

News from Nan

HIGHLIGHTS

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NOVEMBER 21, 2011 | ANNA



Horse cart in Cuba

November 21, 2011

7373 Via Montecitos, San Jose, California 95135

(Through August: 65 Rio Robles E #3402, San Jose, California 95134)

Our first bit of news is that we have moved again this year (in August). Our apartment complex had been raising rents to astronomical levels, so we investigated alternatives and chose an over-55 community in the Evergreen area of San Jose just down the street from the Livengoods. We were a bit unsure if The Villages' profile and our lifestyle were a true match (some of us were VERY unsure!), but were pleasantly surprised from the beginning and have loved being closer to the family, enjoying the community activities and our new neighbors, and appreciating the constant wild animal parade (deer, turkeys, squirrels, quail...).



Big Bunny Run

Running is still a big theme for us and for other members of the extended family, as well. We have entered a number of races this year, mostly 5Ks. We're always pleased when others in the family can join us. This Thanksgiving we and three Livengoods will be in the San Jose Turkey Trot. And we have a couple of other races scheduled for early December in Southern California, one on the Universal Studios back lot. What a thrill!

Our ongoing professional activities keep us busy. Dick and I are still consulting together on a part-time basis, and we're learning more about web content management. So far we've migrated or created about eight WordPress or Drupal sites.

We also show up regularly to help out with the garden at Deer Hollow Farm, a working farm and teaching facility in the hills near Cupertino. Last year there was a serious rodent problem, but the garden has done much better this year, thanks to the new garden boxes and other creative solutions from the DHF staff.



Helen and Bill in Rancho Mirage, California

Our saddest news of the year is the loss of my beloved sister-in-law, Helen, who passed on in May after a series of falls that got ever more devastating. She was both mother and sister to me in spite of our 20-year age difference, and a week doesn't go by that I don't think of something to call her about. I'm grateful that I made it down to San Diego in time to hold her hand one last time and tell her good-bye.



USS Missouri

In January Dick did a Road Scholar trip that involved volunteer restoration work on the Battleship Missouri, now docked permanently in Pearl Harbor. His group refinished the teak deck and did some cleanup and painting in room that will become part of the public tour. He thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



Trinidad, Cuba

in October we both did a Road Scholar trip to Cuba, which was a fascinating experience. Our group brought in medical supplies, which are difficult for the Cubans to obtain. We toured the western and central parts of the island, and enjoyed hearing the experiences and perspectives of various artists and academics. One speaker was American born, met and married a Cuban in Paris, and raised her family in Cuba. Now her children have gone to live in the U.S., and she visits them and her grandchildren regularly. Her story was most intriguing! We also saw several musical performances and even jogged the streets of Havana and Trinidad.

The year was full of family activities, as usual – we love those opportunities!



Dick with Allan and Karen Nichols in Atlanta, Georgia

- On our way to Cuba we were able to work in a short visit to Atlanta to see Dick's sister, Karen, her husband, Allan, and their little Chihuahua, Louie.
- In March we drove down to Southern California and briefly saw Tim and Clara. We're planning on going down again in early December and hope to spend more time with them and the extended family.
- In July we got together with Ellen's and Gillian's families in South Lake Tahoe. it's always special to see all the grandkids together: Matthew, who is a sophomore in high school this year; Miranda, who is now in junior high; Archer, who is about to turn six and is spending his kindergarten year at a Montessori school; and Helena, who just turned four and is also attending Montessori school. We will again be with the Blomquists and Livengoods at Christmas (this time in COLD Minnesota).
- The adults are all doing well in their careers and are very busy with family life and travel. We are proud of their many accomplishments and enjoy seeing them as often as possible.
- Matthew was in track this past spring, and he did extremely well, especially in the 400. He started the season on the frosh-soph team but was quickly moved up to varsity. He is very fast! Both Matthew and Miranda ran cross-country this fall, and we were kept busy "running" from one racing event to another!
- Miranda is also into music: piano, clarinet, and the percussion section of the school band.
- Archer is still into trains and is now also a Lego aficionado.
- Helena loves animals and has huge collections of her favorites (horses, frogs and toads, snakes...).



Blomquists in Lake Tahoe



Livengoods at Miranda's band concert

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