

The 2014 Waite Family Christmas Letter

Wow, with the circulation of our annual letter rising, we have been offered a sponsorship! In exchange for a few innocuous and barely noticeable ads, we will receive compensation in cash and merchandise. With two kids in college, we spend a lot on tuition, so we thought we'd give it a shot. Here's the year in review.

Alex is in his last year of civil engineering undergrad studies at USC. He rejoined the band and has been having a great time in the Greatest Marching Band in the History of the Universe©. He said it was a lot more fun when the jerks graduated and moved on. Funny how often that is true in life.

David is in his third year at the University of Colorado. We are so impressed by the wide variety of programs the university offers. And they are so welcoming to out-of-state students. He changed his major from fine art and physics to fine art and environmental design (architecture), which seems to have suited him well.

Barry traveled to China with a US Commerce Department trade mission. Staying at Marriott Hotels, he was well cared for from Hong Kong to Shanghai, getting a fine variety of oddly-translated foods. They sure know how to take care of their guests. For much of the year, he filled in as community development director for the city of Carson, which meant he had to attend council meetings. The sleep deprivation from meetings going to as late as 4 am made the jetlag from China seem almost pleasant.

Margie spent a week in Seattle with her family clearing out the homestead to sell. Her dad moved to nearby Emeritus, a fine place for senior living. Thanks to Jet Blue, she had a great flight. Bristol Farms keeps her busy in the office normally, but the annual 12 hours of Thanksgiving meal packing in the giant cooler required six Tylenol for her aches and pains. Maybe turning 50 this year is the problem.

Barry formed a new barbershop quartet with some friends. The Pacific Coast Highwaymen have finally reached the point where their respective families no longer leave the house during practices. Speaking of practice, we swear by the chiropractor who fixed David's back, Dr. Pommerenck. If you're all twisted up, give him a crack at your back. Maybe Margie will try that after next year's Thanksgiving pack.

Alex has moved to a hip neighborhood in Long Beach that is very walkable. Another way to put it is parking is at a premium and tickets are a regular occurrence. After hauling a box spring and mattress on the roof of the van, Alex mentioned that his roommate had a truck. It was a very hot day, but luckily there was a 7-11 nearby for us to get some delicious Slurpee's. Margie still likes to feed him and do his laundry.

Barry and David met in Utah for Aunt Bonnie's memorial service. Why is that we have to lose someone to get the family together? It was fun for Barry to see cousins of cousins he hadn't seen in decades. Since everyone now looks like their parents used to, it was instant recognition all the way around. David was driving the Subaru and was camping in Zion first before heading to Ogden. The Subaru was as at home on the highway and in the city as it was off road. What a car!

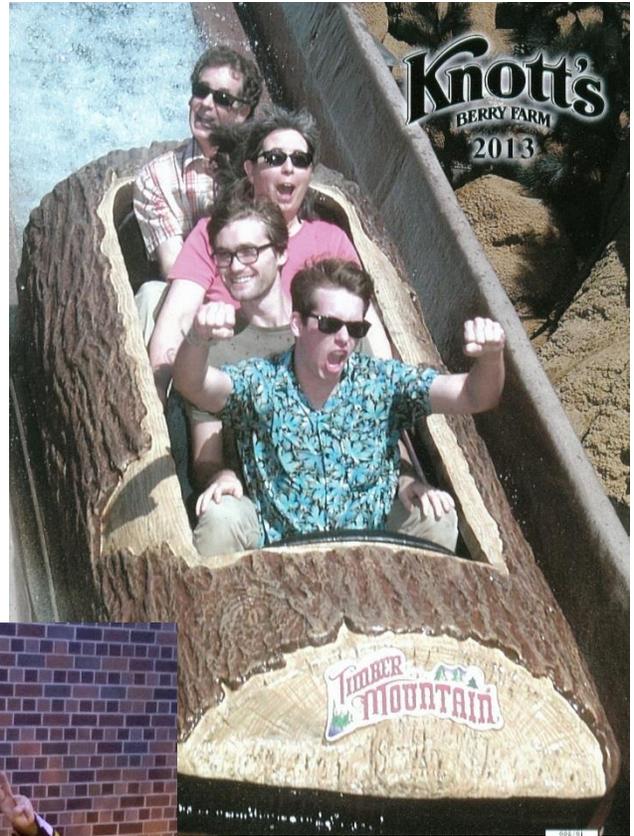
Grandma and Grandpa visited David in September in Boulder. He shares a house with a variable number of other people, deer and raccoons (long story). The grandparents gave him some money that he used to buy power tools for art projects. There is nothing like a Craftsman saw to do the job.

Nicks and Hagrid send their greetings to all. They enjoy getting a walk every night. It's a good thing Petco has those excellent clean-up bags for those Hagrid-size messes along the way. Yup, they are high quality at a good price. Hagrid is still a bit excitable, having ripped the curtains down a few times and busted through the screen door. Then again, haven't we all? On the good side, all plywood barriers in the house are now gone, and the cats and dogs are doing fine together. Mostly.

Of all the isms, we think commercialism is the worst (name that movie). We cut way back on swapping Christmas gifts within the family in 2013. Oddly enough, last Christmas was nicer, more meaningful and far less stressful than ever before. We suggest you consider it. So how are things with you?

Barry, Margie, Alex & David Waite – (310) 325-6389 or waite@earthlink.net

We ended last year with a trip to Knott's Berry Farm. Fun for the whole family! And didn't they do a nice job posing us for a second to get this fine shot?



Alex on the right with his San Pedro High School friends Kyle and Clinton after USC dismantled the unlucky Fighting Irish. They needed some Irish Spring maybe.

This is one of David's paintings that are for sale. This one is 2'x3' oil on wood. Not kidding on this one. He really does want to sell some paintings.

