after five hours of headlamp-illuminated death-march.

Leah is having a great year in 4th grade and finding new pleasure in her abilities at math. She earned her advanced brown belt in Karate, has been working hard on the demo team, and is training hard for the black-belt test this spring. Leah and Dan climbed several mountains together this summer, including Unicorn, which required roped rock climbing, which she loves. Also, Leah and Dan, after climbing Unicorn, descended a canyon with swimming and rappelling through waterfalls, ranging up to 160 feet in length.



It's been a wild year for our country, but we are hopeful that new openness and objectivity will result from our changed political leadership. We wish you all a wonderful New Year, and hope you will visit us in Seattle.



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